COMMUNICATION RESEARCH TRENDS

MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT

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IN THIS
ISSUE

With sections on:

"An Anthropological View of Entertainment"
and
"Entertainment and Religion"
by W. E. Biernatzki, SJ
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Media Entertainment

Prenote

This issue of *Communication Research Trends* departs somewhat from our usual pattern to bring you an extensive bibliography on Media Entertainment, concentrating (though not exclusively) on books published since 1990. Professor Louis Bosshart and Dr. Ilaria Macconi, of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, have worked diligently to gather this information from a wide range of sources. Most of the books cited are in English, but other European languages also are represented — especially German. As an introduction to the bibliography, the principal authors discuss some of the approaches that have been taken to defining "entertainment," and they also have sketched the historical development of research on media entertainment. The editor of *Trends* has followed up, in sections IV and V, with a look at what some anthropologists and psychologists have been saying about entertainment and with a review of the problematic interface between religion and entertainment.   **— The Editor**

I. Introduction

It has taken three years to finalize this issue of *Trends*. The reason for this does not lie in time pressures imposed by the academic schedule, and certainly not in any flagging of interest on the part of the writers. The reason lies, instead, in the scant attention paid by serious researchers to theories of entertainment. There is simply no positive correlation between the amount of entertainment that is consumed and the amount of scholarly research in the field of entertainment. More "noble" topics, such as the interactions of media and democracy, attract much mainstream research, but "mere entertainment" seems too humdrum for serious attention. For example, the 20th and 21st editions of the *Communication Yearbook* (Burleson 1997 and Roloff 1998, respectively), do not even include the word "entertainment" in their indexes. The *Handbook of Communication Science"* (Berger and Chaffee 1987) is a little better, devoting five of its 896 pages to the topic.

From the audience's point of view, however, entertainment is important. It provides the main sorts of gratification people want from most media. This issue of *Communication Research Trends* is designed to locate and publicize the research that has been done recently on this important but sadly neglected topic.

II. Defining "Entertainment"

There are few things less entertaining than trying to define mass entertainment. Nevertheless, all empirical and theoretical research requires definitions; so we, too, must begin there. As a first step towards a definition, entertainment can be described and experienced as a *reception phenomenon*.

Entertainment as a Reception Phenomenon
For the individual experiencing it,

entertainment means:

- psychological relaxation — It is restful, refreshing, light, distracting;
- change and diversion — It offers variety and diversity;
- stimulation — It is dynamic, interesting, exciting, thrilling;
- fun — It is merry, amusing, funny;
- atmosphere — It is beautiful, good, pleasant, comfortable;
- joy - It is happy, cheerful.

These experiences are indeed pleasant and positive ones. They are distinct from everyday routine and boredom. Entertainment in the sense of the Latin word *tenere* means to keep somebody steady, busy or amused. In today's words, entertainment serves the improvement of mood states or, more neutrally, it is effective in mood management.

Stimulation seems to be the most important motive for entertainment-seeking individuals. Their main goal is to reach or keep an ideal level of arousal or optimal level of activation. "Entertainment has the capacity to excite, to soothe and to calm as well," according to Zillmann and Bryant (1986: 307). Different genres offer stimuli of different strengths to people with different entertainment needs. According to Zillmann:

> Action drama, comedy, and game shows tend to be moderately arousing. ... Non-fictional material of this kind (as in sports, documentaries, and newscasts) tend to produce even stronger excitatory reactions. ... Sexual themes rank among the strongest arousers available. (Zillmann 1988: 153)

While some people are eager to get an arousal kick out of entertainment stimuli, others tend to lower their excitation level, and still others try to maintain their satisfied state. Entertainment thus enables us to regulate different states of excitation.

Entertainment in a Semantic Differentiation

The complexity of entertainment as a vast field of joyful and pleasant experiences of people also can be reduced by the help of a semantic differentiation. As Osgood (Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum 1970) stated, the semantic space of any term can — with the help of a factor analysis — be defined by three basic factors:

- assessment: whether it is good/bad, positive negative;
- potential: whether it is strong/weak;
- activity: whether it is active/passive, fast/slow.

Taking into account the term's associations, its main constituents, and the common elements of definitions of it that have been proposed, the basic factors of the term "entertainment" would show the following profile:

- assessment: Entertainment is pleasant, agreeable, good, beautiful, and enjoyable.
- potential: Entertainment is light, restful, easy, not demanding, and not compulsory.
- activity: Entertainment is stimulating, dynamic, alive, exciting, thrilling, spontaneous, and varied.

So, entertainment has basically active, tension-reducing, and positive components. The first of these provides stimulation or suspense, the second provides relaxation and diversity, and the third provides joy and pleasure.

From a negative perspective, entertainment is not demanding, not unpleasant, not monotonous, and not boring. Entertainment is also seen to be something that is experienced as relatively better than any alternative. The opposite of information is disinformation; the opposite of entertainment is boredom (Klaus 1996: 402).

Entertainment as Pleasure

After all is said and done, entertainment is pleasure. It means experiencing pleasure by witnessing or being exposed to something! Taking up this term used by Thomas Aquinas in his reflections on passions, and following Hausmanninger (1993: 34), who follows Thomas Aquinas (*passiones sunt delectationes sensibiles, emotionales, cognitiones, reflexivae* — "Passions are sensible, emotional, cognitional and reflexive pleasures"), pleasure can be subdivided into four sub-categories: (1) pleasure of the senses, as in the use of physical abilities, or the experience of motor and sensory activity; (2) pleasure of the (ego-) emotions, as in evoking and experiencing emotions, or in mood-management; (3) pleasure of personal wit and knowledge, as in the use of cognitive or intellectual powers or competence in being able to use one's wit; (4) and pleasures of the (socio-)emotions, such as the ability to feel an emotion with and for others, to identify with others).

Since the above pleasures usually come together in psychosomatic reactions, the above categorization can be broken down into three subsystems of the human being:

- Physical system: materiality, existence (being there);
- Psychological system: personality emotions and cognitions (being thus); and
- Social system: sociality, coexistence (being with).

Entertainment can therefore be experienced as a pleasant stimulation of these human subsystems.

Entertainment as Play

Different definitions of the concept "entertainment" indicate that entertainment goes beyond the above description of it as stimulation, relaxation, and pleasure. Culture comprises not only everyday routine but also ideas and mental images of alternative states of possible realities. Dreams and hopes have been taken as the food that is able to nourish fictional entertainment. Those dreams are not unrelated to everyday life and to the conditions of human existence. Popular culture as a way to construct reality goes beyond everyday reality. In "collective dreams," i.e., in narratives, people can experience potentials they have wanted to turn into actualities. Phrases in literature about popular culture that point to this kind of utopia include, "free play of the fantasy" (Berghaus, 1994: 154), "pleasures of the fantasy" (Klaus, 1996: 407), "dive into a fictional world" (Klaus 1996: 412), "plays of illusion" (Vorderer 1994: 337), and "dream worlds" (Groebel 1998: 353).

Immanuel Kant was convinced that the imagination stimulates, boosts, and actualizes latent human potentialities. Entertainment in this sense means that people experiencing entertainment live in an as-if-world, a world that is different from the real world, but in a way is linked to it. As soon as an individual pays attention to such a world, as soon as he or she is willing to be absorbed by such a world, and as soon as he or she adopts the rules of such a world, that person is experiencing entertainment. It is important for the concept of "as-if-worlds" to distinguish between everyday as the unchangeable reality and play as an area of the fantasy, as a playground for utopian outlines. The boundaries of the everyday routine can be crossed with the help of the imagination. It grants the fulfillment of wishes that otherwise are denied. It can, to a certain degree, be a compensation for shortcomings. The relationship between entertainment and the as-if-world becomes very clear. The individual who wants to experience entertainment must be ready and willing to dive into a fictional, fantastic world, to be taken away, to play a specific role, to be involved and absorbed, and to identify himself or herself with fictional persons and actions. It is quite evident that experiences like these do have an impact on

our everyday life. They can be sources of inspiration or at least consolation. People live in fictional worlds. They enjoy their dreams — or, perhaps better, "day-dreams" — and build up various utopias that are linked to their own existence.

Definitions

According to Dyer (1992: 17), "Entertainment is a type of performance produced for profit, performed before a generalized audience (the 'public'), by a trained, paid group who do nothing else but produce performances which have the sole (conscious) aim of providing pleasures." It seems to be widely accepted that entertainment is a manifestation of pleasure-seeking behavior, and "each audience ultimately develops unique standards for choosing what it considers to be the most desirable means for satisfying its pleasure needs," according to Mendelsohn and Spetnagel (1980: 20). *Profit* and *joy* are key-words in the definition of Barnow and Kirkland: "The modern definition of entertainment is any narrative, PERFORMANCE or other experience that can be

sold to and enjoyed by large and hetero-geneous groups of people" (1992: 50). For the same two authors, the label *entertainment* "implies that it is intended primarily to absorb the attention and to leave agreeable feelings" (1992: 51). For Zillmann and Bryant, entertainment can be "crudely defined as any activity designed to delight and, to a smaller degree, enlighten through the exhibition of the fortunes or misfortunes of others, but also through the display of special skills by others/or self" (1986: 303).

Mendelsohn and Spetnagel add another dimension to their passage quoted above, as follows: "From earliest antiquity, entertainment has functioned to provide pleasurable reassurance to audiences by satisfying their deep-felt desires for distinctive reflections of their own lives" (1980: 15). Looking at the ubiquitous phenomenon of entertainment this means that we have to look at two sides, at what the pleasurable experiences are and at what the stimuli are that are able to create pleasure. Although many things can be entertaining to many people, some things are not entertaining at all.

III. A Historical Approach

Aristotle, Plato, Montaigne, and Blaise Pascal all have mentioned entertaining aspects of the arts. But they were quite reluctant to acknowledge positive aspects of entertainment. Mendelsohn has listed some opponents of entertainment in Western society:

It appears that the influences of Greco-Roman morality, Hebraic-Christian concepts of sin, Catholic and Protestant asceticism, Puritan dogma, secular royalism, and ideological Marxism either singly or in combination serve as foundation stones for the strength and diversity of the attack upon

mass media entertainment. (Mendelsohn 1966: 31)

This negative approach might explain why Harold Mendelsohn started his book *Mass Entertainment* with a quite defensive chapter, "The Attack upon Entertainment: Its Origins, Functions, and Implications." Then he lays the basis of what has become the functional approach to entertainment: a chapter on "The Sociological Functions of Mass Entertainment" and one on "The Psychological Functions of Mass Media-Derived Entertainment." Despite the fact that Mendelsohn adds much insight

into the phenomenon of entertainment, his conclusion is very pessimistic: "Our ignorance of just what makes for the enjoyment of mass entertainment by individuals is simply monumental" (1966: 170).

In 1980, that ignorance was still not overcome, so that Percy H. Tannenbaum opened his edited book (1980) with a chapter entitled, "An Unstructured Introduction to an Amorphous Area" (pp. 1-12). One problem was the perennial definition issue. What is "entertainment" after all? And another problem was the concept of entertainment. What does it mean to be entertained? Is the approach to understanding entertainment a sociological, a psychological, or a social-psychological enterprise?

It can be said that Tannenbaum's book structured the field with its chapters on "Entertainment as a Sociological Enterprise," by Harold Mendelsohn and H.T. Spetnagel; "The Audience as Critic: A Conceptional Analysis of Television Entertainment," by Hilde H. Himmelweit, Betty Swift, and Marianne E. Jaeger; "Entertainment as Vicarious Emotional Experience," by Percy H. Tannenbaum; "Anatomy of Suspense," by Dolf Zillmann; and "Humor and Catharsis: The Effect of Comedy on Audiences," by Thomas J. Scheff and Stephen C. Scheele. Entertainment came to be known as an inexpensive form of mild arousal offered in a fantastic world between hopes and fears.

The third basic book in the field of entertainment research was published in 1979, and edited by Heinz-Dietrich Fischer and Stefan Reinhard Melnik (1979). Innovative elements in this reader were the link that it made between sport, entertainment, and the ludic theory of advertising and newsreading.

The German market was opened by one very theoretical study by Louis Bosshart (1979), and one empirical study by Ursula Dehm (1984). Bosshart examined the main literature on entertainment at that time. He looked at the concept of entertainment from anthropological, aesthetic-cultural, psychological, social-psychological, sociological, and political-economic points of view. He defined entertainment as a basic human maintenance-(service) or support, as a pleasurable reduction of the gap between reality and utopia, and as a reconciliation between hope and fear, and between everyday life and something that could be better (daydreams).

Dehm showed that people experience entertainment as something that is creative, active, informative, emotional and natural. Entertainment in this sense has something that activates and relaxes people at the same time in a pleasant, compensatory atmosphere. She showed that information is not the opposite of entertainment. Information is part of the entertainment. The audience does not make a distinction between information and entertainment. The opposite of entertainment is boredom. Ursula Dehm also showed that media entertainment is able to offer the same gratification as conversations among individuals do, with the exception of conversations among friends being more helpful and emotional. More recent research gives evidence that mass-mediated para-social interactions have the quality of interactions among neighbors and not friends.

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IV. An Anthropological View of Entertainment
By W. E. Biernatzki, SJ, Editor, *CRT*

Victor Turner. *From Ritual to Theatre*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982.

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["References" to sections IV and V are listed after section V.]

Liminal and Liminoid

Anthropologist Victor Turner, drawing on his studies of ritual in African societies, arrived at a seminal recognition of the close relationship between the sorts of transitions that occur in ritual processes — most characteristically, rites of passage — and the changes an audience undergoes when it enters a theater for a staged performance. Not all staged performances are necessarily "entertainment," but entertainment shares in the kind of "passage" discerned by Turner; and his insights have opened a new perspective on what happens when we are being "entertained."

Building on the work of earlier anthropologists and psychologists, such as Arnold van Gennep (1906), Jean Piaget (1962), Johan Huizinga (1970), Clifford Geertz (1973), and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1974), and his own extensive fieldwork (Turner 1967, 1969, 1974), Turner stressed that rituals move their participants into a different psychological "space" from that in which they normally live, passing, as it were, over a "threshold" — Latin: *limen*. Rites of passage mark a permanent transition in the life of the initiate, in which he or she casts off old social roles to assume new ones, with their appropriate behaviors, attitudes, and even new and different self-images, which will be retained for the remainder of his or her life, or at least until another rite of passage changes everything once again.

According to Turner, something similar happens when we enter a theater. The staged entertainment draws us into a different world, in which we mentally assume a new set of relationships and attitudes appropriate to our participation in the quasi-ritual process of the drama we are viewing. The change in us when we become part of an audience is real, but of course it is not permanent, and we emerge into our familiar, normal world again with all our previous relationships intact when we exit the theater. This experience therefore is in some ways "like" the *liminal* experience of a rite of passage, but it is not identical with it. Turner coined the word *liminoid* to describe this analogical relationship (1982: 20-60).

One important distinction between the liminal and the liminoid is that the former is intrinsically connected with "work," while the latter is the product of "play" or, more generically, "leisure" (*ibid.*, pp. 31-35). For Turner, the liminoid is a characteristic of industrial society, which has separated work from leisure in a way unknown in pre-industrial societies. Although the people of pre-industrial societies had feasts, dances, games, and other "playful" and joyous activities, they always carried with them a "work" function, performing some serious social task:

> The point is though, that these play or ludic aspects of tribal agrarian ritual myth are, as Durkheim says, "de la vie sérieuse," i.e., they are intrinsically connected with the "work" of the collectivity in performing symbolic actions and manipulating symbolic objects so as to promote and increase fertility of men, crops, and animals, domestic and wild, to cure illness, to avert plague, to obtain success in raiding, to turn boys into men and girls into women, to make chiefs out of commoners, to transform ordinary people into shamans and shamanins, to "cool" those

"hot" from the warpath, to ensure the proper succession of seasons and the hunting and agricultural responses of human beings to them, and so forth. Thus, the play is in earnest,... (Turner 1982: 32).

That is not true of play and leisure activities in industrial and post-industrial societies. Neither are they the same as the idleness of Greek philosophers and other elites in highly class-structured societies, where slaves and serfs did the work, and the elite classes had nothing to do with it, even though their idleness did give rise to many cultural developments. Turner, following Joffre Dumazedier (1962, 1968), holds that "true leisure only exists when it complements or rewards work." Leisure "presupposes work: it is a non-work, even an anti-work phase in the life of a person who also works" (Turner 1982: 36).

Turner describes entertainment as sharing liminoid characteristics in a special way. While the liminal activities of tribal society generally reinforced the *status quo*, entertainment as we know it often is subversive of the *status quo*. According to Turner, "the word 'entertain,' ... is derived from O.F. *entretenir*, to 'hold apart,' that is, to create a liminal or liminoid space in which performances may take place" (1982: 41).

Turner summarizes the distinction between liminal and liminoid phenomena as follows: (1) "*Liminal phenomena* tend to predominate in tribal and early agrarian societies." "*Liminoid phenomena* flourish in societies with 'organic solidarity,' bonded reciprocally by 'contractual' relations, and generated by and following the industrial revolution," although they began to appear earlier. (2) "*Liminal phenomena* tend to be collective, concerned with calendrical, biological, social-structural rhythms or with crises in social processes ..." "*Liminoid phenomena may* be collective ... but are more characteristically individual products though they often have collective or 'mass'

effects. They are not cyclical, but continuously generated..." (3) While "*liminal phenomena* are centrally integrated into the total social process... *Liminoid phenomena* develop apart from the central economic and political processes..." (4) "*Liminal phenomena* tend to ...[be] symbols having a common intellectual and emotional meaning for all the members of the group...," but "*Liminoid phenomena* tend to be more idiosyncratic, quirky, to be generated by specific names, individuals and in particular groups...and are thought of at first as ludic offerings placed for sale on the 'free' market..." (5) Liminal phenomena tend to support the social and cultural structure, "making it work without too much friction. Liminoid phenomena, on the other hand, are often parts of social critiques or even revolutionary manifestos — books, plays, paintings, films, etc., exposing the injustices, inefficiencies, and immoralities of the mainstream economic and political structures and organizations" (pp. 53-55).

Distinguishing the liminoid in this manner leaves a lot of room in it for activities that cannot be called "entertainment," but entertainment clearly qualifies as one kind of liminoid process. Theater, however, remains, at least in its serious forms, something that cannot be called purely entertainment, even though

theatre, in Western liberal-capitalist society, is a liminoid process, set in the liminoid time of leisure between the role-playing times of "work." It is, in a way, "play" or "entertainment" (which means, etymologically, "held-in-between," that is, it is a liminal or liminoid phenomenon)... [in pre-industrial] societies acting was mainly role-playing; the *persona* was the dominant criterion of individuality, of identity. Thus, the great *collective* which articulated *personae* in hierarchical or segmentary structures was the real protagonist, both in life and ritual.

... Western theatre has often posited, like

Western art generally, a contrast between everyday life... and truly antistructural life (private religion, taking part in the arts as creator or spectator, and the like). The *persona* "works," the *individual* "plays"; the former is governed by economic necessity, the latter is "entertained"... But theatre, though it has abandoned its former ritual, claims to be a means of communication with invisible powers and ultimate reality, and can still assert, particularly since the rise of depth psychology, that it represents the reality behind the role-playing masks... They present the false face in order to portray the possibility of a true face.... (Turner 1982: 114-115).

Ritual, Theater, and Emotion

Ed S. Tan. *Emotion and the Structure of Narrative Film: Film as an Emotion Machine*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996.

Du-Hyun Lee. "Korean Shamans: Role Playing Through Trance Possession." In Schechner 1990: 149-166.

Emotion is obviously not limited to entertainment, since it permeates all of life. Nevertheless, entertainment, like art, is designed to generate emotion artificially, along with whatever other functions it may have. This process of emotion generation has been explored in regard to film by the Dutch psychologist Ed S. Tan (1996). In Tan's view, the psychological study of film awareness has been neglected because that awareness is so complex. He asks, for example, "How can enacted sorrow stimulate real emotions in viewers?" (1996: x). He feels that narrative films are able to produce feelings that "possess the most important functional characteristic of what we regard as genuine emotion, namely, the realization of concerns despite the pressure of reason, and, above all, gaining and retaining control precedence" (1996: 250).

Du-Hyun Lee (1990), quotes S. M. Shirokogoroff (1935: 331) on the comparatively much greater impact of shamanistic rituals on their audiences in contrast to "the emotion produced by theatrical and musical performances, literature and general artistic phenomena of the European complex, because in shamanizing the audience consists at the same time of actors and participants." Shirokogoroff's impression from observing the rituals among the Tungus Mongols, corresponds with Lee's own observations of the audience at a Korean shaman's ritual (Lee 1990: 162 and 166n).

Lee goes on to quote Shechner's (1977: 75) list of contrasts between ritual, characterized as having "efficacy," and theater, characterized as "entertainment": Ritual seeks results, is linked to an absent Other, abolishes real time in favor of symbolic time, brings the Other here, the performer is possessed and in trance, the audience participates and believes, criticism is forbidden, and the event is one of collective creativity. Theater, on the other hand, is fun, is only for those present, emphasizes the now, its audience is the Other, the performer knows what he/she is doing, the audience watches and appreciates, criticism is encouraged, and the event is one of individual creativity (Lee 1990: 166).

In his book, *Between Theater and Anthropology* (1985), Richard Schechner was concerned with the development of a theory of performance, melding his own long experience in experimental theater with data from anthropological case studies of ritual performance. He is interested in theater as performance and art, rather than specifically as entertainment. But, citing Gregory Bateson (1976), he sees an intimate relationship between theater and play. Human play involves "some degree of metacommunication, i.e., of exchanging signals which would carry the message 'this is play'" (Schechner 1985: 297, quoting Bateson 1976: 68). Because of its essential dimension of metacommunication, human play exhibits a "layering of seeings" — e.g., performer seeing audience, performer seeing self as performing, audience seeing performer, audience seeing self as audience,

etc. — that "radically distinguishes" human play from animal play (Schechner 1985: 297).

Schechner also remarks that new developments in communication technologies have brought about a "blurring of categories," not only between different kinds of "information" and "entertainment," but all "categories separating different ways of being with, and relating to, others ..." (1985: 324).

Violent Entertainment

Jeffrey H. Goldstein (ed.). *Why We Watch: The Attractions of Violent Entertainment*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Jonathan Lake Crane. *Terror and Everyday Life: Singular Moments in the History of the Horror Film*. Thousand Oaks, CA/London/New Delhi: Sage, 1994.

James B. Weaver III and Ron Tamborini (eds.). *Horror Films: Current Research on Audience Preferences and Reactions*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996.

The definitions of "entertainment" discussed in the first section of this issue of *Trends* tended to emphasize its pleasurable and joyful aspects; but the fact that much entertainment is violent, horrible, frightening, and ugly seems to contradict those earlier evaluations. People seem to be attracted to, and pleasurably entertained by fear, horror, violence, and other experiences from which we would normally flee in "real life." For example, a popular entertainment in late 19th century Paris was visits to the city morgue where "dead bodies displayed behind a large glass window drew as many as a million visitors a year" (Schwartz 1998: 44). The "horrible" can be "pleasant", but it is not immediately evident how that can be possible.

Jeffrey H. Goldstein (1998) has brought together papers from a distinguished international list of contributors representing varied academic fields to explore the attractions of violent entertainment. Violence in mass entertainment, like depictions of sexual behavior, has raised fears about the damage it may do to children and the role it might play in causing higher levels of violent behavior in "real life."

Few clear-cut answers are available to the question of whether media violence causes violent behavior in its audiences, and this book does not attempt to give such answers, but it does take some steps toward answering a preliminary, but generally neglected question: Why do we like to watch violent entertainment at all? Goldstein points out that in the past both popular complaints and formal research have focussed on the production of violent media and its effects, but not on its appeal (*ibid.*, p. 1).

Although boxing and some other sports are intentionally-staged real violence, and some "reality-TV" and news broadcasts show real violence, most discussion of entertainment violence is about dramatized representations of violence. For purposes of the book, Goldstein and his contributors "...regard violent entertainment as descriptions or images of fighting, bloodshed, war, and gunplay produced for the purpose of entertainment, recreation, or leisure" (1998: 2).

The fact that "people voluntarily expose themselves to, and often search out, images of violence," is evident. The tendency to do so may be escalating. Jonathan Lake Crane puts it bluntly: "Millions of fans now consider any horror film absent unprecedented scenes of graphic mayhem a waste of precious leisure time" (1994: 1). In spite of a temporary decline in the popularity of horror films, "a new form of apocalyptic realism" has spread to many other film genres" (*ibid.*, p. 168). "Gore is everywhere" (*ibid.*, p. 159). It also seems clear to Goldstein that "the trend in film and literature has been to portray violence in increasingly realistic and bloody ways." A key question that arises is whether the attraction to viewing realistic violence is different from the attraction to a clearly false simulation of violence (Goldstein 1998: 2-3).

It also is clear that the attraction to violent imagery is complex. "Every chapter in this

book makes clear that attraction is multidetermined, reflecting the object of attraction, the audience, and the broader context in which the experience occurs" (Goldstein 1998: 4).

In his concluding chapter, Goldstein remarks that violent entertainment is not the most popular form of entertainment and that "for the majority of consumers of violent imagery, the violence is a means to ends, an acceptable device valued more for what it does than for what it is" (1998: 213). Boys, especially adolescent boys, like violent entertainment far more than girls do, according to research in both western and non-western countries (pp. 213-214). Several popular theories about the attractions of violence are rejected by the various contributors, such as "the position that people experience a catharsis of deep-seated fears ..." and "the claim that viewers identify with the aggressor. Violent entertainment does not purge us of aggression or the propensity for violence, nor does it provide relief from unpleasant emotions" (p. 215).

On the side of what violent entertainment actually *does* do, the various papers in Goldstein's book indicate that violence appeals primarily to males, usually in groups, who sometimes use it "as a sort of rite of passage" establishing social identity (1998: 215-216); that it carries an "emotional wallop" that may assist in reducing anxiety (pp. 216-217); that it is a way to restore excitement to life in an "unexciting" civilized society (p. 217); that it provides "social occasions for the expression of intense emotion" (pp. 217-219); that it is a chance to totally immerse oneself in "the temporary loss of self-consciousness (flow)..." of a fantasy world (p. 219; cf., Csikszentmihalyi 1974); that context, such as background music, is important for pleasantly experiencing the danger of violence in a recognizably "safe" environment (pp. 219-220); that a sense of justice is appealed to by first viewing the perpetration of violent injustice and then punitive violence exercised on the perpetrators (pp. 220-221); and, finally,

that the attraction of violent entertainment is affected by the actual level of violence in the historical context of the audience, varying during wartime or peacetime, for example (p. 221).

Contributors to Weaver and Tamborini's (1996) volume on horror films relate research conclusions that parallel those in Goldstein's discussion of violence. Boys tend to think of their attendance at horror movies as "proof of courage," (Weaver and Tamborini 1996: 90), and both male and female subjects said they enjoyed a "companionship in confrontation with cinematic horror" (*ibid.* p. 91). Younger viewers were found to be more responsive to the grotesque and fantastic in horror films, whereas threats of global disasters and the terrorized reactions of protagonists tended to have more effect on older children and adults (*ibid.* pp. 69-75). In contrast to some earlier researchers' findings, Tamborini and Kristen Salomonson, in their paper on "horror's effect on social perceptions and behaviors" (in Weaver and Tamborini 1996: 179-197) feel that fictional horror can "increase the chances that hostile actions will follow from exposure to this genre," if the scene is perceived as aggressive, if the aggressive behavior is seen as justified and rewarded, if the viewer identifies with the aggressor, and in proportion to the "perceived reality of the media event" (*ibid.*, pp. 187-188).

Crane sees the current trend toward excess in the name of "apocalyptic realism" as a quest for an honest depiction of a pain filled world: "In the end, the truest images, and the most entertaining, are those pictures and words that make us hurt" (1994: 168). That may be true for some, but according to Goldstein, the issue of "the degree to which realism enhances or diminishes" the appeal of violence remains unresolved (1998: 221).

Dolf Zillmann and Rhonda Gibson (in Weaver and Tamborini, 1996: 15) note that, far from being a modern deviation, "the telling of horror tales is as old as the human capacity to tell tales." Similarly, Goldstein concludes

that "The portrayal of violent action is inevitable; nevertheless, the limits we place on it, the manner in which we consume it, and the ways we respond to it help to define a culture" (1998: 226).

V. Entertainment and Religion
By W. E. Biernatzki, SJ, Editor, *CRT*

William H. McCabe, SJ. *An Introduction to the Jesuit Theater*. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1983.

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Ritual "Work" vs. Entertaining "Play"

In traditional societies ritual was either identical with, or closely linked to religion. The growth of division of labor in the "organic" societies of the modern world, and attendant secularization in which religion, like other activities, becomes compartmentalized rather than permeating the whole of social life have created purely civil rituals as well as "entertainment." The latter, as was noted above, is a word "derived from O.F. *entretenir*, to 'hold apart,' that is, to create a liminal or liminoid space in which performances may take place" (Turner 1982: 41). Such a separation of "play" from "work," in Turner's terms, is itself a manifestation of the general process of secularization experienced in the course of the growth of civilizations.

As secular entertainments began to emerge in the Renaissance, religious people were most acutely aware of those entertainments' *separateness* from religion, and perceived them as a threat in their very nature, not just in terms of moral deviations they might represent or advocate. Consequently, the relationship of religion with entertainment, in Western civilization, at least, has been a bumpy one.

Since we cannot cover all religions in the brief space available here, our discussion will focus on Roman Catholic interactions with the entertainment media, especially in the United States. While this single case has its unique aspects, the reactions of other religious groups to entertainment's ambiguities are similar enough to that of Catholics for the latter to be fairly representative.

Jesuit Theater of the Renaissance
The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries saw the rise of clearly secular entertainments — some of the plays of Shakespeare, for example. The Jesuit theater common in Catholic countries of the same period, however, retained a strong didactic motivation that identified it more with the "work" of ritual than with the unalloyed "play" of entertainment. The school plays of the Jesuit schools, like those of the Lutheran and English schools which preceded them, had definite social purposes that included training in declamation and other skills as well as moral uplift. They were anything but "art for art's sake."

These Renaissance schools drew heavily on a classical tradition which, especially in its later Roman form, had represented an earlier period of secularization but was now desecularized, to a degree, to accomplish goals that were, in part, religious. William H. McCabe, SJ, described the rationale of the

Jesuit dramas as follows:

> To this current of classical influence, Greek and Roman, was added another, which we may for convenience call the medieval, though to the Jesuit it was deservedly of all time. I mean the element of didacticism, religious and moral, on which I have already dwelt at such length that I need but to refer to it here. ...two aspects of didacticism particularly found expression in the plays: the informing and the edifying; in other words, the scriptural, hagiological, and the doctrinal foundation, and the lessons of faith or conduct built up thereon (McCabe 1983: 56).

Distrust of "Mere Entertainment"

Religion in the West — Protestant as well as Catholic — had a view of life as serious, with little or no room for any form of art that lacked a didactic and morally uplifting purpose. Consequently, an atmosphere of distrust of the popular theater — "mere entertainment" — prevailed among religious people, which was exacerbated by rumors of the dissolute lives supposedly led by actors and artists.

That distrust has continued into the age of cinema and television. Activist conservative Christians, for example, often campaign intensively against films and programs they regard as offensive, with only spotty attempts being made to mobilize the same media to serve Christian goals in a positive way.

Reactions to "Hollywood"

Nineteenth century Catholicism in the United States was permeated with Jansenism — a kind of "Catholic puritanism" that served to reinforce distrust of everything regarded as "frivolous." The movie industry, lacking as it seemed any purpose but to put on a "good show," was seen as "dangerous" from its very beginning, by Catholics, Protestants, and many others. Walsh (1996: 2) traces the first systematic beginnings of a Catholic "struggle to shape the content of American films" to a reaction against government-sponsored films made during the First World War to inform soldiers and others about the dangers of venereal diseases — rightly regarded by the government as a serious threat to military preparedness.

In the early 1920s the Catholic movement was only part of a widespread demand in U.S. society for more effective regulation of film moral standards, including calls for government controls (Black 1994:31-34). Protests by others had little impact. The Catholics, however, were better organized, better able to sustain their campaign, and better placed to get the attention of the industry. That industry was beginning to fear both for its public image — in the context of some spectacular Hollywood sex scandals — and the prospect of possible federal, state, and local government regulation. Therefore, it began to be amenable to some external guidance.

"The Code"

Father Daniel Lord, SJ, who taught drama at Saint Louis University, was asked to draft a self-regulatory code for the motion picture industry in 1930. That code was adopted by the "Hays Office," the regulatory body of the movie industry's trade association, The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA), under the association's president, Will Hays (Black 1994: 1-2). The movies attracted special attention because, as Father Lord put it, "Hollywood films were first and foremost 'entertainment for the multitudes,' and as such carried a 'special *Moral Responsibility*' required of no other medium of entertainment or communication" (Black 1994: 39).

The Legion of Decency

Despite the new code, the industry seemed not to improve, and Father Lord, feeling he had been "used" to create a smoke screen

concealing Hollywood's failure to carry out serious reform, broke with Hays. Rising dissatisfaction with the industry and fear of its effects on children, in particular, led to the foundation by the Catholic bishops of the "Legion of Decency," with its rating system and its annual pledge by Catholics not to patronize objectionable movies.

The Legion and increased self-regulation by a cowed industry tempered the film-makers' inclinations to exploit sex — if not violence — through World War II (Black 1994: 238-239). The Legion, in particular, lost much of its lay Catholic backing soon after the war, changed its name in 1965, and liberalized its classification system, but finally was terminated by the bishops in 1980 (Walsh 1996:2).

The period of moral inhibition in the U.S. film industry that resulted from adoption of the industry's self-regulating code and from pressure from external sources, such as the Legion of Decency, is frequently criticized as having frustrated artistic expression and having discouraged treatment of serious social issues. To some degree that criticism is justified, but the pressure's positive results often are overlooked. Controls of this kind forestalled efforts to impose government controls at the state and national levels, which had been vigorously promoted in many quarters during the early 1920s. Also, rather than totally curbing artistic expression they forced film makers to work within certain limits which may actually have stimulated their ingenuity and subtlety of expression. In addition to the "mere entertainment" at which the American film industry came to excel during those years, serious films like *Citizen Kane* and *Grapes of Wrath* emerged at the same time to challenge the status quo.

A More Positive Approach

Conservative Protestants now have taken over much of the public moral criticism of films and "have adopted many of the Legion's old tactics, including letter-writing campaigns, decency oaths, film morality ratings, boycotts, and pickets" (Walsh 1996: 2-3).

Many (not all) Catholics have learned from past mistakes and now take more nuanced and temperate stances on media morality. Stanley (1999) recently described how a much more positive approach to "the dominant cultural medium of the age" by official Catholic Church bodies in both Italy and the United States has taken root in recent years.

Many also feel that widespread media literacy education will provide the best solution to improving the moral quality of the media — and incidentally its artistic quality, as well — by supplying people with principles and criteria to use in making up their own minds about media content and in teaching their children to make wise choices as they confront today's ever-expanding range of entertainment opportunities (cf., Pungente and Biernatzki 1993).

Playfulness: Structure/Antistructure

A recurrent theme in Victor Turner's writing is the tension between structure and antistructure in human society. It is especially evident in religious contexts. New, "antistructural" religious movements constantly arise to counteract the rigid forms religious structures tend to assume. The formal structure of the religion then reacts by imposing rules to try to rein in the potentially "dangerous" innovations.

Religious orders in the Catholic Church are perhaps one of the clearest examples of this interplay. New religious institutes arise from new insights or "charisms," seen by their founders to meet an otherwise unfilled need in the Church. Saint Francis of Assisi wanted no rules for his followers except the love of God, dedication to extreme poverty, and a charismatic openness to the Spirit; and, in any event, Francis seems to have been incapable of writing a rule. Turner quotes Paul Sabatier (1905: 253) as saying: "Never was man less

capable of making a Rule than Francis." But the Church insisted that Francis' enthusiastic followers should adopt a rule to bring them within a controllable, structured frame of reference (Turner 1969: 142-143, citing Lambert 1961: 33-36; cf., Turner 1982: 50).

Even Saint Ignatius of Loyola felt that it would be ideal if his followers did not need rules, but he recognized that both realism and Church authorities would require them, and so prudently anticipated their demands by writing constitutions for his new Jesuit order (Ganss 1970: 119-129, art. #134).

The "playfulness" which is pure entertainment is another example of an antistructure that is disturbing to established society and therefore is in constant danger of being either suppressed or coopted to do some "useful work" in society. As Turner put it, "Playfulness is a volatile, sometimes dangerously explosive essence, which cultural institutions seek to bottle or contain in the vials of games of competition, chance, and strength, in modes of simulation such as theater, and in controlled disorientation..." (Turner 1983: 233).

There is something of this ongoing dialogue between structure and antistructure to be seen in the innovations of entertainment, on the one hand, and the judgmentalism of both religious and secular critics and of serious students of the media, on the other. This would appear to be one reason for the dearth of scholarship on entertainment mentioned at the beginning of this issue of *Trends*.

Entertainment must appear to *do* something for (or against) society in order to be given serious attention by structure, but in being assigned a serious function it loses something of its playful identity and becomes, to a degree, "work." Entertainment studied or critiqued — and thereby taken seriously — is no longer entirely play, and no longer "entertaining" to the same degree.

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VI. Bibliography

Compiled by Louis Bosshart and Ilaria Macconi

The main goal of this issue of *Trends* is to put together a bibliography of books and articles on entertainment that have been published in the 1990s. Some exceptions are made for older books, mostly when publications are either very rare in a special field or when they are still important for contemporary research in the field of media entertainment. The bibliography is divided into two sub-sections, for fictional and non-fictional entertainment, respectively. Each of those sub-sections is again subdivided by genre.

6.1. Fictional Entertainment

6.1.1. Westerns

Westerns are narratives that tell stories that took place in the West of North-America somewhere between 1850 and 1903. Their conflicts deal with the oppositions of men and nature, law and order and outlaws, good and bad, civilization and wilderness, strong and weak, individuals and societies. These oppositions make the western a genre with strong mythical roots:

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Acknowledgements

Book Reviews

Alexander, Alison, James Owers, and **Rod Carveth** (eds.). *Media Economics: Theory and Practice*. 2nd edition. Mahwah, NJ; London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Pp. ix, 304. ISBN 0 8058 1842 1 (pb.) $34.50.

This reader contains 13 papers under two headings: "Economic Value and Structure," and "Industries and Practices."

Their approach to the topic and its urgency are outlined by the editors in their preface as follows:

This volume examines the process of media economics decision making through an exploration of such topics as industrial restructuring, regulatory constraints on media operations, and changing economic value. Because the structure and value of media industries have changed so rapidly over the last decade, it is important to understand the mechanics of such change so as to provide insight into the processes reproducing contemporary trends in media economics, rather than simply documenting historical patterns (p. viii).

The 15 authors all are based in the United States — most of them at universities — and the focus throughout is on the American situation, although chapter 12 discusses "the economics of international media" (pp. 223-245). Even that chapter is most concerned with international competitiveness of U.S. television companies, which, "continually will have to monitor and adjust their notions about global marketplaces," in the face of rapidly-changing political and economic conditions (pg. 244).

Specific topics of other chapters include concepts and principles of media ownership, regulation, "valuation of media properties," mergers and acquisitions, daily newspapers, television networks, the cable industry, Hollywood, radio, the music industry, and online media.

The latter chapter highlights the difficulties in predicting the extent to which new technologies and services will be adopted, as well as the ways people will actually use them. The long-term viability of a medium depends on its "ability to provide people with something beyond a novelty" (pg. 271, quoting Walker Smith of the Yankelovich Partners, opinion pollsters).

Appendix A describes "media accounting practices"; Appendix B is on "financial management"; and there is a general glossary (pp. 287-296), as well as a special glossary for chapter 7, "Economics of Television Networks" (pp. 148-149). References follow each chapter.   — WEB

Allan, Kenneth. *The Meaning of Culture: Moving the Postmodern Critique Forward.* Westport, CT/London: Praeger (Greenwood Group), 1998.

Sociologists have had conceptual problems in expressing the reality of their subject — society — since before Emil Durkheim was driven to call social reality an "ens sui generis" — a being unlike any other. Society and culture are products of the mind — residing in the awareness of individuals — but, at the same time, they possess a reality apart from the individual — common to the members of a social group and determining the group's behavior, even to decisions about life and death. In his Introduction, Allan touches on some of the attempts that have been made to deal with the kind of reality exhibited by society and culture, especially since the "major breakthrough" represented by the 1966 work of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman, *Social Construction of Reality.* The theme was subsequently taken up by ethnomethomologists, postmodernists, and cultural theorists.

Allan wants to correct a "fundamental error" in contemporary cultural theory that he sees as a survival from an outmoded structuralism: "the structure of the sign system is posited to be the dynamic upon which human action and interaction are dependent." The resulting narrow focus on cultural "text" results only in the study of sign systems and has "little to do with the meaning experienced by the people viewing or using the symbols" (pg. 5).

The author says that the book "is about the human experience of reality...a theoretical exercise that seeks to explain in a general fashion the subjective experience of a social actuality" (pg. 5). This "human reality is a produced reality. ...Our culture tells us what an object or experience means, and that meaning becomes our reality...contingent and dependent upon human action and interaction for its stability and reification" (pg. 5). He argues, "that both sense- and affect-meaning are important to the study of culture but that affect-meaning, and its impact on the production of intersubjective reality, has, on the whole, been slighted by the different perspectives of culture" (pg. 9). He says that his theory is

based upon a need assumption: I posit that the presence of culture will, without fail, produce the

needs for facticity and ontological security and that those needs will drive humans to certain kinds of behaviors that, in turn, both create and meet those needs (pg. 9).

In five chapters Allan addresses, respectively, "the postmodern problem and linguistic-structuralism" (pp. 13-36), "the subjective view and the social construction of sense-meaning" (pp. 37-60), "the moral perspective and the social construction of affect-meaning" (pp. 61-98), "the ideological perspective and the challenge to meaning and reality" (pp. 99-126), and "the production of meaning and reality in postmodernity" (pp. 127-174).

The book's "critique of the way in which culture is approached by most contemporary analyses, in particular, postmodernism" (pg. 127), despite weaknesses stemming from preoccupation with texts and neglect of the micro-level and affect meaning, has resulted in "powerful insights into the makeup of culture, has once again fixed culture as a legitimate field of inquiry in sociology, and has prompted an increase in the use of culture as a variable in a diverse array of research projects" (pg. 128). In pursuing its goal "to generalize some of the dynamics and effects that postmodernism has identified and place those elements within a well-defined theory of meaning construction," the book has, in the author's opinion, shown that postmodernists have "correctly identified some important cultural dynamics but that their conclusions are incorrect" (ibid.).

The postmodernists have overstated the case by concluding that there is a crisis, that reality consists only of text, and that the self is necessarily decentered and fragmented, and they have erred in their exclusive concern with the structure of culture. The postmodern model misses four essential and interrelated elements. First, it does not consider the basic processes through which meaning is created; second, it misses the effect that the contingent nature of culture has upon human beings; third, the model leaves unexplicated the micro-level dynamics of culture; and, fourth, the postmodern model contains an unarticulated, and deficient social psychology (pg. 156).

Allan feels that, like the "fundamental error of structuralism" which it replicates, postmodernism fails to recognized that meaning is produced through human action and interaction, not through the structural relations of the cultural system (pg. 173).

References at the end of the book constitute a bibliography (pp. 175-183).   — WEB

Allen, Mike, and **Raymond W. Preiss** (eds.). *Persuasion: Advances Through Meta-Analysis.* Cresskill, NJ: Hampton, 1998. Pp. viii, 280. ISBN 1 57273 066 8 (hb.) $62.50; 1 57273 067 6 (pb.) $26.50.

Mark A. Hamilton and John E. Hunter begin this book's first chapter, "A Framework for Understanding: Meta-Analyses of the Persuasion Literature," by insisting that meta-analysis is a necessary tool for theory construction because it accurately establishes facts on which sound theory can be based (pg. 1). Meta-analysis uses "the data from multiple studies to generate a more accurate interpretation of findings than is possible by considering the studies one at a time" (pg. 2). In that way, it avoids aspects of the individual studies that hinder the accurate drawing of theoretical inferences.

They comment that in order to correct the imperfections, or "artifacts" that are inevitable in all research papers the imperfections must first be discovered and admitted. But a "catch 22" effect causes authors to insist that their studies are "perfect," since any admission of imperfection can cause the paper to be rejected for publication, given "the virulence of current publication review practice... [and the consequent] failure to correct for study imperfections means that study outcomes will be inaccurate" (pg. 2).

Applying sophisticated methodologies to their analysis of many projects, meta-analysts can correct for sampling error, measurement error, defects in construct validity, the researcher's dichotomizing of continuous variables, and failures to adequately restrict the range of applicability of the data (pp. 3-4).

Subsequent chapters address the "meta-analysis of controlled message designs," "fear-arousing persuasive appeals," "the persuasive effects of

testimonial assertion evidence," "comparing the persuasive effectiveness of one- and two-sided message," "the effect of language intensity on receiver evaluations of message, source, and topic," "forewarning and persuasion," "the effect of distraction during persuasion," "an analysis of the sleeper effect," "the use of rhetorical questions," "the efficacy of powerful/powerless language on attitudes and source credibility," drawing "explicit and implicit conclusions in persuasive messages," "the persuasive impact of incentives" in counterattitudinal advocacy," "evaluating the advice offered by the tool users," and, finally, "evaluating and using meta-analytic knowledge claims."

In that final chapter, James Price Dillard, comments that

> This is a heady time to be a student of persuasion. The application of meta-analytic methods to the persuasion literature promises to yield estimates of message effects that are more precise and more systematically derived than anything that we have seen before (pg. 257).

Dillard — in effect, meta-analyzing meta-analyses — says that it would be "wrongheaded" to regard any meta-analysis as having said the "last word" on a research area. Rather, "it will usually be better to treat meta-analytic findings as guidance for future research rather than problems that have been fully solved" (pg. 267).

The 15 contributors all are communication scholars based at U.S. universities, specializing, for the most part, in aspects of interpersonal communication or closely-related fields. — WEB

Christenson, Peter G., and **Donald F. Roberts**. *It's Not Only Rock and Roll: Popular Music in the Lives of Adolescents.* Cresskill, NJ: Hampton, 1998. Pp. xi, 305. ISBN 1 57273 142 7 (hb.) $65.00; 1 57273 143 5 (pb.) $22.95.

A research questionnaire involving one of the authors once asked Northern California high school students which communication medium they would want to have if stranded on a desert island. Over 80% chose a music category (including radio, used chiefly for music by adolescents) as one of their top three choices, and over half the 11th graders put music media first (pg. 33). Music is "at center stage during adolescence," according to the authors, "both in terms of time spent and intensity of involvement" (*ibid.*).

Classifying genres of popular music poses a challenge to the authors, who note that "there may be 25, 40, or 100 genres, and the categorization differs according to the age of the one doing the classifying." However, "attitudes toward different music types are not isolated from one another, but are structured and organized, grouped psychologically and sociologically into what one might call *metagenres*, that is, constellations of music styles and labels that coalesce in some way" (pg. 76), according to various principles. Christenson and Roberts feel that "the appropriate place to look for the deeper structure of popular music taste is in studies using adolescents as respondents" (pg. 77). One such study in Yorkshire, in 1972, found an absolute distinction between rock and pop music, with social class seeming to play a role. "Pop" music was working class, female, and young in its appeal and used "for dancing at the disco and hanging out on the street corner" (*ibid.*). "Rock" was for "an older group of middle-class males, either in or on their way to college" (*ibid.*). At the time, it was considered harsh, political, and for foreground, not background: "..the audience sat down to listen" (pg. 78). In the early 1970s, the pop/rock dichotomy, in some form, was international and seems to have carried over through the intervening years, although a third "cluster" of "more 'serious,' non-youth-oriented types of music" has tended to form a distinct and enduring category (*ibid.*).

The authors describe their chief purpose in writing the book as follows:

> To a great extent, this book is about whether music is "just music," as many would have us believe, or whether it plays a much more central role in the lives of young people — indeed, has the potential to exert a significant influence on them (pg. 1).

Another perspective on adolescents' choices of music sees them as a manifestation of the "'storm and stress' model of adolescence," in which "the predominant emotional state of adolescent youth is

crisis and their primary motivational state one of rebellion against adult authority" (pg. 7). Popular music becomes "the crucial battlefront in the war between the generations — and one can derive a common conception that often takes this form: ' Kids won't listen to any music that doesn't make their parents mad ' " (ibid.). But the authors feel that view "runs counter to a great amount of developmental research" (pg. 8). Similarly, blanket statements by those who say, on the one hand, that certain kinds of music are intrinsically harmful to youths, and the music industry's view, on the other hand, insisting that "music is ' just ' entertainment or that lyrics are not the primary draw," must both be subjected to critical evaluation (ibid.).

After the Introductory chapter one, the book's chapters deal with "the nature of adolescence: myths and realities," "equipment for living: adolescent uses of popular music," "fragmented rock: music preferences and allegiances," "the messages in the music," "making sense of popular lyrics," and "did the devil, the drummer, or the ' doo-wop ' make ' em do it: the effects of exposure to music media."

The final chapter "Pop Policy: What Should We Do about Popular Music?" begins by summarizing some assumptions supported by the earlier chapters which should be considered in forming policies concerning popular music:

> The music media influence the lives of adolescents in a number of ways. Some of the effects of music use are kpositive or beneficial (e.g., the relief of loneliness) and some negative or harmful (deafness seems an obvious case in point). Furthermore, whatever the influences may be, people — be they government, industry, parents, teachers, or adolescents — have considerable power to control or channel them (pg. 225).

They wonder "whether the influence of music is big enough to warrant intervention," and conclude that while "it appears certain that popular music is a highly influential agent of socialization for many American youth...the question of effect size is more speculative with music than it is with television" (pg. 226). To coin a phrase, "More research is needed" (ibid.). They note, however, that even were the research available, "public and private policy often proceed without much regard for it anyway" (ibid.). Policy is then discussed in terms of the roles of government, the music industry, the family, and schools (pp. 226-251).

The publication references constitute a substantial bibliography (pp. 253-277), and a section of song references lists them by title and notes the performer who first made each song popular, the album title, recording company, album serial number, song writer and lyricist, year of publication, and publisher, insofar as information is available (pp. 279-281).   — WEB

Hardy, Phil (ed.). *The BFI Companion to Crime.* Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. 352. ISBN 0 520 21538 9 (pb.) $29.95.

Richard Attenborough's Foreword to this British Film Institute catalogue of crime movies notes that, although crime movies have seen their greatest development in the United States a "wealth of crime films" have been produced in Russia, Japan, Brazil, France, Africa, Italy, and especially in Britain and other English-speaking countries.

In his Introduction, Hardy says that the intention of this book is not to explore "the reasons why crime is so prominent on our television and cinema screens, and in our newspapers and popular fiction," but, rather, to survey and classify "the main types and examples of crime fiction in the cinema" (pg. 11).

Although the genre had its origins in the literary fiction of the late nineteenth century, the editor notes that the film medium "was not best suited to the minutiae of detection as practised in literary works. But what it could provide par excellence was both a comprehensive depiction of a criminal milieu in all its shocking but fascinating detail, and an insight into the mind of the criminal himself..." *(ibid.)*. The representations of daring criminals and recreations of the underworld that developed during the 1920s set a pattern for today's "refinements of this initial staking out of the terrain" *(ibid.)*.

The Introduction sketches the developing of crime films from the gangster movies of the prohibition era through *film noire* to the more psychologically and socially nuanced productions

that have marked the more recent development of the genre. The book contains over 500 entries, illustrated by 500 black and white and 16 color photographs. Entries are generally alphabetical, by title, but some of the entries are generic — "Actors," "Alcohol," "The American Cop Movie" — merging discussions of several individual films that fit each category.

Since a majority of today's films seem to have some relation to crime, selection posed a problem. The editor describes his selection policy as follows:

> When considering where to draw the line as regards which films count as crime films, I have tended towards inclusion rather than exclusion. Thus the book includes many films which are on the borders of the genre: parodies, works of science fiction such as *Blade Runner*, films such as *Psycho* which are also seminal to the modern horror film. ...It does not provide career summaries for film makers; crime films, unlike say the Western or the horror film, have not lent themselves to specialisation of the sort which identifies a film-maker with a particular genre... On the other hand there are many fiction writers who are closely identified with the genre, and these have their own entries when their work has been a significant source for the cinema... television productions are only noted in passing (pg. 24).

There is no index.   — WEB

Moore, Roy L., Ronald T. Farrar, and Erik L. Collins. *Advertising and Public Relations Law*. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Pp. x, 499. ISBN 0 8058 1679 8 (hb.) $57.50.

This is a media law textbook designed, as the authors say in their Preface, "to reflect the distinctive needs of advertising and public relations professionals" (pg. ix). They go on to list some of the book's special emphases, designed to respond to those needs:
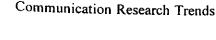
> ...(a) two entire chapters devoted to the commercial speech doctrine, including its history

and development; (b) separate chapters on public interest speech, on professional advertising and promotion, on product liability, and trademarks, patents and trade secrets; (c) extensive discussions of how federal agencies beyond the Federal Trade Commission regulate advertising and promotion and of product disparagement; (d) three chapters focusing on privacy rights and concerns; and (e) an appendix with model release forms, professional codes of ethics, a diagram of the United States court system, a copy of the United States Constitution, and the copyright and trademark registration forms. Our concluding chapter deals with traditional journalistic concerns such as privilege, free-press-versus-fair-trial issues, and access (pp. ix-x).

This material is presented in 17 chapters and 6 appendices, plus a table of cases. The 17 chapters are distributed among six sections: "The Commercial Speech Doctrine," "Governmental Regulation of Advertising and Commercial Speech," "Prior Restraints on Advertising, Public Relations, and Commercial Speech," "Commercial Speech Torts," "Intellectual Property," and "Journalistic and Legal Issues." The "table of cases" is an index to cases referred to in the text, and the book also has a general index.

The discussion of commercial speech notes that the freedom of commercial speech (and publishing, etc.) in the United States always has been interpreted by the courts in less protective terms than the First Amendment protection accorded non-commercial speech, but the issue is so nuanced that court decisions over the years have varied considerably, sometimes allowing more freedom from regulation, and sometimes less (pp. 20-45). Reviewing some of the reasons for this differing treatment of commercial speech, the authors cite authorities who have singled out the "profit-making motive for speaking," the tendency for commercial speech to be "hyperbolic" rather than factual, the fact that "commercial speech is 'verifiable' and therefore held to higher standards than other speech," and the "more durable" character of commercial speech, which is motivated by profit and therefore "not as easily chilled by regulations as other forms of speech" (pg. 46).

Appendix A is devoted to texts of "Professional Codes," including the "Code of Professional

Standards for the Practice of Public Relations" (pp. 420-428), "Standards of Practice of the American Association of Advertising Agencies" (pp. 428-429), "Outdoor Advertising Association of America Code of Industry Principles" (pg. 430-431), "Better Business Bureau Code" (pg. 431), "Self-Regulatory Guidelines for Children's Advertising council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc." (pp. 432-433), "The Direct Marketing Association Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice" (pp. 433-442), "Code of Ethics, Adopted by the Society of Professional Journalists, September 21, 1996" (pp. 442-445), "Radio-Television News Directors Association Code of Broadcast News Ethics" (pp. 444-445), and "The Louisville *Courier-Journal* Policy Statement on Ethics" (pp. 445-446).   — WEB

National Alliance of Media Education Working Group (NAME). *The National Media Education Directory. 1997*. San Francisco: The National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, 1997. Looseleaf binder. No ISBN. n.p. (Contact information: The National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, The Ninth Street Media Complex, 356 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-3809, USA. Phone: +1 (415) 431-1391; Fax: +1 (415) 431-1392; e-mail: < namac@igc.apc.org >.

This directory of people and organizations interested in media literacy education in the United States is described by its project director and editor, Karon Sherarts, in her Introduction, as follows:

> The National Alliance for Media Education's National Media Education Directory is a resource many of us have been eagerly awaiting. Its purpose is to compile and share material about current practices in the rapidly emerging field of media education. Across the US, a growing number of educators, artists, school districts, organizations, and media arts centers are providing access to media education through a variety of strategies. We hear bits and pieces about programs at gatherings and through publications, word of mouth, and online — but it's difficult to get a clear picture. The Directory helps bring the components of the national picture into focus.

Each potential contributor was asked to create a page, according to a "template" furnished by NAME, which would include its address and contact information (contact person, phone, fax, e-mail, web page), and its own self-description under four headings: "Media Education Goals," "Programs and Activities," "Resources, Materials and Expertise," and "Issues and Dreams."

The 221 respondents are numbered and included alphabetically by state or territory. Appendix I is an alphabetical index of entries, Appendix II describes the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, Appendix III lists State Arts Agencies with their addresses and contact persons, Appendix IV lists contact persons and phone numbers by state for the Family and Community Critical Viewing Project, Appendix V lists information about eight national film/video youth festivals, and Appendix VI gives online addresses for organizations providing media literacy resources.

The project was supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and is seen by the editor as "a work-in-progress. NAME hopes it will be used as a tool to further the levels of dialogue, questioning, and collaboration that we need to continue building a strong, inclusive community" (Introduction).   — WEB

Ridgman, Jeremy (ed.). *Boxed Sets: Television Representation of the Theatre*. Luton, UK: The Arts Council of England/John Libbey Media/ University of Luton Press, 1998. Pp. viii, 219. ISBN 1 86020 519 4 (pb.) £14.95.

As the numbers of channels and length of available broadcasting/cable/satellite hours expand television's appetite for content becomes more and more insatiable. Much of that content lacks any shred of quality. However, one source of quality material has been recognized and mined for adaptation to TV since the beginnings of that medium: the theater.

Stage plays have provided a rich source for quality television throughout the last half of the 20th century, even though they cannot go far to fill the new technology's demand for time-filling content nor to displace much of the low-quality material to which television resorts to fill out its schedules. Productions written for the "legitimate"

stage nevertheless pose challenges to those who would adapt them either to cinema or television. Furthermore, the existence of television and its intensive interaction with theater and cinema has brought about changes in the older dramatic forms, as Will Bell points out in his Preface to Ridgman's book:

It was Bertolt Brecht who said that "the old forms of communication are not unaffected by the development of new ones, nor do they survive alongside them. The filmgoer develops a different way of reading stories. But the man who writes the stories is a filmgoer too." That theatre and television have had an uneasy relationship is not the question. The question is the extent to which a technology develops an aesthetic that has a symbiotic relationship to its, sometimes, reluctant partner. In truth, television has had a tremendous affect [s.i.c.] on writing for the theatre as well as directing and acting. The theatre has returned these creative encroachments with equal verve. *Boxed Sets* looks at this relationship and shows that both theatre and television are better for it (pg. vii).

The book's focus is totally British, and the writers all are UK-based. Most of the productions they discuss are those of the BBC, with some attention to Channel 4; although Bob Millington devotes his chapter (pp. 187-198) to the ways London Weekend Television's *The South Bank Show* (ITV, Channel 3) has dealt with the theater throughout its 20 years as "the only generic Arts documentary to hold a regular slot on a popular channel" (pg. 187). That program has concentrated on three areas of theater interest, according to Millington: "championing of male writers," "theatre practitioners whose work spans several media," and "its desire to elevate forms of popular culture to the level of art" (pg. 189).

Other chapters include Neil Taylor's "A History of the Stage Play on BBC Television" (pp. 23-37), Jason Jacobs' discussion of how "shot and scene" in television have had to evolve away from the "photographed stage plays" of early television (pp. 39-61); the medieval mystery plays broadcast by Channel 4 in 1984 (pp. 62-88); local cultures on national TV, exemplified by Scottish plays (pp. 89-105); drama about minority and marginal cultures (pp. 107-127).

The ways in which the Royal Court Theatre's 1982 production of Caryl Churchill's play "Top Girls" was changed for the BBC2 *Performance* series, in 1991, losing something in its altered use of space, is discussed by Val Taylor (pp. 129-139). She says that

The discourse of space is, in this comparative instance, missing a core structural element of its grammar. If a stage play carries meanings encoded within such a specifically *theatrical* discourse of space then the subsequent absence of a key element of its grammar may be sufficient to modify or to subvert the reception of those meanings (pg. 131).

In other chapters, John Adams intends to concentrate "on a theatrical concept of performance and, with reference to film and theatre, explore ways in which television fictions have developed distinct tendencies in terms of an aesthetic of screen performance" (pg. 141); Peter Reynolds discusses "Actors and Television," commenting that "although television gives work to actors who might otherwise be unemployed, I have argued that its influence over theatrical performance practice is generally negative"; while Carol Banks and Graham Holderness ponder the ups and downs of the presentation of Shakespeare's historical plays on television, remarking on an "'epic' interpretation ...[that] satisfies the interests of the culturally and politically conservative" (pg. 182).

The book closes with an interview with Simon Curtis, producer of the BBC series *Performance* since 1991 (pp. 199-208).   — WEB

Steemers, Jeanette (ed.). *Changing Channels: The Prospects for Television in a Digital World.* Rhetoric and Society series. Luton, UK: John Libbey Media/University of Luton Press, 1998. Pp. viii, 156. ISBN 1 86020 544 5 (pb.) £14.95.

The editor begins her introduction by remarking on the "astonishing" way in which television has become "an inescapable and central component of modern society" in a relatively brief time. She stresses that "the television landscape has experienced its most radical changes since the early

1980s," converting it from (in Britain) a public resource into, among other things, something "little different from any other consumer product" (pg. 1). The explosion of new digital technologies in the 1990s is changing television even more, and is adding the new dimension of its convergence with other communications media and with "the computing and telecommunications sectors" *(ibid.)*.

Steemers quotes Nicholas Negroponte's statement that: "The key to the future of television is to stop thinking about television as television" *(ibid.)*. Instead, many expect it to become "a 'random access medium' alongside other forms of audio-visual and text-based content" *(ibid.)*. There are, however, many problematic elements involved in trying to predict television's future. The convergence of media and technologies creates an increased need to consider the interactions among such factors as "ownership and control, media access, influence and effects, and issues of representation and identity" in their quasi-ecological interactions, rather than in isolation *(ibid.)*. Steemers says that: "This volume constitutes an attempt to cross some of these boundaries, and address not only the impact which policy, regulation and technology are having on television directly, but also the impact of digital distribution on television's position within a broader communications framework" *(ibid.)*.

The nine contributors all are based in Britain. At least four of them have had extensive experience with continental European media organizations. They represent a wide range of professional expertise, including media economics, journalism, and policy research.

In their chapter, "Digital Television between the Economy and Pluralism," Peter Humphries and Matthias Lang conclude that digital television "will come in the end," despite high initial costs and even though it is unclear that the viewer will derive any benefits from it other than multiplication of channels. They foresee increased pressure on public broadcasters to justify continued license fee funding (pp. 30-31).

Diall Duffy, Johnathan Davis, and Adam Daum begin their discussion of "the economics of digital television" (chapter 2, pp. 37-58) by noting two ways digitization affects television: by changing the technology used in recording and broadcasting programming, and by making a greater amount of

programming available by means of compression techniques (pg. 37). They foresee little competition unless costs are reduced and they also see a need for operators "to have some control or linkage with content if they are to extract enough profit to cover investment costs" (pg. 57).

In his chapter 3, "This is not television...." Rod Allen explores "some frameworks for thinking about ways in which the new technology can be used," as well as "some of the business and financial issues which will help to shape the digital future" (pg. 59).

Thomas Gibbons examines arguments for de-regulating or re-regulating the system in the British context (pp. 73-96).

The editor, in chapter 5, looks at the prospects for public service broadcasting in the "digital age" (pp. 97-123).

Finally, in chapter 6, David Hancock looks at digital television from the perspective of European policy-makers "in order to put the situation in the UK into context" (pg. 125). Despite "confusing" reactions from the European Commission, Hancock says "that in the main audio-visual players are convinced of its [digital television's] viability and are prepared to take on losses in order to reap even greater rewards" (pg. 138).

A general bibliography is appended (pp. 141-149), in addition to references after each chapter.
— WEB

Stillar, Glenn F. *Analyzing Everyday Texts: Discourse, Rhetoric, and Social Perspectives.* (Rhetoric and Society Series). Thousand Oaks, CA/London/New Delhi: Sage, 1998. Pp. x, 206. ISBN 0 7619 0060 8 (hb.) $42.95; 0 7619 0061 6 (pb.) $24.50.

"Text" implies a written form of communication, even though the meaning of the word has been extended by some in recent years to include such modes of expression as oral discourse, dance, ritual process, etc. Stillar acknowledges that texts are "not limited to... language systems," but he insists that they always *involve* language. So, he operationally defines "text...[as] the record of discoursal processes involving, but not limited to, language systems" (pg. 11). "Everyday" written texts are those we encounter in the normal course

of life, such as personal notes, brochures, advertisements, and reports," rather than those that place special literary, political, legal, religious, or other more-than-ordinary claims on our attention (pg. 1).

The author sees each text of this kind as having three characteristics or functions, "no matter how mundane" the text may be:

> ...they all (a) exhibit complexity in terms of the linguistic resources we draw upon to make and understand them, (b) perform critical rhetorical functions for the participants involved, and (c) powerfully summon and propagate the social orders in which we live (pg. 1).

Consequently, after a preliminary chapter describing everyday texts and the purposes of the book, Stillar draws together the description of his analytical into three chapters corresponding to those three "vocabularies for investigating text" (pg. 107): "The Resources of Discourse Analysis," "The Resources of Rhetorical Theory," and "The Resources of Social Theory" (pp. 14-106)

When discussing rhetorical theory, the author employs many of the insights of Kenneth Burke; and in his discussion of the analytical resources of social theory, he places considerable reliance on the work of Pierre Bourdieu — particularly Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* — and on that of Anthony Giddens.

In chapter 5, Stillar conducts extended analyses of three cases of "everyday texts": an illustrated Saturn automobile advertisement, Royal Bank of Canada financial advice booklets, and "a progress report concerning a 6-year-old boy's participation in a 'fluency program for preschoolers' conducted at a university speech and hearing clinic" (pp. 107-178). Discourse, rhetorical, and social analysis are employed on each of the three texts to show, according to the author, "that, however mundane the texts are, the stakes are high for everyone involved" (pg. 170).

Chapter 6 is devoted to "Integrating Theoretical Resources and Critical Practices," knitting together the three theories — discoursal, rhetorical, and social — and showing how they can clarify our understanding of "the symbolic act," which Kenneth Burke is quoted as calling, "the dancing of an attitude" (pg. 179).

The references constitute a brief bibliography (pp. 197-199). — WEB

Art, almost by definition, requires innovation — something new. Consequently, any critique of an art work is to some extent venturing into unexplored territory, where the criteria derived from past experience no longer quite apply. Together with the great diversity of the art and entertainment field, this can pose a real challenge for the newly assigned reviewer for a newspaper or other medium.

In his Preface, Titchener notes that a complicating factor in recent newspaper coverage of the arts is the "growing trend toward the use of part-time writers rather than regular staff members in reviewing the arts" (pg. vii). On the one hand, this trend could enable the papers to use critics who have specialized knowledge well suited to a particular work, and who therefore would be less daunted by its innovative dimensions. On the other hand, it could lead to the employment of part-time critics who lack the broader perspective a full-time arts editor might bring to a particular evaluation.

In chapter 1, the author distinguishes between three kinds of people who, at first glance, may all appear to be "critics," but whose roles and expertises differ. The *experienced critic* specializes in only one art form and generally is limited to reviewing new openings and producing "occasional provocative, longer essays on the arts" — an activity properly called *criticism* (pp. 1-2). A *reviewer*, or entertainment writer, by contrast, is a generalist, required to report on a wide range of art and entertainment forms (pg. 2). *Part-time reviewers* may typically "have considerable expertise in the art they are reviewing, but limited experience, if any, in the inner workings of the newspaper office" (pg. 2). The same chapter goes on to describe in greater detail their differing roles and how they integrate into the arts/entertainment world and into the newspaper's organization.

Chapter 2 describes the arts with which a reviewer might be asked to deal. They include not

only the "seven lively arts" — "architecture, art, dance, drama, literature, music, and sculpture" — but also radio-television and film, "the *modern arts,*" and probably photography, computer art, and "sculpture made of found objects," as well (pp. 17-18).

Chapter 3 presents "a method for reviewing the arts," centered on "the five-part review" consisting of "a strong opening, a strong closing, identification, summary, and opinion," which a majority of successful reviews are said to incorporate (pg. 31).

In chapter 4, the author suggests that the beginning reviewer might want to start with film, "where everyone is an expert" (pg. 40). Some aspects of film calling for the reviewer's critical attention are accuracy, believability, credibility, "pace, climax, and resolution," and clarity (pp. 50-53).

Television, dealt with in chapter 5, is "the awesome medium," which "changes too quickly for anyone to be able to make pronouncements about it that will stand the test of time" (pg. 61).

Music, according to chapter 6, is a "divided art... with a clear distinction between the old and the new, to say nothing of the many further divisions within each camp" which pose a special challenge to the reviewer (pg. 71).

Chapter 7 discusses drama, which can be approached by the reviewer from two directions: that of its physical aspects and that of artistic and creative considerations — most often focused on the acting (pg. 92).

In chapter 8, Titchener notes that "the critic rejoices in the dance," whereas the reviewer "may evidence more apprehension than anticipation" when confronted with an assignment to cover a dance performance." Dance "at its most complex... is a combination of music, theater, athletics, emotion, and expression...[which] can be a great deal of fun for the new reviewer, but it can also be frightening" (pg. 103).

Subsequent chapters address the special challenges of architecture, graphic arts — "It's pretty, but is it art?" — sculpture, and literature reviews.

Chapter 13 is devoted to "the ethics of the business," with attention to libel, defamation, the special case of public figures, invasion of privacy, conflicts of interest, "wise guy writing," the entertainment writer as journalistic watchdog, and the fact that critics themselves attract criticism and must know appropriate ways to respond to it (pp. 162-172).

Chapter 14, new to the second edition, discusses a problem the author feels has become much greater since the first edition of the book appeared: "a disconcerting rash of violent acts connected with the popular arts" (pg. vii). Accurate reporting of such popular music forms as hip-hop, rap, and gangsta rap, requires that the reporter have a broad knowledge of social and political realities that go far beyond the music itself (pp. 173-178).

In the Epilogue, Titchener remarks that the reviewer "should try to remain unknown," since he or she functions best when his or her presence is not known to those being reviewed (pg. 179).

A reading list suggests a few key works in each category to help the new reviewer cover architecture, art and sculpture, dance, drama, film, literature, music, and television.   — WEB

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