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Children and Television

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The Status of Research on Children and Television

Anyone who has been trying to understand the relationship of children and youth to the media will tell you this is an exciting time to be involved. Collaboration and the exchange of information come more readily to those of us fortunate enough to have access to email and Internet services, while international conferences allow us, as policy-makers, producers, teachers, parents, and scholars, to come together to share ideas and gain perspective in ways that had been more difficult in the past.¹

This essay is an attempt to look at some of the issues currently under discussion, such as the ways violence on television affects children and ways television's influence on children might be changed for the better, but it is in no way a comprehensive review of the research or work in the field of children and television. For example, a review of the research on children and media in the United States in process by the author has generated more than 400 citations in U.S. publications alone since 1990. However, this will be an attempt to introduce the reader to some of the most current work in the field.² In conversations with scholars, participation in conferences, and a scouring of journals and publications it became evident that little has changed in the questions under debate. As we will see, what is changing is the way in which we approach these questions. Traditional effects research is beginning to give way to a cultural studies approach that considers the complex nature of peoples', including children's, relationship to the media.

¹ For convenience, the website address is most often listed for the resources in this essay. However postal addresses, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses are also available for all. Full contact information is included at the end for resources to complete address listings for many of the organizations discussed.

² Unfortunately much of the work presented here is from the English-language countries. An attempt to broaden the range of information globally was thwarted by language. However, what little work from non-English language countries was available demonstrated the overwhelming influence of American and European scholars. Many of the same names were repeated in available bibliographies.

The "Dangers" of Media

Historically, concerns about children's media use have come from the notion that media [beginning with penny dreadfuls and dime novels and extending to computers and video games] have had a harmful "effect" on children and that it is our responsibility as adults to protect them from the dangers of these media. This has led to a concern with social issues such as violence, role modeling, and other questions about the media's role in behavior.

Based on this review of the research on children and television, these are still very much the issues *du jour*. However, as Gauntlett argues, it is time we moved beyond concerns of simple effects to an understanding of media influences. This review supports his claim that "the largest proportion of 'effects' studies have been into aggression – specifically, the hypothesis that the viewing of acts of aggression or violence on the television screen causes people (or young people) to act in similar ways" (1996: 2). He goes on to say that it is of far more concern than "political attitudes, language use, awareness of current affairs" and I would add role-modeling and diversity. Others support this (see Jenkins 1997, for example) as does the review of research presented here. There is still work being done on gender issues such as body-image and career choice, and language acquisition or cognitive processing, but overwhelmingly the chief concern appears to be with television violence.

Media Literacy/Media Education

The second area that appears to dominate the field as we attempt to find ways to control the influence of media messages is media literacy/media education. Here the debate is about the merits of different ways to understand and explicate information. Simply put, the first, media literacy, is defined as the "the ability of a citizen to access, analyze, and produce information for specific outcomes" (Aufderheide, 1993: 2). Built on a protectionist model of media understanding – designed to "protect" children from the evils of the media – the pedagogical goals are to give students the skills to analyze messages.

Media education on the other hand recognizes that social change is fundamental to the understanding of media representations. Most often built on the philosophy of Paulo Freire that takes a "questioning stance," media education is "an analysis of both the form and content of mediated communication ... [it] has some potential to balance social inequalities and is a fruitful way to put the mechanisms of democracy into motion" (Tyner 1998: 30).

In our review we find that there are several dimensions to the discussion. For example, where von Feilitzen draws the line between Western and non-Western countries (1999: 23) others see the distinction between consumer and citizen with media literacy as a way toward training discriminating consumers and media education as a means to develop critical citizens.

Policy and International Scope

These two areas, violence research and media education, are the areas that will be emphasized here. In addition there is a growing attention to policy issues and cross national studies as represented by the work of Livingstone (1998a, 1998b) and Groebel (1997). Both have consequences for the future of research on children and television. There are several other research approaches that should also be acknowledged, some of which will be discussed later in this paper.

Children's Media: A Big Business

Until recently, research on the children's media industry was uncommon. In the United States, except for rare studies that involved the production of children's programming, concentrating on public service broadcasting, such as the Children's Television Workshop (Harris 1999: 234-240) or William Melody's 1973 analysis of the children's television industry, *Children's Television: The Economics of Exploitation* (1973 [1977]), the focus has been on media effects or media content.

Beginning with the work of Ellen Seiter (1993), there has been an increasing interest in the social and political climate that has allowed for particular choices. This is best exemplified by the work of Kunkel (1992), Hendershot (1998), and Pecora (1998). Where Kunkel's research generally addresses policy decisions that influence programming and advertising, Hendershot's book,

Saturday Morning Censors, looks at the historical and cultural context of children's television. As a part of the growing influence of cultural studies on children's research, she challenges the notion of the naive or innocent child (see also Jenkins 1998). Building on Melody's model of economic relations between the television industry and the advertising industry, my book, *The Business of Children's Entertainment* (Pecora 1998), considers the evolution of the child audience and the increasing complexities of the economic marketplace for children's leisure.

At a 1997 Symposium on children's television David Buckingham and Hannah Davies (1998) addressed the changing marketplace in Britain and, like Hendershot, contradicted the long held belief that children are a naive audience. This theme is expanded upon in their book *Children's Television in Britain: History, Discourse, and Policy* (1999).

The work of Wendy Keys at the Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy, Griffith University (e-mail interview, December 1998, and see "Resources") brings together policy process and production practice in her work on Australian children's programming.

As the world of children's entertainment becomes increasingly global, these issues must be, and are, being considered on a global scale. Keys' work that includes the study of international co-productions of the Australian television industry is one example of this. Another is the work of Ruth Zanker at the New Zealand Broadcasting School (e-mail interview, December 1998) on the "globalization and commodification of media and advertising and its impact on local range and variety for children in New Zealand." Research such as this is essential as global interaction intensifies.

Finally, the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania in the United States has generated several reports on the American television industry, particularly in response to recent deregulation (1998, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c).

A World-Wide View

The global nature of children's television must continue to be considered in the future, in terms of the economics of the industry, comparative studies of technological availability and media use, and the cultural and social implications of non-

indigenous messages and representations. A recent cross-national study from the Media Research Group at the London School of Economics and Political Science, "Children, Young People and the Changing Media Environment," modeled on the early work of Himmelweit, Oppenheim, and Vince (1958), and Schramm, Lyle, and Parker (1961), uses various methods "to capture the idea of context, including those of social ecology, the social environment and the field" (Livingstone 1998a: 439), in an attempt to understand contemporary children's relationship to media (Livingstone 1998b, 1999a, 1999b).

At this writing there are 12 European countries involved in the London-based study: Belgium (Flanders), Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. A study modeled on this project has also been completed in New Zealand, according to Leland (e-mail interview, 1998). Central to the London study is locating media use in the context of everyday life (Livingstone 1998: 439). Like the work of Jensen (1999) and Hendershot (1998), this project is a "child-centered, constructivist approach [arguing] that children and young people – both individually and as a market – not only respond to but also influence changes in their immediate environment, including their mediated environment" (1998: 441). A preliminary report on several of these studies (on, respectively, young people's media use in Britain and the Netherlands; old and new media use by young people in Flanders, Germany and Sweden; domestic media among Flemish, French, Italian, and Swedish children and teenagers; Finnish, Spanish, and Swiss cases; and peer groups and media use among children and adolescents in Denmark, France, and Israel) is available in a special issue of the *European Journal of*

Communication (Livingstone 1998b).

One other comprehensive study that should be mentioned has been carried out in St. Helena Island in the South Atlantic (Charlton, Coles, Lovemore 1997; Charlton and O'Bey 1997; Charlton and Löhr 1999). The scholars on this project were able to gather information from the children of the island before the introduction of television and again after television had been introduced in 1995. Using surveys, observation, diaries, discussions and interviews, and teachers' comments, those involved in this study have been able to monitor the introduction of television technology in one of the last areas to receive this cultural force.

The Future of the Field

Recently in a round-table discussion organized by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, scholars in the field of children's media were brought together to discuss the future of the field. They commented on the magnitude of the changes in children's television brought about by changes in regulation, such as the three-hour rule in the United States that requires local television stations to program an average of three hours of age-specific programming for children per week (Campbell 1999: 733). In addition, these scholars addressed the future of television research and included concerns about the influence of English-language television on indigenous cultures, according to Amy Jordan of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania (e-mail interview, August 1999).

The following two sections of this essay consider the current research on two issues: television violence and media education.

I. Television Violence Research

Barker, Martin and Julian Petley (Eds.). *Ill Effects: The Media/Violence Debate*. London: Routledge, 1997.

Buckingham, David. "Doing Them Harm? Children's Conceptions of the Negative Effects of Television" in Karen Swan, Carla Meskill, Steven DeMaio, editors, *Social Learning from Broadcast Television*. Cresskill NJ: Hampton Press, Inc., 1998a.

Carlsson, Ulla and Cecilia von Feilitzen. *Children and Media Violence*. Göteborg Sweden: The UNESCO

International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen at Nordicom, 1998.

Cronström, Johan. *Bibliography: Children and Media Violence Research: A Selection (1989—)*. Göteborg Sweden: The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen at Nordicom, 1998.

Groebel, Jo. *The UNESCO Global Study on Media Violence: A Joint Project of UNESCO, the World Organization of the Scout Movement and Utrecht University*. Paris: UNESCO, 1998.

Groebel, Jo. "Young People's Perception of Violence on the Screen – A Joint Project of UNESCO, the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and Utrecht University – Summary Report Presented to the General Conference of UNESCO," Paris, 1997.

Gunter, Barrie and Jackie Harrison. *Violence on Television: An Analysis of Amount, Nature, Location and Origin of Violence on British Programmes*. London: Routledge, 1998.

National Television Violence Study: Volume 1. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1997 .

National Television Violence Study: Volume 2. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998a.

National Television Violence Study: Volume 3. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998b.

Springhall, John. *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics*. New York: St. Martin's Press. 1997.

Thompson, Kenneth. *Moral Panics*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Questions of media violence have been the central issue in the debate on children's relationship to the media. Historically, no other issue has generated an equal amount of interest or research. As children in war-torn countries are confronted with real and televised images, children in the United States take up guns against their peers, and children everywhere encounter mediated images of violence, it will continue to be a focal point to the debate on children and television.

In the late 1990s at least four major projects were published on the topic and, while there are other important studies on children and television violence, these four can serve as examples of the most contemporary thinking on the debate. Gunter and Harrison (1998) present us with a comprehensive study of the current condition in the United Kingdom in the historical context of the research on television violence. A coalition of four universities in the United States published a series of studies, the *National Television Violence Study*, analyzing program content and media effects on children and adolescents over a three-year period (NTVS 1997, 1998a, 1998b). In 1997 UNESCO funded a study of international scope that surveyed more than 5,000 students from 23 countries (Groebel 1997, 1998). And, in 1998, the first

yearbook from the International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen was published examining the state of media violence research worldwide including a selective bibliography of works published since 1970 (Carlsson and von Feilitzen 1998: 364-383). Another bibliography published by the Clearinghouse covered the period since 1989 (Cronström 1998). At the same time there have been calls for an understanding of media violence in an atmosphere of "moral panic" as the media become conduits for sometimes emotional discussions of complex social issues (Thompson 1998: 75).

What is "Violence"?

Gunter and Harrison, although acknowledging that audience interpretation is important, nevertheless focused on program content. They described the "amount, nature, location and origin" of program violence, while, as they say, "going beyond numbers to classes and attributes" (1998: 280), but making no link to effects. Their working definition of violence was:

Any overt depiction of a credible threat of physical force or the actual use of physical force,

with or without a weapon, which is intended to harm or intimidate an animate being or a group of animate beings. The violence may be carried out or merely attempted, and may or may not cause injury. Violence also includes any depiction of physically harmful consequences against an animate being (or group of animate beings) that occur as a result of unseen violence. (1998: 52)

They offer a complex analysis of content characteristics such as the amount and nature of violence, the setting for violent acts, motives and consequences, identity of aggressors and victims, genre and scheduling patterns. They found that an average of 37% of the programs they identified had no violence in the four weeks studied; the greatest number of violent acts was in movies not made for television (52% on average), and the least number of violent acts was on BBC 1 (27% on average). Wrestling and other sports also rated high in number of violent acts.

According to their research, most violent acts in TV fiction were criminally motivated or the result of a dispute or argument. Sexually-motivated violence was very rare in this study. Aggressors and victims were often young white males, though victims would also likely be children and the elderly. Pointing out that much of the previous research on media violence tends to muddle content and effects, Gunter and Harrison attempt to lay a foundation for understanding the context and settings for television violence (1998: 280).

The NTVS Study

Meanwhile, in the United States, the National Cable Television Association funded a three-year research project at four of the major Universities in the United States: the University of California, Santa Barbara, conducted a content analysis of overall television programming; the University of Texas, Austin, was responsible for a content analysis of "reality-based" programs; the University of Wisconsin, Madison, examined the effectiveness of various ratings systems; and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, evaluated anti-violence Public Service Announcements (PSAs). This National Television Violence Study (NTVS) was an ambitious project that resulted in three volumes of reports for the

years 1994-95, 1995-96, and 1996-97 (NTVS 1997, 1998a, 1998b).

Context of Violence

At the University of California, Santa Barbara, researchers reviewed U.S. television for acts of violence on nine contextual factors: nature of the perpetrator and the target; reason for violence; presence of weapons; extent and graphic character of violence; degree of realism; rewards or punishments and consequences; and whether humor was involved in the violence (NTVS 1997: 21). Like Gunter and Harrison, their concern was with identifying the context of media violence as well as documenting the amount of violent acts on television. Their definition of violence was:

[a]ny overt depiction of a credible threat of physical force or the actual use of such force intended to physically harm an animate being or group of beings. Violence also includes certain depictions of physically harmful consequences against an animate being or group that occurs as a result of unseen violent means. (1997: 53)

In addition, acts of violence were measured at three levels — the violent interaction identified as a PAT level [perpetrator, act, target], the scene level, and the program level. Over the three years analyzed, little change was found in the amount or context of violent acts on U.S. television. As with the British study, the most violent programming was theatrically-released movies and the perpetrators and victims were most often white, adult, and male. In year one, the majority of programs (57%) were found to contain some violence, most with few consequences to the perpetrator (NTVS 1997: 136), it is most often justified, and more than 39% of the acts were presented as humorous (p. 141). When the study was replicated in 1995/96 and 1996/97 there was virtually no change in the proportion of violent acts on television (NTVS 1998a: 1998b: 114).

Reality-Based Television

The second phase of the study conducted at the University of Texas, Austin, focused on "reality-based" television [talk shows, documentaries, police shows, entertainment, entertainment news and review, tabloid news, news and public affairs].

As with the first project, there was little change in the number of violent acts over the three years studied. In year one, it was found that 62% of the reality-based programs contained no violence and 18% had only a discussion of violence (NTVS 1997: 287-288). These percentages did not change significantly over the three years of analysis however, although there was little change in the level of violence, there was an increase in the number of such programs. In year one there were 393 programs identified, in year two there were 494 programs, and in year three there were 526 reality-based programs. This was an overall increase of 34% in the number of programs (NTVS 1998b: 261).

Ratings Systems

The third of the four NTVS studies examined the television ratings system comparing children's and parents' reactions to various rating systems, including those used by the motion picture industry, premium cable systems, Canadian ratings, software manufactures, viewer advisories used by the television industry, and the voluntary ratings system that was introduced in 1996. In addition to audience response, the researchers measured the use of the ratings by the television industry. The first year's study examined children's responses to programming based on the rating assigned to a program, from family-friendly to mature audiences only. In general, the authors found that "ratings and advisories can have a significant impact on children's choices of programs and movies on television" (NTVS 1997: 407). There was some indication that older boys were more likely to select programs with a parental advisory warning, while girls were less likely to express interest in such programs. Although there were some differences between the children in year one and children in year two, children in year two were, at some level, still influenced by a program's rating. Year three reported only on the frequency with which stations used the ratings system (NTVS 1998b: 287).

Antiviolence PSAs

Over the three years of the study, the fourth phase of the NTVS, conducted by researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, examined the success of antiviolence messages in

Public Service Announcements (PSAs). During the first year, 200 adolescents rated a series of such announcements on several dimensions: interest, understanding, and remembering the message; attitude and behavioral changes; and increase in levels of anxiety, depression, and hostility and in being a victim; and an increase in the perception of the world as a scary place (NTVS 1997: 417). Year two was designed to determine who should be the target audience for these PSAs, what content was being used for current PSAs, and what messages might be more effective. Year three sought to evaluate messages based on the use of handguns within a message and the importance of the consequences shown in the message. The researchers found that the PSAs used in the first year often lacked credibility with the students and consequently seldom influenced their attitudes or behaviors; in the second year it was determined that PSAs should be more carefully constructed to target various segments of the youth market based on their previous exposure to violence and that such messages should focus on "beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that *enable* violent behavior" (NTVS 1998a: 401, emphasis in the original). The third year they evaluated the success of PSAs based on the consequences of violence as depicted in the messages – paralysis and death or no consequences. It appeared that "death" as a consequence was more effective than paralysis.

This brief discussion does little to convey the range of these four projects but serves to introduce the reader to the NTVS and the dominant research model in the United States. As in Britain there is an attempt to understand not only the number of violent acts but also the context and nature of them. In addition, as we experiment with systems of labeling and prosocial messages, researchers in the U.S. are encouraged to weigh their value.

UNESCO-Scouts-Utrecht Study

A third project was supported by UNESCO and distributed by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (Groebel 1997 and 1998). More than 5000 survey responses from 12-year old children were collected in 23 different countries: Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Fiji, Germany, India, Japan, Mauritius, the Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, South Africa, Spain, Tadjikistan, Togo,

Trinidad & Tobago, and the Ukraine. These children lived in environments defined as both low-aggression and high-aggression, rural and urban (Groebel 1998). Of the children surveyed, 93% had access to television with an average daily viewing time of three hours, demonstrating the ubiquity of television. Action heroes like Arnold Schwarzenegger's *Terminator* were recognized by 88% of the children (1998, 182) and more than 40% identified a figure from popular culture as their hero, with 26% of those being action heroes and about 18% pop stars. Not surprising, children in high-aggression environments often say they would like to be like the *Terminator* (1998, 182).

The UNESCO Clearinghouse

To coordinate the range of research on children and violence, in 1997 UNESCO established the Clearinghouse on Children and Violence at Nordicom, Göteborg University in Sweden. In their newsletters and yearbook, the Clearinghouse has provided a forum for current work in the field. For example, the 1998 Yearbook offers an overview of research on media violence in the United States (relying heavily on the NTVS described above), Japan, Australia and New Zealand, Israel, and Argentina. The companion bibliography presents more than 500 citations (Carlsson and von Feilitzen 1998). Recent newsletters have

documented media violence research in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and South Africa.

"Moral Panics"

However, as important as these projects may be, there is another growing and compelling body of research on media violence that places such work in the context of "moral panics" (Barker and Petley 1997; Buckingham 1998a; Springhall 1997; Thompson 1998). This is not to deny that television, and other forms of media present a world of violence, but these writings on moral panics ask us to place the debate about media violence and the conceptualization of childhood within an historical and political climate that should also be considered. For example, in the United States, many placed blame for recent school shootings solely on the media overlooking other issues of race [attention to the issue that the students were white], class [in middle-class suburban settings], gender [several shootings were directed at young girls], and social environment [a culture of guns].

These studies offer us different ways of examining the critical issues of media violence: one that extends traditional social science questions and another that offers a more critical interrogation asking us to look at the questions in new ways.

II. Media Literacy/Media Education

Aufderheide, P. (1993). Report on the National Leadership Conference. Washington, DC: Aspen Institute.

Buckingham, D. (Ed.). (1998b). *Teaching Popular Culture*. London: UCL Press Ltd.

Hart, A. (Ed.). (1998). *Teaching the Media. International Perspectives*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Horvath, Z. (1998). Film, Television, Radio and the Press — Teaching Media in Hungarian Education. *Electronic Media International*, 35(1), 39-42.

Kubey, R. (Ed.). (1997). *Media Literacy in the Information Age*. New Brunswick NJ: Transaction Publishers. Including the following chapters:

Aufderheide, P. "Media Literacy: From a Report of the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy;" Bazalgette, C. "An Agenda for the Second Phase of Media Literacy Development;" Criticos, C. "Media Education for a Critical Citizenry;" Greenaway, P. "Media and Arts Education: A Global View from Australia;" Hart, A. "Textual Pleasures and Moral Dilemmas: Teaching Media Literacy in England;" Hobbs, R. "Expanding the Concept of Literacy;" Lemish, D. and P. Lemish "A Much Debated Consensus: Media Literacy in Israel;" Masterman, L. "A Rationale for Media Education;" Messaris, P. "Visual 'Literacy' in Cross-Cultural Perspective;" Piette, J. and L. Giroux "The Theoretical Foundations of Media Education Programs."

L'Homme, C. (1998). Decoding Images. *Sources*, 102, 7-9.

Silverblatt, A. (1995). *Media Literacy: Keys to Interpreting Media Messages*. Westport CT: Praeger.

Singer, D. G., & J. L. Singer. (1998). Developing Critical Viewing Skills and Media Literacy in Children. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 557, 164-179.

Tyner, K. (1998). *Literacy in a Digital World*. Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

von Feilitzen, C. (1999). Media Education, Children's Participation and Democracy. C. von Feilitzen, & U. Carlsson (Eds.), *Children and Media — 1999 Yearbook*. Göteborg Sweden: The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen. Nordicom.

Zindovic-Vukadinovic, G. (1998). Media Literacy for Children in the Compulsory School System. *Educational Media International*, 35(2), 133-137.

In 1993 *Communication Research Trends* published an annotated bibliography and review of the research on media education (Pungente and Biernatzki 1993). Since then the field of media education, or media literacy as it is known in the United States, has increased exponentially. Highlighted here are areas of research published since the 1993 issue of CRT.

Those concerned with media violence both in media and in the everyday life of children have turned to media education/media literacy. The introduction of non-indigenous programming, increasingly available, has also encouraged media education programs. For example, in Israel where there is an increasing "Americanization" of television, according to Lemish and Lemish (in Kubey 1997: 216), and in South Africa where educators fight against the effects of years of apartheid education and the uncritical regard for media messages, as Criticos describes it (in Kubey 1997: 229) teachers, parents, and policy-makers are working toward national media education curricula.

Elements of Media Literacy

Media Literacy: Keys to Interpreting Media Messages (Silverblatt 1995) perhaps best exemplifies the understanding of media literacy in the United States. In this book, Silverblatt presents what he sees as five elements of media literacy:

- 1) an awareness of the impact on the individual and society;
- 2) an understanding of the process of mass communication;
- 3) the development of strategies with which to

analyze and discuss media messages;

- 4) an awareness of media content as a "text" that provides insight into our contemporary culture and ourselves;

- 5) the cultivation of an enhanced enjoyment, understanding, and appreciation of media content (pp. 2-3).

These build on the definition that emerged from the U.S. National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy held in 1992 (Aufderheide 1993). There the definition of media literacy agreed upon was: "the ability of a citizen to access, analyze, and produce information for specific outcomes" (p. 2). A review of the media literacy research in the United States, in process by the author (Pecora, forthcoming), indicates that this is indeed the definition that drives much of the work in the U.S. This definition carries with it an assumption that, if one is aware of the messages and understands the process, one will be protected from the influence of such messages. Silverblatt's book continues as a comprehensive guide to understanding the form and function of television including the construction of advertising and the role of political communication. Emphasis is on the deconstruction of messages.

The Content of Media Literacy

Kubey's edited book, *Media Literacy in the Information Age* (1997), on the other hand, contextualizes the media literacy movement historically, philosophically, and internationally. The book, the result of his time as a fellow at the Annenberg Scholars Program of the Annenberg

School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, is a collection of essays by those active in the media education movement in the United States, England, Australia, Canada, and South Africa. It brings together the conceptions of media literacy and media education – one rooted in the understanding of *media literacy* as protectionist and the other of *media education* as the understanding that “learners be creators rather than receivers of knowledge” (p. 5).

Masterman's Principles

In the first section, a chapter by Len Masterman (in Kubey 1997: 15-68) recounts the historical development of the field in England. In his essay, “A Rationale for Media Education,” Masterman discusses the evolution of media education in England and Europe beginning with the early protectionist model of the 1930s to the popular arts movement of the 1960s and the more recent influences of cultural theorists. He advances several principles of media education that include:

- The central and unifying concept of media education is that of representation...
- A central purpose of media education is to "denaturalize" the media...
- Media education is primarily investigative. It does not seek to impose specific cultural values...
- Media education is organized around key concepts, which are analytical tools rather than an alternative content...
- Media education is a lifelong process...
- Media education aims to foster not simply critical understanding but critical autonomy...
- The effectiveness of media education may be evaluated by two principal criteria: the ability ... to apply information to new situations and ... commitment, interest, and motivation ...
- Media education is topical and opportunistic. (Masterman, in Kubey 1997: 40-43).

According to Masterman, these lead to pedagogical and curricular goals that involve the students as partners in their learning, “equalizing” teacher and student (p. 44). This essay goes on to offer practical suggestions for using media across the curriculum.

Integrating Media Education in the Classroom

The second essay addresses the problems of moving from the first phase of the media education movement – establishing media education in the curriculum – to the second phase – integrating media education in the classroom. According to Bazalgette, five obstacles often frustrate the development of media education: (1) because it is not a part of teacher training, it remains the province of enthusiasts and does not become a fundamental part of the pedagogical process; (2) there is little evidence available on the progression of such programs and their successes; (3) there is a diversity of views on what constitutes media literacy and thus no underlying principles to the field; (4) the gap between media teachers and media practitioners is marked by suspicion and misunderstanding; and (5) there is a lack of research and informed debate (Bazalgette, in Kubey 1997: 69, 72-74).

A National Plan

The final chapter in this section is a reprint of the report of the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy held at the Aspen Institute, December 1992 (Aufderheide, in Kubey 1997: 79-88; see also, Aufderheide 1993). The Conference brought together 25 scholars and activists to develop a national plan for media literacy in the United States.

Theory and Concepts

The second section of Kubey's book offers several essays on the theoretical and conceptual understanding of media education. Piette and Giroux (in Kubey 1997: 89-134) present an explication of the media theories that inform six media education programs. According to the authors, a review of three media education programs reveals several theories of mass media that inform their work. In the United States the first is the S-R (stimulus-response), or direct effects model; the second the uses and gratifications approach; and the third is based on cultivation theory and agenda-setting. Each of these lead to assumptions about the audience and pedagogical strategies.

The Critical/Cultural Approach

In Europe media education programs are largely

influenced by what Piette and Giroux argue is a critical or Marxist perspective, the "classical" semiotic approach, and the cultural studies approach. This differentiation leads to an understanding of media education programs that are either content-oriented or process-oriented, one leads to "acquisition of information" (in Kubey 1997: 126) and the other to "acquisition of critical skills" (p. 127). This particular essay also offers a very comprehensive bibliography of the field.

Visual Interpretations

The second and third essays on theoretical and conceptual perspectives expand on the visual interpretations of media. Messaris's essay (in Kubey 1997: 135-162) helps us to understand the parallels between linguistic and visual competence while the essay by Hobbs (in Kubey 1997: 163-186) places media literacy within the context of reading/language arts. As she says: "By broadening the skills of access, analysis, and communication to include a wide variety of messages — language, images, sound, popular mass media, and technology-based messages — the power of literacy can become fully realized as a skill essential to life in an information age" (p. 163).

Global Scope

The third section of the book contributes to our understanding of the global scope of media education. Essays from Australia, England, Israel, and South Africa provide an appreciation unique, and sometimes not so unique, to the problems of gaining acceptance of media education. Here Greenaway (in Kubey 1997: 187-198), reflecting some of the problems addressed in Bazalgette's essay, calls for the inclusion of the arts in any discussion on visual imagery in the Australian media education movement. Andrew Hart (in Kubey 1997: 199-212) points out that, in England, media education is now fully incorporated within the national curriculum yet few teachers are formally trained in media studies [in the United States only one University offers formal certification in media literacy to teachers]. Teachers work in isolation with little support or resources for curriculum development in media education (p. 210).

Implementation is also problematic in Israel. According to Lemish and Lemish, in the early

1990s a diverse group came together and generated a national media literacy curriculum; however, once the national curricular goals were in place problems became evident at several levels. The first was with defining media studies as an interdisciplinary set of principles or as a separate discipline (in Kubey 1997: 222) another was with the control of curriculum at both the national and local level (p. 223). For example, while the Israeli Ministry of Education established a national curriculum that would place "an emphasis on evaluation and criticism of products, processes, artistic values, and effects ... [and] motivate as well as activate students to apply knowledge, to be critical and to be creative," (p. 221) all too often the courses were taught by those either unskilled in education or limited in an understanding of the media. Consequently, students received a hodgepodge education often based, not on pedagogical goals but, on an individual's background and expertise (p. 225).

The final chapter in Kubey's book, relevant to the discussion here, addresses media education in South Africa, and, according to the author, by extension to other developing nations. Here curricular goals seek to "empower" students by training them to be critical citizens in a democracy. Responding to South Africa's long tradition of apartheid, Criticos points out that the "emancipatory elements of media education in South Africa and other countries undergoing national reconstruction are often not acknowledged" (in Kubey 1997: 230). The goal of media education in such circumstances is to "enable a person to act as a creative, active, moral, and critical citizen in a democracy" (p. 231) with media education extending beyond a knowledge of 'issues.' The author identifies three literacies that are essential to the growth of nation states: social literacy that relates to understanding social and political relations; technological literacy that relates to living and acting in a technological world; and communicative literacy that enables a citizen to be an active communicator in multiple modes and models (p. 232). According to Criticos, in South Africa, media education focuses on the third of these working to promote the ability to recognize message-construction and address the questions of "What? So What? and Now What?" (p. 236).

Media Education in English-Speaking Countries

In *Teaching the Media: International Perspectives* (1998), Andrew Hart offers a survey of media education developed in English-speaking countries [England, Northern Ireland, South Africa, Western Australia, Massachusetts, and Ontario] (Hart 1998: 3). It addresses three issues: How teachers experience media in both personal and professional lives and the way this relates to their classroom experience; how schools respond as institutions and their awareness of children's lives outside the classroom; and the influences on curricular development (p. 4). Using previous research conducted in England as a model (see Kubey) Hart focuses on classroom experience. The primary research question was: What are English teachers doing when they say they are doing Media Education with students age 14-16 in secondary schools? (p.11) It led to two further questions within: (1) What Media Education aims are apparent? and (2) What forms of Media Education are apparent?

Except for Ontario and Massachusetts each research contribution adhered to the same methodological strategies. In Ontario and Massachusetts the projects built on research in process (Hart 1998: 4). Using case studies based on classroom ethnographies and interviews with teachers, these six models help us to begin to see the limits to teacher training for media education, but they also highlight the successes of individual classroom teachers. This project explicates the three levels of culture that teachers have to forage: the 'official' culture of public institutions; the culture produced by media institutions; and the vernacular culture grounded in everyday life (pp. 186-187). As teachers we are prepared well for level one, rarely for level two; and virtually never for level three, which is a function of engaging students in their own learning and is fundamental to media education (p. 188).

This book offers us a valuable opportunity to reflect on the centrality of pedagogical principles

The New London Group a coalition of international scholars whose work is represented in a recent article in *Harvard Educational Review* (66:1), "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies"

The Bertelsmann Foundation at http://negia.net/~spartan/media_ed/ and

in media education — it is not just talking about television — and moves us along the way to an understanding of the problems identified by Bazalgette in Kubey. That is, with the kind of research presented by Hart and his colleagues, we can begin to articulate the issues in educating those who work with students, to document the progress of training and teaching programs, and to undertake an informed debate.

The Digital Dimension

Kathleen Tyner's book, *Literacy in a Digital World* (1998), is an interesting addition to the scholarship on media education because it comes from her experience as both teacher and practitioner. The book's central tenet contributes to an informed debate offering us an understanding of media literacy within the context of historical changes, classroom practices, and the evolution of technology. She also moves the debate from the simplistic grounding in visual imagery to the complexities of literacies built on information technologies. A premise to the book is that "any analysis of the role that information technologies play in contemporary society and their relationship to complex social compacts such as literacy and schooling can best proceed by examining the way that communication tools contributed to the social landscape in the past" (Tyner 1998: 5). Though not strictly a "technical determinist" (see chapter 3) her book none the less foregrounds the centrality of technology in the social order. The book builds on case studies from her experience, media and educational theory, and, as with Hart's book, contributes to an informed debate.

International Collaboration

One of the most interesting contributions these books bring to the discussion is that they are international in scope, offering us a more complex understanding of the debate on media education/media literacy. This is well-represented by Tyner's book where she describes a number of global collaborations:

<http://stiftung.bertelsmann.de/english/projekte/bereiche/medbild.htm>

International Visual Literacy Association at <http://ivla.org>

World Council on Media Education at <http://uned.es/convoca/cm98/eng.htm>

British Film Institute at <http://www.bfi.org.uk/>

CLEMI — France at <http://www.ac-nancy-metz.fr/CLEMI/>

National Association of Media Educators
at <http://www.pakuringa.school.nz/NAME/>

National Forum on Information Literacy at <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/report1/rep01.htm>

Canadian Association for Media Education Organizations
at <http://www.screen.com/mnet/eng/class/support/cameo.htm>

Australian Teachers of Media at <http://www.cinemia.net/ATOM/>
(pp.255-257)

Another resource on the status of media education, globally, can be found in a 1996 overview by Father John Pungente available on the Internet

at <http://www.screen.com/mnet/engmed/bigpict/WORLMTXT.HTM>

In addition to a status report in several countries, this site offers contact information for the countries surveyed: Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, England, Europe, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latin America, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, and the United States.

However, as global as our conversation has become, much of the work is teacher-driven (Tyner 1998: 122). In Portugal, for example, teachers from local schools formed the national association on media and education, according to Prof. Manuel Pinto of Minho University, Braga (e-mail interview, December 1998).

III. Issues in Media Education

A review of the current writings and research on media education discloses three issues of debate beyond the globalization of the field. The first is the training of teachers, the second is the importance of student participation, and the third is the pedagogical approach. In a way, these are not separate issues but each is linked to the differences between media education and media literacy.

It is evident from the books reviewed here and other writings such as Horváth (1998) or Tuominen (1998) that, where there is teacher training in media literacy, that training is in schools of education where teachers are offered

one or two courses in media studies as a part of their teacher training. Often, as represented in the case of Israel (see Lemish and Lemish, in Kubey 1997), and not atypical elsewhere, media professionals with no pedagogical training are brought in to teach media literacy. When in place, media education courses all too often fall in what Pinto identified as “following the tradition that comes from the emergence of audiovisuals in education, teacher trainers (and politicians) are more concerned with technology, computers, Internet at school and so forth” paying little attention to “the cultural and educational

dimension" though this is changing (L'Homme 1998). This leads to what Green identifies as the disjunction of "teaching' and 'transmission'" versus "learning' and 'interpretation'" (1998: 178). This dichotomy is represented by the curricular goals identified by Singer and Singer:

to understand how television works in terms of simple electronics and economics;
to understand different types of television programs ...
to understand what aspects of a program are real ...
to understand about ... large-scale team effort...
(1998: 168-169)

and by literary devices such as plot, narrative structure, and play on emotions.

The concepts of learning and interpretation are represented in the work of Masterman, above, and others who see media education as central to a democracy (Buckingham 1998b; Criticos 1997). Von Feilitzen positions the dichotomy between Western and non-Western countries with Western media education programs [represented by Australia, Canada, and Europe] leading to "critical, independent and participating individuals" while programs in non-Western countries [represented by India, Brazil, and South Africa] are more likely to lead to "liberation and development of the whole community, emphasising, among other things, that democratisation must mean social justice also for the oppressed and marginalised groups in the community" (1999: 23). According to Bulbulia (interview, 1999) the concept of media education for social justice is also important in South Africa

where it is also important that media are participatory.

Zindovic-Vukdinovic claims that "the knowledge about panoramic drive or zoom is not essential for understanding, but the knowledge about the meaning created is" (1998: 136). To many, this can only come about with children's full participation in the learning process (for example: von Feilitzen and Carlsson 1999: 267-398).

Media education is not only for children and should not simply be a stand-alone course in elementary or secondary schooling. Adults — teachers, parents, professionals, and politicians — all benefit from media education. As von Feilitzen observes, media education in the non-Western sense comprises everyone in the society (1999: 23). A teacher who understands the centrality of media in students' lives begin to see ways that media education can be incorporated across the curriculum and parents learn to regard television not as an evil but as an educational tool.

In addition to the resources noted here — many of which have excellent bibliographies that will lead to other sources — there are a number of journals dedicated to the topic or which frequently include information about media literacy curricula [*Journal of Educational Television, Telemidium, Educational Media International, and Journal of Media Education* are a few examples] and in recent years several journals have published special issues about media education [*Continuum* (1996: Vol.29, no.2), *English Journal* (1998: Vol.87, no.1), *English Quarterly* (1992: Vol.25, nos. 2-3), *Journal of Communication* (1998: vol. 48, no. 1), *Media Studies Journal* (1994: Vol. 8), and *Radical Teacher* (1998: Vol. 50)].

IV. "Effects," Families, and Child Development

Sheri L. Parks. "Race and Electronic Media in the Lives of Four Families: An Ethnographic Study." In, Thomas J. Socha and Rhunette C. Diggs (eds.), *Communication, Race, and Family: Exploring Communication in Black, White, and Biracial Families*. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999, pp. 69-89 (ch. 4).

Judith Van Evra. *Television and Child Development, Second Edition*. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998.

Difficulties in "Effects" Research

As has been suggested earlier in this review,

"effects research" has something of a bad name in communication studies, these days. It shares some of the opprobrium rightly heaped upon simplistic

"stimulus-response," or "sender-receiver," models of communication, which have long been discarded by social psychologists. Even models that introduce intermediate factors, such as the social and personal history of the receiver, feedback, etc., have serious attendant problems — not least because of the extreme complexity of the factors they must take into account. Even the simplest questions lead into complex webs of variables that make meaningful conclusions nearly impossible to reach. Van Evra stresses this difficulty at the beginning of her book — a book intended to untangle some of those webs:

The number and complexity of the interactions are great. The viewing experience of a 4-year-old boy watching a violent show alone is quite likely different from that of a 10-year-old girl viewing the same program with her mother. If one adds to that picture variance in their socioeconomic level, family background, and school experience, as well as differing motivations for viewing and other variables in all of the possible combinations and permutations, one catches a glimpse of the magnitude of the problem facing researchers. (1998: xii)

Nevertheless, the impact of the mass media on our lives and behavior — especially that of television — is almost universally acknowledged to be so great that the research effort must be undertaken, and Van Evra notes, in regard to her own specialization, that "the amount of research into the effects of television programming and advertising on children's development is staggering, and the range of research topics is wide indeed" (p. xiii). Common sense tells us that watching long hours of violent television is bound to have some effect on children — even if science (and, a fortiori, the television industry!) is reluctant to state definitively that it does. It falls to the responsibility of the communication scientist to continue hacking through the tangled jungle of intertwined factors and gradually to come to some solid, if initially scattered conclusions. Meanwhile, others — such as parents — must act on the common sense evidence of their own experience supplemented by whatever else the scientists can tell them.

Any scientific endeavor must begin with

exploration. In the social sciences this often takes the form of the ethnographic method, by which case studies can probe deeply into individual situations. Such evidence is not, per se, very generalizable; but it provides the hypotheses those using statistical methods can then test across broader demographic ranges. Despite their limited range, ethnographic studies can be quite satisfying in showing us how at least some "real people" live and how they use the communication media and are affected by them. An ongoing interplay between in-depth ethnographic case studies and more shallow, but more generalizable statistical surveys is desirable to see both the "big picture" and the hidden "nooks and crannies" of human social reality.

Ethnicity and Television in U.S. Families

Parks' report on race and electronic media in the lives of four middle-class, "child-centered" U.S. families, two Black and two White, is an example of the mutual interdependence of ethnographic and statistical research. It begins with the statistical finding that television use by the two major racial groups differs vastly. African American families watch an average of 10 hours of television a day, far more than the average White family, and the two groups' program preferences are almost entirely different (Parks 1999: 70). With such a disparity in types of television exposure other differences in the uses of television might be anticipated.

Parks found that the more authoritative parenting style of the Black families extended to greater parental control of children's television viewing than was the case in the more permissive and negotiational White families, in which children typically exercised greater control over their own television viewing (pp. 82-83).

The African American families showed a clear preference for programs with Black central characters, at least in the years since African American-oriented programs have become common, whereas "race seemed to matter little in the viewing selection of the White families" (p. 84). Parks' concluded that the African American parents seemed to be using television as a means for "racial socialization" of their children, whereas "the racial stakes were not as high for the White

families" (p. 88).

The application of Parks' ethnographic findings to a broader spectrum of the population is, in its turn, dependent on further studies using survey and statistical methods.

In another finding on ethnic differences in children's viewing, Harris (1999: 23, citing Zohoori 1988) notes how foreign children residing in the United States viewed more television than American children, found it more interesting, and tended to see it as a more accurate representation of American social reality than did American children.

TV and Child Development

Van Evra's book is an intensive and extensive review of major studies about television and child development by both communication scholars and developmental child psychologists. After weighing the evidence from available studies with sometimes conflicting conclusions, she gives her own judgment about where the research on the controverted topics seems to be leading. She concludes, for example, that children are active, rather than merely passive viewers, but that the "smooth integration of both auditory and visual information and of linguistic and holistic components" needed for the best learning can be disrupted or otherwise influenced by differences in processing style and other factors (Van Evra 1998: 24-25).

She also comes down on the side of "television's positive role in children's language development" (*ibid.*, p. 42). Moderate viewing can help develop the communication skills of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, although "viewing more than 5 or 6 hours a day is associated with poorer achievement in all groups." This negative aspect of heavy viewing is more operative among the socially advantaged, apparently by displacing "more beneficial alternatives" (*ibid.*). Children seem to learn to invest less mental effort in their television viewing than they do in reading, which they tend to treat more seriously; but different information is retained from exposure to different media (p. 81).

One of the most frequently verified effects of children's viewing of violence is increased fear; but the complexity of the question of whether

viewing violence causes aggression is seen when we realize that it involves "issues of realism, salience, arousal, toy cuing, strength of identification, family attitudes and behavior, habituation and desensitization, past experience, situational variables, behavioral controls, amount of viewing, and purpose of viewing, as well as gender and age differences," according to Van Evra (1998: 79).

The author recognizes that "television has been shown to facilitate prosocial behavior," such as generosity and cooperation (*ibid.*, p. 93). Prosocial effects appear to be promoted by the presence of an adult in the viewing situation (p. 82). More broadly, "those children who receive parental comment, input, and supplementary information and interaction have a very different experience of television viewing than those who view alone or with less involved parents" (p. 119). Nevertheless, television must rely so heavily on stereotyping and reflects such an unreal portrayal of the world that it may tend to promote stereotyping by child viewers in such areas as gender, occupations, race and ethnicity. Some argue, however, that frequent viewing of diverse programming can give children access to different viewpoints that can help break down stereotypes (p. 86).

Children with learning, behavioral, or emotional disorders "are more vulnerable to television's influence in their lives," partly because they often tend to perceive television as more realistic than better-adjusted children would do (p. 130).

Theory

Various theoretical approaches have guided research into television's effects, but Van Evra warns that each is inadequate by itself and needs integration with the other approaches "into a consistent and coherent conceptualization of what actually happens during and as a result of a child's television viewing, and how those events are caused, mediated, facilitated, or impeded" (1998: 146). The interaction between cultivation theory and uses and gratifications approaches is cited as an example. Heavy viewing by groups with few alternative sources of information may involve a more serious "effort to derive information and knowledge from what is being viewed" (p. 146).

On the other hand, if viewers already have a rich variety of informational sources and are viewing television simply for diversion or entertainment, not for information, they are more likely to experience the television content in a more emotional and less critical way, to exert less mental effort, and to take it less seriously. (Van Evra 1998: 147)

Consequently, even heavy viewers with this background would be less likely than those with more limited information sources to be deeply affected by the content they view (*ibid.*).

Parental Control

Monroe E. Price (ed.). *The V-Chip Debate: Content Filtering From Television to the Internet*. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998.

American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Public Education. 1999. "Media Education." *Pediatrics*. Vol. 104, No. 2 (August), pp. 341-343.

Van Evra points out the effect of technological innovations — such as VCRs, cable, home videos, video games, computers, etc. — as new influences in the lives of children (1998: 153-171). All, but especially computers — now taking on the functions of television and adding others, including easy random access to online material — bring a whole new dimension to the relation between children and electronic media, one that researchers are struggling hard to explore and understand. The increasing number of channels and user choices also has made the use of electronic media more an individual activity, and, in the case of children, much less amenable to parental control.

The so-called "V-chip" has been proposed as a means of reasserting parents' control over their children's TV viewing and computer use. The articles in Price's book explore various pros and cons of the V-chip. They give special attention to developments in Canada, where the V-chip was invented in the mid-1990s, and the United States, where the federal government and others have seemed to regard it as something of a panacea for the problem of children's access to objectionable programming.

The "V" in "V-chip" originally meant "Viewer: a chip to give the viewer a choice" (Price 1998: xvi). The idea spread quickly to the United States,

where the "V" began to stand for "Violence," in a nation preoccupied with the problem of violence and anxious about the presumed role of television in encouraging it. Somehow, and "somewhat mysteriously," it soon came to include sexual content (p. xvi).

The idea of the V-chip, and its immanent translation into regulations and law, raised many questions about both its capability of doing what was intended and its desirability. A V-chip inserted into every television receiver could be programmed by parents to block material they deem unsuitable for their children, so the child could not watch it even in the parents' absence. The use of the V-chip is linked to the development of a ratings system that would automatically trigger the blacking out of programs with undesired ratings.

The old question of "who decides?" inevitably arises, as does that of the danger that a central authority might in the future use the ratings and the chip to regulate "undesirable" ideological or political views. In the United States, to the accompaniment of many loud protests, the television industry itself gained control of the ratings — making it essentially a self-rating system (Campbell 1999: 753-755, and 762).

In Anglophone Canada, on the other hand, through a low-key and generally non-controversial process a policy was developed whereby a "pan-industry Action Group" would develop the rating system, subject to approval by the government regulatory agency, the CRTC (MacKay 1998: 9). Quebec developed its own approach, based on the existing provincial film classification board ratings (p. 10).

Objections to both ratings and the V-chip as well as arguments in their favor were considered in an annex to the "European Union, Green Paper on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity in Audiovisual and Information Services..." in November 1996 (Price 1998: 312-318). The Green Paper characterized the debate in the European Union over the issue as opposing two "philosophies." Supporters felt the system would give parents control over their children's viewing while allowing freedom of expression to broadcasters. Opponents felt that it would transfer responsibility for children's viewing so completely to parents that broadcasters could use it "to justify slippages" in their schedules. and, further, that

many parents would be unwilling to accept the responsibility. The Green Paper went on to point out, however, that

In Canada, the anti-violence chip was considered neither as an end in itself nor as a universal panacea capable of resolving all problems single-handed. The two most important elements of the Canadian approach are still the identification of a specific objective and the definition of a long-term strategy. Even the CRTC views the anti-violence chip as no more than a gizmo which would be useless if the awareness-raising campaign failed to bear fruit within a time span of ten years or so. (Price 1998: 313)

Pediatricians' Views

A recent study by the Committee on Public Education of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP: 1999) reviewed the existing research on "both the public health risks and the benefits of mass media for children and adolescents" (p. 341). The AAP report saw special dangers for children

in television's violent and sexual content, encouragement of tobacco and alcohol use, overstimulation leading to hyperactivity, bad dietary habits, etc., and concluded by strongly advocating "media education for parents and children as an approach to mitigating potentially harmful effects" (*ibid.*). Reduced viewing, and more judicious selection of programs was recommended for all.

One of the AAP's more controversial suggestions was that "pediatricians should urge parents to avoid television viewing for children under the age of 2 years," even of programs made for that age group, because "early healthy brain growth and the development of appropriate social, emotional and cognitive skills," could be harmed by substituting television viewing for direct interaction with parents and other significant care givers (p. 342, recommendation 3). Some pediatricians, however, especially in Britain, felt the AAP conclusions were somewhat overstated, according to a report on a National Public Radio broadcast (NPR: early August 1999).

Perspective

There has been a renaissance in children's media studies over the past decade with the influence of work from European and British Cultural Studies, US Cultural Studies, and the many conversations that have been held at world and regional summits. Where once the field was dominated by the tradition of media effects research we now find research on children and their media informed by political economy, ethnography, rhetorical analysis, and theoretical positioning previously considered "grown-up." These works come with a respect for the rich imagination of the child, concerns about the conditions of all children, and attempts to understand their culture.

However, we still have much to do. In the United States media have been a part of children's culture since almost 100 years ago, when motion pictures began to offer fantasies and adventures. As we enter the 21st century,

motion pictures, television, and now computers still bring them a world of fantasy and adventure. However, it comes with a price. With apparent easy access to the "information superhighway" and computer technology, children now have entré to a world of rich possibilities. It is our responsibility to understand that world and to offer them support and guidance as they make their way. We must address issues of technological access, attend to the questions we ask and the concerns we address, and offer conversations that are real.

Television is now well-established in many parts of the world and new technologies are being introduced at a remarkable speed. Thusfar, only five percent of the world's children have access to the Internet (UNESCO 1999: 25), but that proportion is growing. As technology becomes more sophisticated,

though only marginally less costly, and children in Ohio can talk with children in Zimbabwe by way of computer technology, we must make certain that children in both countries have access to the technology — if that is to be our priority. In the United States where computers are ostensibly becoming a common tool in the classroom, there are still many school districts and families that cannot afford them, reinforcing a two-tier citizenry and a class-based work-force. If children are to be able to use this technology they must also have a free and comfortable environment safe from those who are predators. These considerations lead to issues that must be addressed about the implications and consequences of technology in growing up.

These questions are not new. We have been asking about the consequences of technology in the lives of children since the introduction of motion pictures. An analysis of the research questions about children and the media asked in studies carried out at the introduction of each new technology found that there is a pattern to the questions (Wartella and Reeves 1984). As first motion pictures, then radio, and later television were introduced we have asked much the same questions. As a medium is introduced, early questions address the use of the medium, then concerns with health effects, and finally concern with the effects on children's behavior, knowledge, and attitudes with much of the focus on violence (*ibid.*, p. 27). Although there have been minor shifts that reflect the current thinking of the time, none the less, in the United States the research questions about children and their media have been concerns with the power of the media. Perhaps with the "renaissance" in children's research we will turn our attention to new questions. The challenge is to move beyond the notion of media effects to an understanding of what the child brings to the media experience. As these children in Ohio speak to the children in Zimbabwe we need to ask questions that help bring us together not as consumers but as citizens in a global economy.

What will these children have to talk about? The local McDonald's? Or ways they have brought about change in their community? Issues of gender, class, race, and nation state need to be addressed and fortunately are being addressed by some.

In addition to raising questions about technology and citizenry, we must explore ways to guard children from those who do not wish them well. Profit-driven corporations have created a populace who see no danger in using the internet for commerce. Battles fought and lost when television was introduced are being fought again as organizations such as the Center for Media Education struggle to keep the internet free from commerce. Unfortunately, as Disney advertises on television, so Disney advertises on the internet. However, commerce is not the only danger as pedophiles roam the internet looking for children in ways they cannot on the street. UNESCO addressed this problem, on a worldwide scale, in a conference held in Paris, January 18-19, 1999, as a partial implementation of Article 34 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. According to it, "States parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (UNESCO 1999). The problem has grown with the growth of communication technology. In the past our answer has been to regulate but how does one do so with a technology that transcends borders and defies limits? If an answer is to be found it must be through the fullest collaboration among governments as well as the cooperation of the private sector (*ibid.*, p. 26).

As set out in the beginning of this essay, there is no way this review of the research on children and television could offer a comprehensive view of the field. However, as we move to address questions about the new technologies it is important that we stop to assess where we have been. Presented here have been some of the major works being accomplished and some of the issues under

discussion. The focus, it would appear, has been on media violence and media literacy/media education. Perhaps when the next essay is written we will see new questions addressed in addition to the old.

The following bibliography, lengthy as it is, is by no means complete. There are a number of studies out there that were not available

either because of access or language, a problem one hopes the new technology can solve. None the less, however limited, this review does demonstrate that there is some interesting and exciting work being accomplished with new ways of understanding childhood and more creative ways of bringing children's voices into the process.

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Interviews

In Person:

Fridoze Bulbulia, Chair, Children and Broadcasting Foundation, Africa. Moments Entertainment. Atholi, South Africa. Interviewed in Athens, Ohio, June 1999.

By E-Mail:

Amy Jordan, Ph.D. 1999. Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA - August.

Wendy Keys. 1998. Australian Key Centre for Culture and Media Policy, Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland, Australia - December.

Geoff Leland. 1998. Chair, Screen and Media Studies, The University of Waikato, New Zealand - December.

Manuel Pinto, PhD. 1998. Professor, Institute of Social Sciences, University of Minho, Braga. Portugal - December.

Ruth Zanker. 1998. Academic Leader, New Zealand Broadcasting School, Christchurch Polytechnic, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Afterword

By the Editor of *Communication Research Trends*

Many serious observers of the mass media have long identified television as somehow "dangerous" to children. This concern goes back to the very beginning of the medium — borrowing from even earlier fears about the movies — and has always been a major preoccupation of media scholars. In recent years, while many positive contributions of television to children's development are recognized, the concern about its negative side has become, if anything, even more intense. Added to television — and literally absorbing TV as one dimension of itself — is on-line computer technology, capable of receiving a full range of television channels along with a host of additional, and even more disturbing communication packages.

Responses of adults vary widely. Some media scholars, despite their professional

involvement with the medium, refuse to have a television set in their homes. The American Academy of Pediatricians, as was noted above, advised parents not to allow children under two years old to watch television at all, and to strictly limit viewing by older children and teenagers. In a powerful presentation to the (US) National Press Club, broadcast on CSpan 2, October 18, 1999, Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, a military training officer and coauthor of the book, *Stop Teaching Our Kids to Kill: A Call to Action Against TV, Movies and Video Game Violence* (Grossman & DeGaetano 1999), called TV violence "an addictive, toxic product." He was of the opinion that television is the biggest factor promoting violence in America, and that if there were no television there would be 10,000 fewer homicides per year in the United States.

Turning to video games, he noted that they give children military-quality training in how to kill. The video game, "Doom," for example is used by the U.S. Marines in essentially the same form it is sold to children; and he claims it played a role in three recent mass shootings by teenagers who were addicted to playing it. The military use it to train adults under very controlled circumstances; while children learn murder from it without supervision or safeguards (CSPAN 1999).

At the other end of the spectrum, sailing under false colors of "freedom of speech," is the entertainment industry, which is driven by the profit motive and the rising threshold of boredom of its audience to load its channels with correspondingly progressive increases in violent and erotic programming.

Concerned parents, teachers, and clergy — not to mention pediatricians and child psychologists — are milling about between these two extremes, not knowing what to do. The "V-chip" has been touted as some kind of magic solution. In fact, it could make matters worse, for some children, since it must work in conjunction with a rating system. Any rating system provides sign-posts that not only tell parents what their children should **not** watch but at the same time tell children about the more objectionable material, which it would be "more **fun**" to watch, if only they can gain access to a set not equipped with the V-chip! Furthermore, as has been mentioned, producers almost inevitably would use the presence of the V-chip in receivers to push all responsibility for child-safe programming onto parents while themselves producing even more objectionable "adult" programming.

Although not discussed in our text, the downward spiral of greater and greater stimulation and shock that the industry feels it has to use to keep the interest of its audiences includes not only an increasing resort to violence, horror, and eroticism, but also an increasing tendency to ridicule religion and every kind of moral standard, along with any sort of legitimate authority.

Self-regulation by the industry concerning all these areas of possible excess would be the ideal, if the industry could be persuaded to practice it with any degree of consistency. Angela J. Campbell has surveyed the current status and past successes and failures of media self-regulation in the United States, with reference to U.S. law (Campbell 1999). She concluded that "self-regulation rarely lives up to its claims..." (p. 357).

Most knowledgeable authorities rightly tend to oppose censorship. A majority do so on the grounds that it would introduce a threat to freedom of information greater than the evil it purports to remedy. Even those who have no ethical opposition to censorship have to concede that it does not work — there are simply too many possible ways for children to access the vast number of media channels available.

The best approach to a solution that has been brought forward is media literacy education, which is gradually gaining support worldwide, after a slow and fitful beginning. It is designed to help people — adults as well as children — learn how to use the mass media in a constructive, rather than a self-destructive way. As our research knowledge of the interaction between children and the media grows, effective approaches to educating children for healthy media use can be expected to improve accordingly.

But media literacy education, like any other form of education, is never going to be more than partially effective. It is unlikely to reach all children — at least not without drastic changes in educational institutions around the world — but even many of those who undergo it are unlikely to remember it or be able to use it effectively in their lives. Others will reject constructive approaches to media use because of their own greater attraction to the harmful media contents — much as people start to smoke and continue to smoke although they are fully aware of the damage it does to them and to those around them. It also should be borne in mind that, like "passive smokers"

harmful by a tobacco-polluted environment they did not create, even those who never watch television are indirectly influenced by it through their neighbors who do watch it and through the subtle changes in society and culture it has initiated and encouraged.

Although not a substitute for media literacy education, boycotts of sponsors and similar campaigns against objectionable shows, accompanied by other efforts to persuade media management to clean up its act, are useful but partial solutions. They require the collection of correct information about the media and diligence in using it, but at the same time a sense of proportion that appreciates the value of true freedom of expression and of the media, as well as respect for the legitimate social and ideological diversity of a pluralistic democracy. They also require a prudential realization of the dangers misdirected campaigns might pose to precisely

the values they are intended to preserve.

— W. E. Biernatzki, SJ,
Editor

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Resources

Research Centers and Clearinghouses

(Space permits only a few listings, so those have been selected that are most likely to give access to other sources, in their own area or internationally.)

International

One of the most valuable resources to come available in the past few years is the Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen. Not only does it offer information on current research in the field but the Clearinghouse also has available a comprehensive bibliography on media violence and contact information for most scholars in the field.

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Göteborg University
Box 713
SE - 405 30 GÖTEBORG, Sweden
fax: +46 31 773 46 55
tel: + 46 31 773 12 16

National, by Country

Australia
ABA

Australian Broadcasting Authority

<http://aba.gov.au>

Australian equivalent of the [U.S.A.] FCC. Primary regulatory agency of radio and television services. Responsible for licensing, policy implementation/enforcement and conducting research about community needs and programming requirements/standards. This web site contains a link to Children's Television, outlining the basic tenets of the Children's Television Standards (CTS).

China

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Research Center for Media and Children
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
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CN - Beijing 100026 China
Tel: +86 10 65026231 fax: +86 10 65022868

India

The Don Bosco Institute of Communication Arts (DBICA)
18 Landons Road (off Taylors Road)
Kilpauk, Chennai, India

DBICA has published "the first comprehensive book in Tamil on Media Education": *Media Ulagam*, by Suresh Paul (1999).

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Resource Centre for Media Education and Research
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IN - Pune - 411004, India
Tel and fax: +91 212 351018
igmartin@giaspn01.vsnl.net.in

United Kingdom

BFI Education
British Film Institute
21 Stephen Street
London W1P 2LN, England
Tel: +44 0171 255 1444
Fax: +44 0171 580 8434

In September 1998, BFI published a "Contact Sheet" of key organizations, institutions, and centers for media education in the U.K.

United States

The National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture
The Ninth Street Media Complex
356 Ninth Street
San Francisco, CA 94103-3809, USA
Tel: +1 415 431 1391
Fax: +1 415 431 1392
namac@namac.org
<http://www.namac.org>

NAMAC published *The National Media Education Directory, 1997*, listing descriptions and contact information for 221 organizations and individuals involved in conceptualizing and implementing media

education in the U.S.A. An on-line version of the updated directory is planned for 2000-2001.

Foundations and Advocacy Groups

Anne Taylor, Co-Director
Media Awareness Network, 1500 Merivale Road
CA - Ottawa, Ontario K2E 6Z5, Canada
tel: +1 61 3 224 3271 fax: +1 61 3 224 1958

Freivillige Selbstkontrolle Fernsehen e. V.
Rauchstrasse 18
DE - 10787 Berlin, Germany
tel: +49 30 23 08 36 fax: +49 30 23 08 70
[Http://www.fsf.de/index.htm](http://www.fsf.de/index.htm)

Southeast Asian Foundation for Children's Television
ACPO Box 704, Cubao 1135,
PH - Quezon City
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Featured Book Review

Pecora, Norma Odom. *The Business of Children's Entertainment*. New York/London: The Guilford Press, 1998. Pp. vii, 181. ISBN 1-57230-280-1 (hb.) \$30.00.

The author of this book is also the author of this issue of *Communication Research Trends*, so the book has been mentioned, but not treated extensively in the main review article, above. Therefore, some further description of it is needed.

Like practically everything else in contemporary civilization, children's entertainment has become a business. Pecora remarks that earlier discussions of "commercial culture" have generally neglected to explore how economic forces shape the culture of children. In this book she wishes to "examine children's culture in the context of the economic decisions that have driven the children's entertainment business and

consequently shaped that culture" (pp. 1-2).

The children's entertainment industry is lucrative, and every conceivable medium and gimmick is being used to exploit it as fast as they can be invented and employed. The scene is changing so fast that prediction of the precise shape of its future landscape is problematic in the extreme; so the book's limited "intent is to present a theoretical model to describe and explain that landscape, whatever it may be" (p. 2). Two goals are stated: "1. To describe the children's entertainment industry at one point in time. 2. To introduce a model that serves to explain how decisions were made in the industries involved" (*ibid.*).

Pecora's approach is that of the political economist, basing her analysis on the recognition stated by Graham Murdock and Peter Golding "that the mass media are 'first and foremost industrial and commercial organizations which produce and distribute commodities'" (p. 3). The "commodity" sold by the media is the audience; so the commodity sold to advertisers by the children's entertainment industry is "the child as consumer and as audience" (p. 4). The book focuses on product manufacturing industries that produce toys, food, clothing and other goods that can be advertised to children. The media considered include far more than television, since books, radio, video cassettes, and even computer software, are involved, and the list keeps growing (p. 5).

Chapter one, "Children Become Consumers," and chapter two, "Children Become Audiences," trace the increasing importance of children to advertisers, through the twentieth century. Children not only influence family purchases but also they increasingly control money of their own, and are trained as consumers for their later role as adult consumers. "Children are a current market, a future market, and an influential market" (p. 9, quoting J. McNeal). Children quickly became a major target audience in the early days of radio (p. 25), and "the children's radio industry established the norms of sponsorship and programming" that have continued in television to the present (p. 38).

Chapter three describes an interactive relationship between the toy industry and the children's television industry in which "creative products are the result of marketing strategies and children's imagination is tied into the market economy" (p. 59). Chapter four presents three case studies of this interaction: "Smurfs," "He-Man," and "ThunderCats." The lines between the entertainment companies and the toy companies became progressively less clear during the early 1980s, and often have disappeared entirely (p. 61).

In chapters five and six, the author explores "alternatives for children's entertainment," which bypass commercial broadcast television but are no less dedicated to "the consumerization of childhood" (p. 81). Public television is one of these "alternatives," which, "because of the vagaries of funding, ... has begun to take on the characteristics of commercial broadcasting" (p. 99). For example, the sports shoe company Nike funded *Ghostwriter*, a literacy program for 7 to 10 year-olds. Pecora says, "Although one wants to applaud Nike for its altruism, one must also recognize that Nike is the leading athletic shoe company in the highly competitive youth market. Its logo is shown with each *Ghostwriter* episode, thus associating product and program" (p. 100).

"Licensed character" products, such as toys representing superheros, have spread from radio and television into comic books, books, records, home videos, video games, live concerts and other media. They most often originate in the United States, but have international implications. "Often motion pictures have simultaneous release in the international market as well as the United States, and the Care Bears, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, the Trolls, and the Lion King become a part of the world" (p. 132). The youth population of the world is increasing and thirsts for "the latest pop culture trend," which most often originates in the United States (p. 135). Growing knowledge of the English language, satellite distribution across international boundaries, and the easy translation of animated films (p. 136), all contribute to this globalization of children's culture. But this raises the question, "Will we, at one level, develop a common language, or will we lose a cultural richness as indigenous stories are replaced by Hollywood fantasy?" (p. 151).

The uncontrolled consequences of the profit motive that has given birth to entertainment structures which turn children into consumers have long been recognized as a problem. Efforts to regulate abuses — "to assure that the broadcast industry served the 'public interest, convenience or necessity'" — have

proven futile, at least in the United States (p. 157). The nation, the industry, and the caretakers of children must all become aware of the nature and special needs of children and take responsibility for understanding them and responding constructively (p. 158).

The references provide a substantial bibliography (pp. 167-181).

— WEB

Abelman, Robert. *Reaching a Critical Mass: A Critical Analysis of Television Entertainment.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Pp. xv, 499. ISBN 0-8058-2199-6 (hb.) \$99.95; 0-8058-2200-3 (pb.) \$55.00.

Practically everyone knows about television, but it is safe to say that few understand how the industry works, and that no one has an adequate understanding of what television does to its viewers sociologically and psychologically. Abelman writes "for the millions of us who simply watch television," and stresses that this book "reminds us that nothing is simple about watching television" (pp. xiii-xiv). He says that "television is, after all, big business." As such, it does everything it can to attract and retain audiences to which it can sell products. In doing so, it uses as many innovative means as its programmers think can attract viewers, mystifying them into becoming passive, indiscriminating viewers, ready to view and buy uncritically. The author puts his work in direct opposition to that goal: "This book is about becoming a more active, discriminating, and self-determined consumer" (p. xiv). He hopes that by increasing our knowledge of the inner workings of the television industry we can not only "become viewers capable of making more purposeful viewing selections," but also "become more appreciative of the art, craft, and science of programming and program scheduling and more aware of television as a social and cultural force unmatched by any medium before it... We become a critical mass audience" (*ibid.*).

The book's thirteen chapters are distributed among its three parts, as follows. Part I, "Establishing a Critical Perspective," deals with "Taking Television Seriously," "Taking Television Critically," "Television Programs and Symbolic Interaction," "Becoming Teliterate," "The Business Behind the Box," and "The Evolution of [the TV industry's] Power and Prestige." Part II, "Applying a Critical Perspective: Nonnarrative

Programming," probes three common genres of programming: "Talk Shows," "Televised Sports," and "Game Shows." Part III, "Applying a Critical Perspective: Narrative Programming," addresses four additional genres: "Comedies," "Soap Operas," "Prime-Time Drama," and "Children's Programming."

Despite the fact that television dominates and often sets the agendas for many of our waking hours, we rarely take it seriously. Abelman asks why this is true, and cites many reasons — among them the perception that television "is largely an entertainment-driven activity" and "a pastime, a leisure activity" (pp. 10-11). Also, it "is not an activity that has been embraced by the intellectual community" (p. 12), and it is, simply, "too easily accessible" (p. 13). But, he turns these arguments around and says that we **should** take television seriously for precisely the same reasons, viewed from a different perspective. For example, television is important as an entertainment-driven activity because entertainment serves essential psychological functions and through it much that is true about the human condition can be expressed that cannot easily be expressed in any other form (p. 17). Furthermore, he cites respected TV journalist Bill Moyers as observing that, "All communicators today in any field must be entertainers to some degree" (p. 12). Moyers notes that this is a problem for the serious intellectual, who cannot express his or her complicated understandings of issues in 30-second sound bites. But Abelman, following Marshall McLuhan, remarks that now "electronic technology comprises the ambience of human existence and should not be taken for granted," even by intellectuals (p. 20).

Each chapter is followed by a list of "Key Concepts from this Chapter," and in all but the final chapter it is accompanied by a list of "Questions to be Answered in the Next Chapter." End notes follow each chapter, and the subject index is supplemented by an author index and a TV program index.

— WEB

Aden, Roger C. *Popular Stories and Promised Lands: Fan Cultures and Symbolic Pilgrimages.* Tuscaloosa/London: University of Alabama Press, 1999. Pp. viii, 290. ISBN 0-8173-0938-1 (Hb.) \$34.95.

Everyone's a fan of something. What it may depend on the individual fan's past, present, and desired future. Today's popular culture has made millions of people across the United States into fans. "This book is about why we are fans and what we get out of being fans" (p. 1). The author argues that we get more out of being fans than we realize. Often we are fanatical about things that answer our own life questions, things that contribute to our happiness.

Aden says that Americans believe they must follow certain rules to achieve "the American dream." By following these culturally embedded rules, Americans expect to achieve happiness in their lives or travel to sites termed "promised lands," which are "places where their dreams of progress come true" (p. 3). The author believes that there are three main aspects to consider in defining the American dream: 1) rules, 2) stories, or "grand narratives," that help describe the ultimate dream, and 3) efforts to find the promised land described in the grand narratives.

Rules are common sense norms, or what the French cultural theorist Pierre Bourdieu terms *habitus*. "According to Bourdieu, *habitus* is our collective cultural sense of place that is forged through the reproduction of history" (p. 3). Thus, what we do depends on what we've done. As Bourdieu explains, *habitus* is "history turned into nature" (p. 3). The rules therefore become accepted everyday habits of living.

The continuation of these rules, or *habitus*, is spurred by stories, or *grand narratives*. These stories have a goal for all involved. Often the stories embody a better vision of the future.

These rules inspire the stories and the stories ask for places of development, or "promised lands." The promised lands are a vision of utopia. "Typically the promised land is envisioned as the geographical contextualization of the grand narrative's Idea, the place in which individuals would find themselves once the Idea is realized"

(p. 4).

By having the stories told and retold, over and over, the rules transcend time. Thus even thoughts are bound by the commonsensical rules. Those people who reject the generally accepted common sense rules are seen as strange. No change is encouraged. The grand narratives are roadblocks.

However, creative stories can create change; "...imaginative stories allow opportunities to transcend *habitus*, making possible the envisioning of — and symbolic escape to — alternative social worlds" (p. 5). Storytellers see this as a chance to promote change. Some use their stories to encourage a situation that can exist but never has. As Aden argues, "We enter the imaginary worlds of popular stories, I believe, to engage in *purposeful play*" (p. 6). Purposeful play allows us to go to our own sense of a perfect promised land, to make an *escape*, a movement to "places that matter" (p. 7). We become fans of things that encourage such escapes. Popular stories provide escapes. "To be popular, stories must be different, and a break from the rules offers an opportunity to see how the rules limit us" (p. 9).

Fans make "symbolic pilgrimage" to places where the imagined possibilities exist or can take place. "Only through our imagination ... can we envision alternatives to the constraints of *habitus*" (p. 259).

Part two of the book contains four chapters introducing four examples from current American popular culture to illustrate the more theoretical discussion of the earlier chapters, and to contribute, the author hopes, to "an intriguing and engaging discussion of how symbolic pilgrimages allow us to release, transcend, and critique the *habitus*, while leaving us simultaneously fulfilled and unsatisfied" (p. 112).

The examples, each of which has gathered a substantial following of fans, are the comic strip *Dilbert*, in which office workers contend with the foibles of management bureaucracy and of each other; the television series *The X-Files*, in which two dedicated government investigators are similarly frustrated by the machinations of their superiors under the shadow of extraterrestrial threats and ambiguities; the weekly sports magazine *Sports Illustrated*, in which "sports fans are reminded that sport can either reinforce or resist the postindustrial, technological machine's

tendency to equate humans with mechanical parts, isolate them from others, and insert them into a fixed position" (*ibid.*); and the motion picture *Field of Dreams*, in which a farm field in a relatively remote place is converted into a baseball field, "a particular kind of place" (p. 221) that attracts fans from distant places.

The author says that "a symbolic pilgrimage is an imaginative, ritual journey to a sacred place that is constructed out of the rhetorical fragments possessed by the fan and the text" (p. 258). These examples of journeys into what have become "sacred places" for many illustrate "how symbolic pilgrimages may occur through the popular stories found in a number of different media" (p. 250). Furthermore, the author values them as exercises in seeing what others see in different ways than we would do without such experiences (p. 252).

A long section of references (pp. 263-283) provides a substantial bibliography. — ADK

Alexander, Janet E., and Marsha Ann Tate. *Web Wisdom: How to Evaluate and Create Information Quality on the Web.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xv, 156. ISBN 0-8058-3122-3c (hb.) \$39.95; 0-8058-3123-1p (pb.) \$16.50.

These days, if you want to know more about something, anything, the standard solution is: "Search the Web." In his Foreword, Robert Danford says, "The enormous number and variety of Web sites today offer unparalleled amounts of information" (p. xiii). There are so many Web sites to choose from that the problem for individual users of the Web often is, "How does one find appropriate Web sites and, from those Web sites, how does one select the site or sites that are most appropriate for the immediate purpose?" (*ibid.*). There also is a problem for those trying to create a Web site: How can an unusual, successful Web site be created? This book addresses both those questions.

Searchers must choose among a plethora of Web sites those that are best for their purposes. The authors, both reference librarians at Widener University's Wolfgram Memorial Library, in Chester, Pennsylvania, offer "techniques of critical thinking" designed to choose among competing

sites. "Just as one may act on his or her evaluation of a car or a suit of clothes, he or she may act on information found on the Web — how can we be sure that the information is accurate and useful?" (p. xiii).

Web site creators will want to know how similar sites will compare and how their site can be better than the others.

Just as a user needs to know what elements of a Web site indicate potential value and usefulness, a producer needs to know what users will respond to as they make vital choices from the incredible variety of sites that compete for their attention. (p. xii)

Both the users and creators of Web sites are intended to benefit from the techniques the authors of this book suggest.

A Web site was created by the authors, at <http://www.widener.edu/libraries.html> (Select "Evaluating Web Resources") to provide the reader with "related Web evaluation materials" (p. xv), such as PowerPoint presentations. It also provides "links to many of the Web page examples used throughout the book, as well as links to numerous other sites that illustrate Web evaluation concepts" (*ibid.*).

The book's eleven chapters present many aspects of Web pages, from ways for users to evaluate them to the issues that revolve around creating one. Although the authors do not address visual design, they do emphasize functional design, because of its effect on the quality of information available on a Web site. The goal in creating a Web site, according to the authors, should be for it to "be easy enough to use that it does not frustrate its users or otherwise inhibit access to resources offered at the site" (p. 100).

The book is profusely illustrated with pictures of computer screens illustrating aspects of Web sites being discussed in the text. Appendix A is a compilation of checklists for site creation and evaluation (pp. 116-127). Appendix B similarly provides a compilation of "Information Quality Questions" (pp. 128-136). A glossary (pp. 137-140), brief references (p. 141), and a bibliography (pp. 142-147) also are added. — ADK

Barker, Martin, and Kate Brooks. *Knowing*

Audiences: Judge Dredd: Its Friends and Foes. Luton, UK: University of Luton Press, 1998. Pp. viii, 328. ISBN 1-86020-549-6 (pb.) £19.95.

What are the people like who watch popular action films such as *Judge Dredd*, a feature movie based on a popular hero from the British comic strip *2000 AD*? And, what effects do these sorts of films have on their audiences? While seeming to be fairly easy questions to answer, they presented some problems to the researchers from the University of Sussex who authored this book, "problems that were empirical, methodological or theoretical and sometimes all three at the same moment" (p. 1). Thus, their job was tougher, more complex than expected.

The book is a record of their quest. It is about *Judge Dredd*, the character and the movie, the fans of both the hero and the film, action films in general, how people respond to those films, how to understand those responses, and, as the authors explain, "a hundred other topics to which we found ourselves pushed and pulled by a strangeness that overtook our research in the first place" (p. 1).

In 1995, almost 18 years after the character Judge Dredd was introduced in the comic strip *2000 AD* and had become popular, the film *Judge Dredd* was released. Sylvester Stallone stars, which disappointed many fans who saw the character as a new "Dirty Harry," thus envisioning Clint Eastwood as the more appropriate star.

Made aware of the hopes and confusion of *Judge Dredd* fans by his thorough research of comics, Martin Barker pursued a study of the film's audiences, a study funded by Britain's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), "paying particular attention to the ways in which different groups might 'negotiate the meanings of the film'" (p. 2).

Not only the film, but also the research, drew fire from critics, both journalistic and academic, who decried the "waste" of public research money on a film as "trashy" as *Judge Dredd*, a "typical Hollywood blockbuster" (p. 2). In this book, the authors present their motives in undertaking the project, their thoughts along the way, problems "with our recalcitrant materials" (p. 16), and the ways in which they attempted to solve the problems. In the trial-and-error process of developing their research model, a process detailed

in the first five chapters, the authors felt they learned something of value about popular culture research of this kind, and they "hope readers will gain something from the encounter" as well (*ibid.*).

The book's thirteen chapters discuss a wide range of topics, from audiences to the process of making and marketing a film. In Chapter 10, "Who Cares About Dredd?" the authors say that "having cost over US \$70 million, its box office returns were not good enough" to avoid a serious financial loss, which, coupled with two other major flops and only one success, led to the eventual collapse of the production company Cinergi, in 1997 (p. 225).

Barker and Brooks cite several reasons they found for the film's failure. The first noted was a failure to create a clear image for the film and its hero — comparable, for example, to "Dirty Harry" or "Superman" (pp. 225-226). The second reason was that the film presented America and being American in a negative way and from a British perspective. "The trouble with Dredd was that this was a particularly cynical outsider's image" (p. 228). Americans often are cynical about their own culture and institutions, but don't let anyone else try it! A third reason was a failure in merchandising, including such factors as insufficient time to raise the hero from the relatively specialized, insulated world of British comics to become a household word. The poor box office returns reduced the sale of associated merchandice (toys, video games, etc.).

The authors summarize the reasons they perceive for the film's failure as follows: "What we see here is a series of conflicts: impossible expectations, demands not fulfilled, compromises struck, and so on" (p. 232). The public ultimately has to decide not only whether or not they want to see the film, but also what they think they will gain from seeing it.

Chapter 13 begins with an admission that the book's treatment of *Judge Dredd* has been inadequate in a very critical area: the audience — despite the researchers' considerable efforts to analyze the audience. They feel that audience research on popular culture is plagued by a plethora of theories, to one or other of which researchers often are prematurely and inordinately committed. They describe this general defect in the field as follows:

...our goal was to walk a straight line and stay true to listening to our audiences, and learning from them — however uncomfortable the answers we got. The more we researched and analysed, the more we became aware that a key problem in all work on audiences is that everybody thinks they know what the issues are, before they begin. (p. 301)

The long bibliography is divided into three sections: "Dredd-related materials," "Books and Articles," and "Ephemeral Materials" (pp. 311-323).
— ADK

Cameron, Deborah (ed.). *The Feminist Critique of Language: A Reader*. Second edition. London/New York: Routledge, 1998. Pp. xviii, 368. ISBN 0-415-16399-4 (hb.) \$75.00 [Canadian \$105.00]; 0-415-16400-1 (pb.) \$22.99 [Canadian \$31.99].

Believe it or not, language is a feminist issue! This book aims to guide readers through this very complex labyrinth. The first edition, titled *Word and World*, was meant for literature students, but it attracted a much broader audience than that. According to the editor, "In this extensively revised edition I have taken more account of that diversity, and set out to make the book more useful to more readers" (p. ix).

This second edition has been updated to voice more current feminist arguments, although the basic thrust of the book has not changed. "The overall goals remain the same as they were before: to illustrate the diversity and complexity of feminist ideas about language, to trace the evolution of important dates over time, and to make texts available in their original forms..," the editor explains (p. ix). Although the goals of the book have remained static, the contents have developed to satisfy the broader audiences' thirsts and to encompass more timely writings. Updated versions also became necessary because the feminist critique of language has changed over the years. The three parts and 22 chapters of this book aim to present the reasons now most commonly being given to show why language is a feminist issue.

Part one, "Speech and silence — The quest for

women's voices in culture," provides a number of opinions on the so-called silencing of women. It starts with a chapter on "Naming and Identity" by Zambian-American Felly Nkweto Simmonds, and concludes with a piece by Sara Mills on "The Gendered Sentence."

Part two, "Representations: Sexist language and sexist discourse," looks at how gender is identified in language. The selections in this section are split into three subsections: "Theoretical Questions," "The Debate on Nonsexist Language," and "Approaches to Discourse." The overall goal of this section is to show that the general concepts about sexist language are possibly too basic, and even feminist linguistic researchers argue about the different theories (p. 89). However, as is argued many times in this section, this does not mean that feminist efforts, past and present, are worthless. "Rather," as the editor argues, "it means that the feminist critique of language is an ongoing project, and will doubtless remain ongoing for the foreseeable future" (*ibid.*).

How and why women and men talk the way they do is discussed in part three, "Talking gender: Dominance, difference, performance." It is argued that men and women aren't just born speaking the way they do. Their styles are culturally developed. The editor admits she has "selected contributions to part three to illustrate how feminists have arrived at this newer understanding of what is at stake in the study of gendered linguistic behavior" (p. 215).

Each of the book's three main parts begins with an introduction by the editor and closes with suggested "Further reading" for those who wish to delve further into the topic. The "further reading" sections should be read with reference to the bibliography (pp. 345-358), which contains each title's full publication details.
— ADK

Ganesh, S. *Lectures on Mass Communication*. Kamla Nagar, Delhi: Indian Publishers Distributors, 1995 (2nd ed., 1998). Pp. xiv, 462. ISBN 81-7341-014-3 (pb.) Rs. 170.00.

This is an introduction to mass communication studies based on lectures given by the author at more than twenty institutions in New Delhi, Bombay, Andhra Pradesh, and other locations in India. The 83 chapters begin with general

treatments of communication and communication studies, then go on to cover a wide range of topics. The author places some emphasis on advertising and public relations (p. 458), his own areas of specialization. The book is intended "for the Indian reader keeping his or her interest in mind while not neglecting the dominant stream of thinking in the broad field of communications" (p. 1).

A chapter on media and religion suggests that the media take a positive stance towards religion while promoting tolerance between different religions. The case of the Hindu-Muslim clash over a temple/mosque site in Ayodhya is given special attention (pp. 201-205).

Three pages of references are supplemented by a brief list of additional bibliography.

There is no index. Binding and paper quality are poor. — WEB

Gonzalez, Alberto, and Dolores V. Tanno (eds.). *Politics, Communication, and Culture.* (International and Intercultural Communication Annual, 1997, Volume XX. Thousand Oaks, CA/London/New Delhi: Sage, 1997. Pp. vii, 292. ISBN 0-7619-0741-6 (hb.) \$55.00; 0-7619-0742 (pb) \$24.95 [ISSN: 0270-6075].

This twentieth volume in the International and Intercultural Communication Annual series focusses on intercultural communicative aspects of political behavior.

Ten papers are equally divided between Part I, "Perspectives on Politics and Culture," and Part II, "Politics and Its Cultural Bases." A final section, "Forum: Politics in Intercultural Training Programs" (pp. 207-248) consists of four interacting papers: "Intercultural Training for Expatriates: Reconsidering Power and Politics," by Hui-Ching Chang and G. Richard Holt, followed by "Introducing Power, Context, and Theory to Intercultural Training: A Response to Chang and Holt," by Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz, "The Problem With Power: Reflections on Chang and Holt," by Anita Kathy Foeman, and "Reconsidering Power and Politics: A Rejoinder," by Chang and Holt.

In the latter discussion it is noted that power is a central but sensitive, and frequently neglected dimension of intercultural training programs. It is

interactional as well as structural and arises from many factors and forces. Issues of power are difficult to insert into an intercultural training program, but, according to Chang and Holt more specific and relevant approaches to it are possible.

Topics covered in Part I include a review of U.S. and European communication studies on culture's influence on politics, the "dialogic ethic of coherence," the function of political communication in establishing the political legitimacy of the state, and "the debate between relativists and antirelativists over the United Nations' 1949 Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (p. 6).

The papers in Part II deal with the role of mythic discourse in a contemporary Hawaiian sovereignty movement, the role of ritualism in Mao Zedong's cultural revolution, the generation of "multilexical texts" in the 1990 Mohawk confrontation with Quebec police, avoidance of rebellion in Taiwanese politics, and the "vernacular construction of Chicano/a Nationalism" in the southwestern United States.

All references are combined at the end (pp. 249-267). — WEB

House, Linda I. *Introductory Phonetics and Phonology: A Workbook Approach.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Pp. x, 263. ISBN 0-8058-2068-X (pb. \$24.50).

Although this workbook is intended for a variety of audiences, the author has especially in mind speech and language pathologists, who, before they can identify and begin to cure pathological speech must first understand "the normal processes of how sounds are formed and their relation to language development" (p. ix).

Phonetics is defined, at the outset, as "the study of speech sounds in terms of physical and articulatory aspects" (p. 5). *Phonology* is defined as, "the study of the rules and organization of sound units in the language" (*ibid.*).

The book begins with a chapter on "the basis of phonetics and phonology," including an introduction to the international phonetic alphabet, in the recognition that many sounds in English [and other languages, as well] cannot be adequately

expressed in the unaided Roman alphabet (p. 3). Chapter 2 discusses anatomical and physiological correlates," and subsequent chapters in part one — which accounts for half the book (pp. 1-139) — deal, respectively, with vowels, diphthongs, consonants, and "single phoneme and phonological development."

The five chapters of part two (pp. 141-216), "Stress and Theory," treat coarticulation, syllable stress, "narrow transcription and factors influencing pronunciation," sentence stress, and "standards of pronunciation and dialects."

Six appendices provide historical and background information on the origins and diversity of the English language and its antecedents. A brief list of references follows (p. 257).

The book is intended to be used as a workbook, with space provided for notes and written responses to the suggested exercises.

— WEB

ILCE: Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa (Calle del Puente No. 45, Col. Ejidos de Huipulco, Delegación Tlalpan, C.P. 14380, México, D.F.); the five following publications:

Ávila Muñoz, Patricia, and Cesáreo Morales Velázquez (Coordinators) *Estudio Independiente* (Independent Study). Mexico, D.F.: ILCE, 1996. Pp. 283. No ISBN; n.p.

"Maestría en Tecnología Educativa" (Mastery in Education Technology) series:

Módulo Investigación Educativa (1995):

Taller: *Medición, Evaluación y Clasificación de Información para Plantear y Contrastar Hipótesis - Guía Teórico-Methodológica*, Pp. 134. n.p.

Taller: *Medición, Evaluación y Clasificación de Información para Plantear y Contrastar Hipótesis - Cuaderno de Ejercicios*, Pp. 42. n.p.

Módulo Planificación y Administración Educativa (1994):

Taller: *Administración de Centros Educativos - Cuaderno de Ejercicios*, Pp. 134.

El tiempo que te quede libre: Usos y Desusos del Tiempo Libre (The Time That Remains Free to You: Uses and Misuses of Free Time) (December 1997). Pp. 56. No ISBN; n.p.

The ILCE — Latin American Institute for Educational Communication — is concerned with studying and promoting distance education and open education in Latin America. It works in close collaboration with the Organization of American States (OAS, or OEA — Organización de los Estados Americanos). That collaboration is evident in the first four of the five publications reviewed here, which were published by ILCE in collaboration with the OAS.

The book edited by Avila and Morales consists of articles on improving independent study, such as that required of students in distance education programs. Most of the articles are by Mexican authors supplemented by contributions from Venezuela, Chile, Spain, and the United States. Independent study is, of course, a *sine qua non* of distance learning. The authors deal with it under four headings: basic principles and considerations, an "exploration of the habits and strategies necessary for the development and consolidation of independent study" (p. 7), models and methods of research concerning distance education, and "practical contributions for the formation of students and professionals of strategic design for independent study" (p. 8).

The three workbooks on "Mastery in Technological Education," include a "theoretical-methodological guide to the measurement, evaluation and classification of information for planning and checking hypotheses," a collection of exercises to accompany that guide, and a collection of exercises about the "administration of educational centers."

The fifth publication consists largely of line drawings with accompanying text designed to help young people plan their use of both free time and study time more effectively.

— WEB

Journées d'études François de Sales. Lecteur mon prochain (Reader, my neighbor): *Actes*:

Thonon-les-Bains, les 25/27 janvier 1996.
Paris/Annecy/Lyon: La Fédération Française de la
Presse Catholique/Le diocèse d'Annecy/Le
Département de Communications de l'Université
Catholique de Lyon, 1996(?). Pp. 149. No ISBN.
(pb.) FF 120.-.

This volume of proceedings of the study days of Francis de Sales held at Thonon-les-Bains, France, and organized by the Diocese of Annecy, the French Catholic Press Association, and the Department of Communication of the Catholic University of Lyon, attempts to orient the French Catholic press towards a better understanding of and relationship with its "neighbors." This attitude is deemed consistent with that of Saint Francis de Sales, patron saint of the Catholic press, who worked in the same area 400 years before these "study days" (p. 35).

After an opening session, the morning and afternoon sessions of Friday and the afternoon session on Saturday were each arranged around a position paper (*provocation d'ouverture*) followed by workshops (*ateliers*) addressing aspects of each paper.

Risk is involved in approaching one's neighbor, so each of the position papers is titled as a "bet" or "wager" (*pari*): "The wager of proximity," "the wager of conviviality," and "the wager of responsibility." A special section deals with writing for youth: "Young reader, my neighbor." The closing session offers perspectives on how the journalist might prepare himself or herself to listen to others and come closer to readers.

The representatives of the three organizing bodies — diocese, association, and university — then give their conclusions. Aimé Savard, President of the French Catholic Press Association, notes that Catholic journalists, "ask that the Church recognize that the Catholic press — despite its human imperfections — also has a missionary vocation and is conscious of it" (p. 148).

There is no index. — WEB

King, Neal. *Heroes in Hard Times: Cop Action Movies in the U.S.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999. Pp. xi, 282. ISBN 1-56639-701-4 (hb.) \$59.50; 1-56639-702-2 (pb.) \$19.95.

What do cop movies really mean? They are a "politically charged, wonderfully brutal, and frustratingly straight-white-male-centered genre" (p. x), a fantasy world that bears little resemblance to real life, but appears to fill certain social-psychological functions for its predominantly white, male target audience. Sociologist Neal King looks at how the different cultures of the cop movies and real life in the U.S. affect each other. To do so, he closely studied 193 cop action films produced from 1980 through 1997. While both academic and nonacademic researchers have arrived at what King feels are broad and simplistic conclusions about cop movies, he believes "that cops often spell out the place of racism, misogyny, and capitalist greed in their world" (p. ix). Cop movies therefore make very descriptive political comments on their times. King says, "I show how cops mount a morality play about what different people deserve, how they lost it, and what they can do about it" (p. 2).

Chapter 1, "Losing Ground at the Movies," looks at how cop movies comment on the fact that people feel their world is falling apart. In the movies, the cops victoriously rebel against the criminal class, which reflects the problems of the time. The cops are "real men" who "do work that is both devalued and difficult but vital to a sick world's survival" (p. 12). As the author puts it, "Hard times give them opportunities to retake the center stage they feel they've lost" (p. 2).

Cop movies speak to the political, social, and economic problems of the time, for the most part as perceived by working-class white males.

Cop action grapples with the frequency of divorce, delinquency among children, sexual deviance among men, sale of drugs to children and the poor, violent crime in general, control of that crime by police, preferential treatment of suspects by race, affirmative action in a meritocracy, segregation and harassment on the job site, deskilling of professional labor, devaluation of blue-collar work, corruption among ruling-class men, and conspiracy theories of economic crisis (p. 4).

The cops fight all of the aforementioned problems and then become heroes by killing the ultimate causes, who King believes are usually

white, upper-class men. The seemingly more immediate threats to white, working-class male status — women and non-white working-class males — become "sidekicks" in this class struggle. "Together the heroes and sidekicks argue about class, gender, or race relations and then defeat the criminals with bloody violence" (p. 3).

The book does not really delve into the *hows* and *whys* of the American preoccupation with cop movies, in the course of its seven chapters and conclusion. King explains, "I conducted this research, not because it stood a chance of answering those questions, but because I grew tired of people trying to answer them without paying close attention to the movies in the first place" (p. 209).

King closes with an extensive appendix, "Using Movies," that instructs the reader on how to interpret cop action movies and also provides a filmography of the 193 movies he included in his studies, followed by a long section of endnotes.

— ADK

MacKie-Mason, Jeffrey K., and David Waterman (eds.). *Telephony, the Internet, and the Media: Selected Papers from the 1997 Telecommunications Policy Research Conference*. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Pp. xxiv, 297. ISBN 0-8058-3151-7 (hb.) \$79.95; 0-8058-3152-5 (pb.) \$45.00.

This volume consists of papers from the 25th annual Telecommunications Policy Research Conference. Although the papers reflect the rapid changes that have taken place in technology and other aspects of the communications industry through the past few decades, in some ways it can be said that "the more things change, the more they stay the same." Many of the same basic policy issues remain, while growing in complexity, as technologies converge and the various parts of the industry come to have greater impact on each other.

Telephony, the internet, and the mass media are all different types of communication industries, yet they are very interrelated and dependent on each other. If one of these industries has a problem, the others feel it. So they must band together to make their services appealing to consumers. The editors

say in their introduction that, "It is not reaching to say that no longer can any telecommunications policy be limited strictly to a single communications medium" (p. xiii).

The various communications industries also can look at each others' histories of successes and failures and learn from them. The editors point out the value of this interaction to one of the newest major communications industries: "As the chapters in this volume indicate, these common concerns are especially important for Internet research" (p. xiv), given that the Internet is a relatively new communications industry that is growing very quickly.

The Conference papers selected for this book illustrate how the Telecommunications Policy Research Conference (TPRC) has adapted to the changing times since its inception (p. xi). But the industries' rapid convergence posed organizational problems for the Conference:

With the continuing convergence and interaction between traditionally separate telecom industries, it is not easy to segment our 15 selected papers from the 1997 TPRC into well-defined categories. (p. xv)

Consequently the subject matters of the book's five parts — Historical, Telephony, The Media, the Internet, and Comparative Studies in Telephony and Satellite Policy — inevitably overlap and intermesh.

The historical first part looks at the beginning of TPRC. It notes that

An objective of TPRC has always been to provide not merely a forum for communication policy researchers to exchange ideas, but also a channel for policy-relevant research to reach regulators and other government officials, and for the latter to convey their research needs to academics. (p. 1)

The second part of the book focuses on telephony, from local to international markets. Part III, "The Media," looks at the different forms of "mass" media presentation, from video to radio.

"The Internet" is the theme of part IV. In one of its papers authors Lorrie Faith Cranor, of AT&T Labs-Research, and Joseph Reagle, Jr., of the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, point out the seeming anomaly that "Technologists are designing Web applications to address social problems" (p. 230). In these "social protocols," they recognize

that social concerns may explicitly contribute to the requirements of the design. However if collecting and comprehending requirements from a client in the commercial or technical world is difficult, it is much harder to understand the requirements of a society or multiple societies! (p. 230)

The final part, "Comparative Studies in Telephony and Satellite Policy," stresses how all the industries can benefit from looking at the experiences of their sister industries around the world, with reference to communication satellite policies in Asia, telecommunications policy in the new South Africa, and telecom competition in Canada and the United States. This last chapter comments on

important differences in the approaches chosen by the two countries. The U.S. approach is based on public utility concepts, whereas the Canadian approach is based on antitrust and economic principles. This chapter shows that, as a result, Canada is likely to have widespread facilities-based competition for local telecommunications services before the United States. (p. 269) — ADK

Miller, Toby, and Alec McHoul. *Popular Culture and Everyday Life*. London/ Thousand Oaks, CA/New Delhi: Sage, 1998. Pp. xii, 224. ISBN 0-7619-5212-8 (hb.) n.p.; 0-7619-5213-6 (pb.) \$24.95.

Wake up. Get out of bed. Take a shower. Get ready for work. Have breakfast while watching the news. Drive to work while listening to the radio. A normal morning; and, one would think, activities relevant to the study of "popular culture." But are they? The authors feel that the study of "popular culture" has focussed so much on the spectacular — "pop stars and their sexuality, politically 'hot' topics, youth resistance, and so on" (p. ix) — that

it has neglected the mundane and the normal activities that are the true locus of culture. If they are mentioned, they are turned into spectacle, as representations of "wider social forces."

According to the authors, "All we have to say (or rather, to show) in this book, is that everyday popular culture is too important a social phenomenon to be dealt with speculatively, as the spectacular, and always as a representation of something else" (p. x). They want to show how the objects different people use to meet their everyday wants and needs are very personal and individual, not "spectacular." They also want to show how to recognize these objects. They term their approach, "ethnomethodologically inspired cultural studies," or EMICS (p. xi).

They adopt a two-pronged approach that concerns "the specifically historical and the specifically mundane" (p.xi). Miller, Associate Professor of Cinema Studies at New York University, looks at popular writings that theorize on specific cultural fields, like eating, reading, and watching TV. McHoul, Associate Professor in the Communication Studies Program of Murdoch University, asks "typical cultural studies questions" about Miller's findings: *How* do they eat, read, or watch TV?

Their differing approaches do not always agree with each other: "they sometimes abruptly collide" (p. xi). They do not see this as a problem, since, by its nature, the field of cultural studies looks for different theories that do not always agree; although, historically, it has focussed unduly on the spectacular.

In what claims to be a new focus for cultural studies, the authors look at everyday life, attempting to give a broad view, looking at individual participation in both majority and minority cultures. After an "Introduction to Popular Culture and Everyday Life" (chapter one), the remaining four chapters are devoted to the domains of "food/eating," "sport," "self help/therapy," and "cultural devices: talking." Each chapter begins with a synopsis of important studies on the subject covered in that chapter; "it then goes on to examine other public discourses that produce these cultural fields, and concludes with one or more original empirical investigations based on ethnomethodologically inspired cultural studies (EMICS)" (p. 2).

The introductory chapter defines terms such as "popular," "culture," and "the everyday," adding the authors' views about each. A Glossary, at the end of the book (pp. 183-197) provides definitions of many additional terms.

Typical of each of the four domain-oriented chapters is the one on sport (chapter three). It opens telling of sport's frequently heard characterization as a break from real life. The authors dispute that theory, saying that "sport is neither completely separate from everyday life; nor is it quite *ordinary* life as usual" (p. 89). It is argued that sport is both ordinary life and spectacular. But it is recognized that sport problems and real problems remain separate.

The glossary is followed by extensive references (pp. 199-216) and an index. — ADK

Moore, Roy L. *Mass Communication Law and Ethics, Second Edition.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xvi, 678, ISBN 0-8058-2599-1 (hb.) \$55.00.

Moore's Preface to this second edition of the book (the first edition was published in 1994) cites a 1995 study of journalism curricula which indicated that while "more than 9 out of 10 accredited journalism programs require a course in journalism law," only "slightly more than 4 out of 10 ... require a course in journalism ethics" (p. xv). The author brings the two together in this volume as means to help give students an "understanding of the symbiotic relationship between media law and ethics" (*ibid.*). He feels that a greater stress on ethics joined to the study of media law is needed in an era when "public confidence in the mass media continues to erode and more reporters and editors are exposed for unethical conduct" (p. xvi).

Part I of the book presents an overview of "the American legal system and the judicial process," with three chapters covering "codes of ethics and sources and types of U.S. law," "the U.S. legal system," and "the judicial process" (pp. 1-96). Part II, "Governmental Restraints," has seven topical chapters on: "prior restraint," "corporate and commercial speech," "electronic mass media and telecommunications," "libel," "right of privacy," "press and public access to the judicial process, records, places, and meetings," "intellectual

property," and "indecentcy, obscenity, and pornography." Like part I, part II is limited to the United States context.

Media law constitutes a huge body of codes, decisions, and interpretations, but they are usually clear and specific. "Unlike the law, codes of ethics are generally so nonspecific that even their staunchest advocates differ on how they would apply them and in their interpretations of their meaning" (p. 16). Ethical norms usually are embodied in codes of ethics devised from time to time by various professional groups or even particular media enterprises. Sources for the norms are diverse, and they often are unclear, and hard to apply. The author says that

tracking down the sources for standards of ethics is no easy task. Indeed, most of what we know about media ethics has been acquired with experience, although there are a few professional codes that provide some guidance. Unfortunately, these codes are typically so vague and general that yes or no answers are usually impossible (p. 17).

He believes that most journalists want to be ethical, but, "according to one study, codes apparently do not have a direct impact on journalists' decisions" (*ibid.*).

The book makes no reference to philosophically- or theologically-based ethical or moral systems.

Self-regulation is an ethically-based approach often relied upon to fill in legal lacunae in media situations that threaten the common good. Efforts "to eliminate false, misleading, and deceptive advertising" often take this direction in situations wherein broad interpretations of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment protect commercial speech which is widely recognized to be harmful. But those who are responsible for the regulation are precisely those who stand to lose most by its strict application. Consequently, "self-regulation still typically weeds out only the most blatant and egregious abuses, and government enforcement is usually only a few steps ahead of self-regulation" (p. 250).

Appendixes A through E are the texts of various American ethical codes — for journalists, photographers, editors, advertising agencies, and broadcast news. Appendix F is the text of the U.S.

Constitution, with Preamble and Amendments. Appendix G gives "fair use" guidelines for educational multimedia, prepared by the Educational Multimedia Fair Use Guidelines Development Committee, July 17, 1996 (p. 633). Appendix H reproduces copyright registration forms, Appendix I reproduces trademark registration forms. A "Table of Cases" precedes the general index. — WEB

Myers, Greg. *Ad Worlds: Brands, Media, Audiences.* London/New York/Sydney/Auckland: Arnold (Hodder Headline Group), 1999. Pp. xv, 246. ISBN 0-340-70006-8 (hb.) \$60.00; 0-340-70007-6 (pb.) \$19.95.

Analyzing advertisements has become so normal that almost everyone does it. It is so common, says the author, that "advertisers are painfully aware that their audiences know something about ads, and try to build this knowledge into ads that refer to other advertising" (p. ix). At the same time, it is argued that ads must be seen within the culture in which they are released in order to fully appreciate them. How is the advertised product marketed? How does advertising affect the public? How do the members of the public see themselves? And how are they seen by others? All of these questions must be answered before a successful ad or ad campaign is created.

Advertising is a multifaceted industry. An ad goes from the client to the agency to the audience. And the "contents of advertising texts are not just imprinted on the blank minds of spectators" (p. x). Rather, everyone who witnesses an ad has his or her own life history. Thus, how people grow up, their culture, is highly determinative of how advertising affects them. Furthermore, the production of an ad goes through many different stages, passing through several "worlds" that influence it from differing perspectives. An ad may go from the brand manager to a television broadcaster to consumers. "This is the main point of this book: detailed consideration of any ad leads us through many worlds" (p. xi). The three main worlds of advertising make up the three parts of the book. They are brands, media, and audiences.

Part I, "Brands," goes from a chapter on what ads do to a chapter on globalization in advertising.

Part II, "Media," covers everything from media mixes to advertising on the World Wide Web. Part III, "Audiences," instructs advertisers in how they can construct an audience and goes on to tell them what most audiences already know about advertising.

Chapter 10, "Projecting the audience: drink driving," argues "that ads do not necessarily find (or miss) a target audience that is already out there, but may project a category of audience that fits the ad" (p. 170). Myers exemplifies his discussion of the target audience using the UK's "ads warning against the dangers of drinking and driving" (p. 172). He shows that while all ads are meant for a particular group of consumers, or target audience, the process of pinpointing that audience can be very complicated. Advertising against drunk driving poses several special problems, in spite of everyone's opposition to drunk driving. Overlapping categories in the ads provided material that very diverse audience members could use to construct their own meanings, appropriate to their own situations, yet delivering the advertiser's message. Like this campaign, much advertising assumes an active audience, "whose members can put together a complex message out of bits, according to the relevance it has for them" (p. 181).

Myers finally admits that there are an infinite number of ad worlds. "But the study of advertising should tell us...that ad worlds are not the whole world" (p. 214). Although "ads are ubiquitous in our culture" they "are not omnipotent or monolithic" (*ibid.*).

An extensive glossary provides detailed descriptions of keywords used in the book, from "address," to "medium" to "World Wide Web" (pp. 215-230), and the references provide a bibliography (pp. 231-239). — ADK

Noam, Eli M. (ed.). *Telecommunications in Africa.* New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. viii, 306. ISBN 0-19-510201-0 (hb.) \$75.00.

"Just give me a call." While this is an effortless and therefore common request to respond to among inhabitants of industrialized countries, it is a demanding and presumptuous request to make in Africa. On a global scale, Africa's land mass and

population are impressive, yet it accounts for a mere two percent of the world's telecommunications. In 1994, "the region of 600 million people had fewer phones than Manhattan south of 59th Street" (p. 3).

Telecommunications were first brought to Africa by the colonial nations to be used as an instrument of power, but after independence they came to be used with the domestic goal of assisting national development. By the 1990s, political and economic development among the various countries in the continent differed greatly. "It is this diverse and changing environment that we present in this book" (p. 8).

Noam, Professor of Finance and Economics and Director of the Columbia Institute for TeleInformation at the Columbia University Graduate School of Business, has assembled contributions from 22 experts on telecommunications. Thirteen of them are based in Africa south of the Sahara, one in Egypt, one in Ethiopia, four in the United States, and three (the authors of the chapter on Kenya) are from the firm, Booz, Allen & Hamilton, which is not further identified in the book. Noam describes the book's purpose as follows:

It is our hope that the present volume will contribute to the development of innovative, effective, and timely solutions to the challenges that face African telecommunications as they enter a period of historic transformation. (p. 11)

Andrea Kavanaugh of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute analyzes the development of telecommunications in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia in Chapter 4. Those countries have surpassed not only most other African countries but even many industrialized countries in some aspects of the development of telecoms technology.

In Chapter 8, Hughes Koné reports on the origins of telecommunications in Cote d'Ivoire (The Ivory Coast), how it is doing now, and what is expected for the future. Since its independence in 1960, telephone subscribers have multiplied substantially faster than the population has increased. Although "the Ivory Coast's telecommunications system is considered one of the most effective and advanced in sub-Saharan Africa," the country nevertheless remains "almost

totally dependent on Western countries, especially France," for its "technology and the supply of telecommunications material" (p. 161).

The two closing chapters deal with continent-wide issues. Chapter 14, by Mansur M. Nuruddin, of Columbia University, discusses "Models for the Development of Regional Telecommunications Networks in Africa" (pp. 257-278). In Chapter 15, Heather E. Hudson, of the University of San Francisco, addresses the "challenges for Africa" of "New Communications Technologies for Development..." (pp. 279-299). Hudson stresses that African policy makers must "keep in mind...that the telecommunications network is more than simply a financial asset and a source of revenue. It is a vital strategic resource for their nations and for the continent" (p. 297).

Although progress in telecoms development in African countries is diverse, and its success far from uniform, recent political and economic changes throughout the continent give the contributors to the book hope that Africa can soon start to take part in the global telecommunications economy.

References and bibliographies follow each paper.

— ADK

Olson, Scott Robert. *Hollywood Planet: Global Media and the Competitive Advantage of Narrative Transparency.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xiv, 215. ISBN 0-8058-3229-7 (hb.) \$45.00; 0-8058-3230-0 (pb.) \$24.50.

Does culture rule? Without it there would be anarchy, and, in fact, human social life would be impossible. There has been, and foreseeably always will be, conflict between the two: the norms of cultural tradition and the disorder of anarchy. International media, particularly American media in the international marketplace, have the power to lean people one way or the other: towards lives that are orderly and "traditional" or towards disorder and anarchy. As the author says, "American media are everywhere and responses to them are complex" (p. vii). The media create images that are experienced all over the world.

A UNESCO conference in the 1980s stated that culture is worldwide, images are created that

"inevitably wear away national cultures and transmit a uniform lifestyle which it is attempted to impose on the planet as a whole" (p. viii). UNESCO called for a "New World Information Order" (NWIO) partly to help protect threatened cultures. Many attempts have been made to create a worldwide culture in the twentieth century. When we look back at some of their disastrous results, such as Nazism, Stalinism, and Maoism, we can see why diversity has come to be widely preferred to them. Most nations accommodate a number of cultures living together in peace. "So the option is not really between culture and anarchy, but rather between cultures and anarchy" (*ibid.*). And the author feels that the international media play a role in "coaxing us to one or the other" (*ibid.*).

American culture is the one most often imported into other countries by the international media. According to some, it tends to develop a "*global monoculture* — a single set of shared values, beliefs and behaviors imposed or accepted everywhere" (p. ix). The author says that "due to a unique mix of cultural conditions" in United States culture, people of other cultures can easily "project indigenous values, beliefs, rites, and rituals into imported [American] media..." (p. 5). The same iconic media are easily adopted by people who read into them their own values. The foreign texts then "resonate with the same meanings they might have if they were indigenous" (p. 6). This is termed *media transparency*. "This transparency effect means that American cultural exports...manifest narrative structures that easily blend into other cultures" (*ibid.*). In this way, American culture often permeates other cultures because people tend to see it as their own culture. Looking for the greatest profit from overseas distribution, American producers tend to amplify the transparency of their products, making them even more acceptable worldwide.

Throughout the eight chapters of this book, the purposes and effects of the international mass media are explored, focusing on US media strength. The first six chapters look at why transparent media is good, why America produces it so well, and how much this type of media is wanted worldwide. Chapter 7 then exemplifies some transparent movies and television programs, such as "The Lion King" and "Walker: Texas Ranger."

Chapter 8, "Cultures and Anarchy," presents the more negative side of how transparent products, such as media, affect other cultures. "Although initial readings invite the projection of preexisting cultural conceptions, particularly when the text is transparent, subsequent readings necessarily become dynamic hybrids of projection and reception, become protean syntheses" (p. 162).

The result is not a movement towards a homogenous world culture. Because "the relation among culture, identity, and media is far more complex than originally assumed," more research is needed, but it already seems clear to the author that, in the postmodern world, "cultures are mutating, dissolving, and hybridizing so fast that it becomes difficult to pin any one of them down, as fragmented, multiplied, and interdeterminate as they are" (p. 186). Transparency

allows unmoored readings, culture is no longer an option, and anarchy is all that remains. ...

What's left? Declining sovereignty, disappearing democracy, reasserting subalterneity, and the end of nationalism.

The Hollywood planet has chosen anarchy. (p. 186).

The references provide a substantial bibliography (pp. 187-197). — ADK

Riffe, Daniel, Stephen Lacy, and Frederick G. Fico. *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Pp. x, 208. ISBN 0-8058-2018-3 (hb.) \$49.95; 0-8058-2019-1 (pb.) \$29.95.

This book draws upon a total of over 60 person-years of experience in quantitative content analysis research on the part of the three authors. The research used in it as illustrative examples ranges from such topics as "White House coverage to portrayal of women and minorities in advertising aimed at children, to environmental reporting and controversial issues in local news" (p. ix). The forms in which that research was presented also are varied, ranging from academic theses to Web sites.

The authors' earlier research raised questions for them both about the processes employed to get

content and about the content itself. Through their involvement in such a large number of studies, the authors found common questions always arising in the process of designing quantitative content analyses, concerning such factors as sample size and technique. This book is meant to answer these common questions. The authors say, "Our goal was to make content analysis accessible, not arcane, and to produce a comprehensive guide that is comprehensible" (p. ix). To make their subject understandable, the authors have tried to use basic language and have used concrete examples to illustrate suggested techniques.

The book starts by discussing the various fields, such as mass communications, that are affected by content analysis. Then the authors define quantitative content analysis:

Quantitative content analysis is the systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, in order to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption. (p. 20)

The chapter devoted to definition is followed by the authors' instructions for designing a study and questions that they think should be included. After this basic groundwork is laid, research issues — measurement, sampling, reliability, validity, data analysis — are discussed. The final chapter, "Computers," recognizes that the use of computers for content analysis has become very popular over the past couple of decades. They "play a variety of roles in content analysis" (p. 192). However, they go on to explain why computers are not appropriate for all content analysis studies. "The nature of the variables being created, availability of appropriate programs, and the impact on expenses determine whether computers should be used for coding" (*ibid.*).

Evolution has occurred over the years in the ways research questions are defined and answered in the field of communication research. "Content analysis has been used in mass communication and in other fields to describe content and test theory-

derived hypotheses" (p. 17). How the research is applied, however, is completely dependent on the analyst, who, the authors feel, can benefit greatly from the guidelines they present in this book.

References are gathered at the end of the book (pp. 193-200). — ADK

Rinehart, Robert E. *Players All: Performances in Contemporary Sport*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998. Pp. xvii, 189. ISBN 0-253-33426-8 (hb.) \$35.00; 0-253-21223-5 (pb.) \$15.95.

We're all in this together: whether spectator, fan, or actual participant, everyone plays in the games of organized sports. The author comments, "There are a myriad of folks out there who have, in one way or another, become players of sport" (p. x). That is why contemporary sports have become much more than just games. Rinehart, an independent scholar whose work has been published in sports and cultural studies journals, looks at how sport has gone from simply a competition between individuals to a complex spectacle in which everyone takes part.

One of the author's many goals is to try to show similarities between sport and art. To reach each of his goals, he presents his findings to his readers, yet leaves it to each individual to draw his or her own conclusions. As he puts it, "I leave the issues open, for the reader to explore them, based upon my reporting of evidence and based upon the reader's own experience... The reader...becomes one of the players of sports as well" (pp. 18-19).

Each of the eight chapters explains a different characteristic of sport, from it being seen as a performance to its contribution to tourism. Yet each of these chapters contributes to Rinehart's overall vision of western sport today — all sports contain at least some of the elements explained in each chapter, according to him.

Chapter 4, "Sport as Avant-Garde: A Case Study of the World Wrestling Federation," looks at the various things modern sport affects: among them, the participants, the fans, and world culture. Rinehart sees "the World Wrestling Federation athletic performances as exemplars of a late-twentieth-century moment precariously bridging the last gasps of modernity and the growing

acceptance of a postmodern condition" (p. 56). He attempts to show how the World Wrestling Federation, popularized by TV, has redefined sports in general:

...the cry in reference to professional wrestling that "It isn't sport: sport has to have an uncertain outcome" or some such prescriptive, traditional definition, is quite beside the point. All (post)modern televised sport is staged and produced for spectator consumption. Modern mediated sport is primarily entertainment, and athletes are likewise primarily entertainers. (p. 62)

The author asks some questions about contemporary sport, but invites "the reader to disagree, to challenge, to explore his or her own experience relative to mine." Some of those questions are:

What is it to experience sport in the late twentieth century? How have nineteenth-century rituals and myths of authenticity become interwoven into the fabric of (postmodern American) sporting life? How have we all become players involved in contemporary postmodern sport forms? (p. 136).

A long list of endnotes and an index compensate for the lack of a bibliography. — ADK

Santos, António. *Visita ao Jornal* (Visit to a Newspaper): *Guia do Professor, Cadernos Público na Escola 2*. Lisbon/Porto: Público, 1991. Pp. 69. No ISBN (pb.) - "out of print" as of 1996.

And,
Pinto, Manuel, and António Santos. *O Cinema e a Escola* (The Cinema and the School): *Guia do Professor, Cadernos Público na Escola 6*. Porto: Público, 1996. Pp. 134. No ISBN (pb.) 1,500 escudos.

These two teachers' handbooks are examples of the series of publications produced for media education in schools by the Portuguese newspaper, *Público*.

The project, "O Público na Escola," was intended "to contribute to forming a closer relation

between the school and the press" (Santos, 1991: 67).

Santos' book offers suggestions to teachers who want to take their students on field trips to newspaper offices. The chapters cover topics such as: "Why visit a newspaper?" criteria to choose which newspaper to visit, how to analyze in depth what a newspaper actually is and its contents, journalists' roles, how a newspaper office functions, the press as an industry, local journalism as an alternative, and follow-up class activities after the visit.

The handbook by Pinto and Santos moves to the cinema and how it might be effectively taught in the classroom. Section "A" gives an overview of cinema from many aspects in twenty sub-sections, ranging from how to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the cinema in schools (December 1995 - Pinto and Santos, 1996: 11-12) to "the Catholic Church and the Cinema" (*ibid.*, pp. 60-61). Section "B" suggests some practical ways of approaching cinema in the classroom. In section "C" several authors discuss activities about cinema in schools, from several perspectives, including "How to awaken in our students a taste for cinema" (pp. 95-100).

In section "D", "The past and future of cinema," several contributors deal with a wide variety of considerations, including the use of "shock value" in films, questions of reality/unreality, and the ways the industry has evolved and is expected to evolve.

Appendixes provide a chronology of cinema history, a glossary, a list of the "best films of all time" — with a general list of ten (4 American, 3 Italian, 1 Russian, 1 French, and 1 by a Dane who worked in various countries) as well as specialized lists — addresses of Portuguese film companies, distributors, schools, festivals, and "Laws concerning cinema," and contact addresses for twenty-six U.S. actors and actresses, as well as a brief bibliography.

Both books are profusely illustrated with high quality black-and-white photographs. — WEB

Sohn, Ardyth Broadrick, Jan LeBlanc Wicks, Stephen Lacy, George Sylvie, Angela Powers, Nora Rifan and C. Ann Hollifield. *Media Management: A Casebook Approach*. Second

Edition. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. x, 383. ISBN 0-8058-3026-X (pb.) \$39.95.

The authors of both this and the first edition (1993), view this second edition as having a better organization: "a reordering of the chapters that facilitates teaching and content cohesion" (p. ix). Among the many contributors, Jan LeBlanc Wicks, Stephen Lacy, George Sylvie, Angela Powers, Nora Rifan, and C. Ann Hollifield are cited by Sohn as responsible for most of the new writing and revisions.

Each topic is accompanied by case studies, thus, according to Sohn, making the book "ideal for students of management because it takes into account flexibility, individuality, and creativity as students face realistic problems and opportunities mirrored in the professional world" (p. x). Good managers are made by employing both thought and practice. The use of the cases is exemplified by instructions towards the end of chapter one, "Managerial Decision Making," as follows:

The principles, theories, and research presented in the early part of the chapter should be used to analyze the information that either is provided with the case or needs to be collected from outside sources. (p. 26)

In each case, the recommended decision process must be applied, according to the authors. It consists of steps which have been described in various ways, but which the authors see as: defining the problem, specifying goals, developing solutions, selecting a solution, implementing the solution, and monitoring the solution (pp. 6-12).

Chapter One recognizes decision making as the core of managing. It is such a large part of the managerial process that it must be done by managers as second nature. This is achieved with time and practice. The decisions that managers must make can be classified as programmed, nonprogrammed, proactive, or reactive. Furthermore, "just as decision making is at the heart of management, so analysis and information collection are the hub of decisions" (p. 26). Without proper analysis or information, bad decisions can be made. There are some tools, such as social science theories and cost-benefit analysis,

that can aid managers in the decision-making process. The three case studies given in this chapter are intended to encourage the use of several managerial tools, from considering past decisions made to looking towards future needs.

The remaining nine chapters, from "Leadership and the Workforce" to "Budgeting and Decision Making," are designed to cover the full range of managerial duties.

Chapter six, "Media Regulation and Self-Regulation," recognizes the fact that media law and regulation are too complicated to have been fully discussed in this chapter. Managers are encouraged to "review the sources cited in this chapter as well as other appropriate sources and counsel to keep abreast of the ever-changing laws, ethical standards, and professional and ethical issues affecting media firms" (pp. 168-169). Eight cases are then given, in that chapter, involving aspects of media regulation and self-regulation.

Chapter nine, "Marketing and Research," encourages media managers to understand and use research to their advantage. "Managers also should understand the research data and techniques their counterparts use" (p. 293). Issues are discussed to help managers design a research study. "Some of the research categories that are important to effective media management are primary, secondary, syndicated, exploratory, descriptive, and causal research" (p. 293). Some applied research methods and data collection designs are then suggested (*ibid.*)

Chapter ten covers "Budgeting and Decision Making."

Two extended case studies follow, to provide students with material for practice analysis using procedures learned from all the chapters. They relate to problems of media profits, public interest, and capital investment.

References, consolidated at the end of the book, provide an extensive bibliography (pp. 359-369).

— ADK

Stark, Frank M. *Communicative Interaction, Power and the State: A Method.* Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 1996. Pp. xi, 227. ISBN 0-8020-0658-2 (hb) \$55.00/£35.75; 0-8020-7612-2 (pb) \$19.95/£13.00.

Stark describes a "method" as combining "an epistemology with appropriate research techniques." This book's purpose, consequently, "is to bridge the gap between theory and research," first building "a theory of institutions and the state upon George Herbert Mead's concept of communicative interactions, Kenneth Burke's notions of rhetoric and dramatism, and Anthony Giddens's scrutiny of the relational conception of power" (p. ix).

In Part 1, Stark first describes Mead's theory of communicative interaction, then he relates it to rhetoric and power, with reliance on the work of Kenneth Burke, whose

understanding of communicative interaction is in fact based on his understanding of Mead's theory. ...rhetoric can be seen as a part of a contest for the control and definition of significant symbols and their meanings in the communicative interaction that brings a community's discourse into being. (p. 21)

Part 2 applies communicative interaction theory to the state, then brings in the relationship of rhetoric and public policy, which Stark feels has been seriously neglected in the literature on either rhetoric or public policy (p. 62). He then goes on to apply the theory to international communication, arguing that "only a theory which deals with communicative *interaction* truly deals with communication between human agents..." not an approach assuming that the existence of facilities for communication implies that the communication already exists (p. 84).

Part 3 discusses "communicative interaction and research techniques," espousing the model of "dramatism," based on Kenneth Burke's "dramatistic model" and "dramatistic analogy," which Burke elaborated out of "Mead's notion of the 'act'" (p. 110). In applying dramatism to the state — with reference to the use of dramaturgy by anthropologist Victor Turner — Stark moves closer to empirical analysis, in chapter 7 (p. 135). He focuses on the analysis of social situations as "scenes," using the Quebec Conference of 1864, which helped determine the shape of Canadian federalism (pp. 145-151), the Founbam Conference of 1961 — "an important scene in the creation of the Federal Republic of Cameroon" (pp.

151-155) — and the Constitutional Conference on Aboriginal Rights and Title of 1983, which helped define Canada's Indian policy (pp. 155-165). Chapter 8, "From Framework to Field-Work," attempts to complete the linkage between the general theoretical model and practical empirical analysis (pp. 167-169).

An appendix, "Explanation, Understanding, and Social Communication," discusses "some basic aspects of explanation in relation to social interaction and institution formation" (p. 192). A bibliography is also appended (pp. 209-218). — WEB

Taracena, Arturo, and Jean Piel (eds.). *Identidades nacionales y Estado moderno en Centroamérica* (National identities and the modern state in Central America). San José: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica — Colección Istmo, 1955. Pp. 281. ISBN 9977-67-275-X (pb.) n.p.

This volume consists of selected papers for a seminar on "the historical balance of the nation states in Central America," held in San Salvador, El Salvador, from Nov. 22nd to 24th, 1993). The editors note, in their "prologue" that many problems and blank pages exist in the political historiography of Central America. They see much of the problem as arising from the prevalence of an evolutionary myth of the "predestined" rise of the political structure from independence through republics and liberal reform to democracy, culminating in the democratic nation-state. It is seen as a task of today's political historians to demythologize the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The editors say that the authors in this volume are dedicated to this task through discerning the larger structure of the period, even though they may occasionally disagree (p. 5).

The authors of the seventeen chapters are based in France, Canada, the United States, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala — with the largest number from the United States.

The four sections into which the chapters are grouped are:

1. Reflections on the Region;
2. Construction of National Identities;
3. Construction of the Modern State;
4. Nation, Gender and Ethnicity.

There is no index.

— WEB