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Visual Persuasion

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IN THIS ISSUE

and

Persuasion and the Moving Image

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Introduction

The Importance of Visual Imagery

Visual images are truly pervasive in persuasive communication. Most persuasive messages — which mainly means advertising, propaganda, and, in fact, rhetoric of almost any kind — make extensive use of various forms of visuals. Many scholars think that a visual image is often a more leading element than its verbal counterpart in the process of persuasion. The visual message easily grabs people's attention and effectively affects their emotion. With these benefits in mind, many people use visual images as persuasive tools. For example, the right visual image and its emotional impact are important to the success of all product and service advertising messages. Even in a political campaign, attention-grabbing and memorable campaign graphics can make a name stand out in a crowded field. On top of that, the visual message offers the best way of imparting complex information. It can transcend language barriers, stimulate interest in subjects considered dry, and accurately and accessibly record technology that might otherwise be forgotten.

A Need for Explanations

The growth of scholarly interest in visuals marks a cultural reality: visual images have become a predominant means of transmitting information in the twentieth century and may be even more so in the next century. However, although it is apparent that more extensive and sophisticated studies are being performed in this area, the body of literature discussing the role and influence of visual imagery has generally failed to explain it fully and only leaves the impression that a great deal of research remains to be done on the question of visuals in communication. Even more surprisingly, this simple term even lacks a widely accepted definition. Therefore, as a consequence of this, it is not a big surprise that this area lacks a cohesive theory.

To Rethink and Redefine

The need to systematically examine visual images in persuasive communication grows even stronger when we consider the changing face of media today. Thus, in this issue I will be examining the recent literature and research to illustrate the need to rethink the definition, the role, and the impact of visual imagery in persuasive communication. In doing so, I shall attempt to develop a map of the field that identifies the foundational theories on which visual persuasion research might be built. This paper seeks to answer the following questions: What are the fundamental characteristics that distinguish visual images from the verbal mode of communication? What is the distinctive contribution that visual images make to persuasive communication? What are the main streams in research on visual persuasion? What are the critiques of visual persuasion? And, what does visual persuasion imply for visual literacy?

Although this paper will draw on numerous ideas and theories stemming from various disciplines, it will not insist on one single way to explain visual persuasion by combining them. Various theoretical approaches are employed just because the evolving body of visual communication theory and literature cross a variety of disciplines.

I. What are the Visual Aspects in Communication?

Paul Messaris. 1997. *Visual Persuasion: The Role of Images in Advertising*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hiroyasu Ogasawara. 1998. "What is 'Visual'? Toward the Reconstruction of the Visual Literacy Concept." *Journal of Visual Literacy*, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 111-120.

Linda M. Scott. 1994. "Images in Advertising: The Need for a Theory of Visual Rhetoric." *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 21, pp. 252-273.

We must confront the problem of identifying the visual image before we can identify the body of visual image research. Most people, even many researchers, use the term "visual" or "visual image" too casually. Although the term in general, refers to things we can see, this common-sense definition of visual is apparently wrong simply because the letters in written verbal communication also can be seen, making them *visual*, as well (Osagawara, 1998: 112). If that is the case, one might add a condition to the naive definition and say that "visual" refers to visible things other than printed words that are used in a communication process. Unfortunately, that also is to be proven wrong. To most modern people, some ancient scripts which are now hardly used will often be regarded as visuals similar to pictures. People tend to regard unfamiliar characters or other decorated letters as visuals.

Then, what are the fundamental characteristics that distinguish visual images from other modes of communication, especially words? To scrutinize the simple and annoying question, it will be useful to look over a few existing ways to divide signs into visuals and verbals. According to Osagawara (1998), many different perspectives on categorizing signs can be sorted into three major perspectives: 1) The relationship between a sign and its meaning, 2) The operational and physical perspective as the decoding sign, and 3) A perspective on the degree of meaningful clarity for the interpreter of the sign.

Here, these three perspectives are respectively named as the *criterion of resemblance*, the *criterion of quickness*, and the *criterion of ambiguity*. Some other perspectives also are included in the criteria. Through this line of categorization, we may clearly differentiate the visuals from the verbals.

The Criterion of Resemblance

It has been said that a criterion for whether some things are visuals depends upon a reality or resemblance between them and their references (Osagawara, 1998: 113). In semiotic or structuralist approaches, for instance, it is often said that pictures signify by virtue of their resemblance to the object.

Depending upon Charles S. Peirce's (1982) categorization of signs — the icon, the index, and the symbol — Messaris (1997) summarized the characteristic properties of persuasive visual images as fulfilling three major roles: iconicity, indexicality, and syntactic indeterminacy, that is, lack of an explicit propositional syntax.

First, iconicity, as a semantic property of images, is referred to as likeness to a representational object, although an iconic sign need not provide a particularly close replica of its object's overall appearance. Through this property, images are assumed to travel across cultures more easily than words do. Another semantic characteristic, indexicality, means a property of pictures that fits Peirce's notion of a sign produced as a physical trace of its object. It is a critical ingredient in the process of visual persuasion whenever a photographic image can serve as documentary evidence or proof of a persuasive message's point. The case of celebrity endorsements in advertising is a simple illustration of this situation. In terms of syntax, what visual images lack, especially in comparison to verbal language, is a set of explicit devices for indicating causality, analogy, or any relationships other than those of space or time. In short, what he contends is that, as far as semantic features are concerned, it is the indexical and iconic properties of visual images that most clearly set

them apart from language and other modes of communication, and that symbolic signs are even more characteristic of language (Messaris, 1997).

The criterion of resemblance, a notion that some things are visuals depending upon a reality or resemblance between them and their references, has been the most common explanation about visuals in many perspectives, including Messaris'. the theoretical principle that pictures reflect reality often becomes the *demand* that pictures should reflect reality (Scott, 1994: 260). Thus, if a visual image does not copy reality, it is conceived of as distorted.

> ...research reflects a bias in Western thinking about pictures that is thousands of years old: the assumption that pictures reflect objects in the real world. From the vantage of this ethnocentric stance, the frankly rhetoric nature of advertising imagery is either purposely overlooked or criticized as a distortion of reality. (Scott, 1994: 252)

Meanwhile, a few researchers recently have expressed dissatisfaction with conceptualizing images as icons that denote reality (Scott, 1994: 260). And now, due to a few seminal articles such as those by Scott (1994) and Osagawara (1998), we can find much evidence proving that visual images do not depend totally upon resemblance to their references. In particular, Scott contended that the approach to visuals would recast pictures as information in symbolic form to be processed cognitively by means of complex combinations of learned pictorial schemata and to not necessarily bear an analogy to nature. She sees advertising images (an example might be the Marlborough cowboy, with his wide range of "Western," "he-man" symbolism) as "A symbol system employed for the purpose of persuasion." that is, she is emphasizing the symbolic relationship that visual images have with their meanings, in contrast to Messaris' argument that symbolicity is only a minor feature of visual communication (Scott, 1994).

According to this perspective, visuals are said to be symbolic on the basis of the fact that they are conventional rather than natural, and therefore, reality or resemblance are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for them.

The Criterion of Quickness

Alan C. Burns, Abgijit Biswas, and Laurie A. Babin. 1993. "The Operation of Visual Imagery as a Mediator of Advertising Effects." *Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 71-85.

Kathy A. Lutz and Richard J. Lutz. 1978. "Imagery-eliciting Strategies: Review and Implications of Research." In, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 5. Edited by H. Keith Hunt. Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research, pp. 611-620.

Deborah J. MacInnis and Linda L. Price. 1987. "The Role of Imagery in Information Processing: Review and Extensions." *Journal of Consumer Research*, No. 13, pp. 437-491.

It is usually believed that pictures can be understood quickly and easily. People think that because visual images resemble the references in shape, the interpretation of visual images is accomplished by analogy and not by learning. This belief is not true of all visual images. For instance, an extremely abstract artistic work does not allow us to decode it by our usual methods. It may not have a fixed meaning nor even a common interpretation among us, and rather may await a unique decoding by each of us for ourselves (Osagawara, 1998: 117).

This false conviction is also somewhat due to the confusion between visual images as a presentation form and mental imagery as a representation form. Mental imagery is defined as a mental event involving visualization of a concept or relationship (Lutz and Lutz, 1978), or a process whereby sensory information is represented in the working memory (MacInnis and Price, 1987). Richardson (1969) states that imagery refers to all those quasi-sensory or quasi-perceptual experiences of which we are self-consciously aware and which exist for us in the absence of those stimulus conditions that are known to produce their genuine sensory or perceptual counterparts.

Visual imaging serves as a mediating factor, operating to accentuate or attenuate the effects of an independent variable on a dependent variable

(Burns, Biswas, and Babin, 1993: 74). And, it is initiated by use of concrete words, as well as by inclusion of pictures. It is mental imagery, not the visual image itself as stimulus, that makes an interpretation immediate, nonlinear, and intuitive.

No one can understand pictures and figures without any preconception or pre-learning. And, this is also true for words. Therefore, it can be said that quickness and ease are not inherent properties in pictures. We should distinguish between perceivable objects (that are visual images) and the way of processing (that is referring to visual information processing).

The Criterion of Ambiguity: A New Definition?

According to Osagawara, pictures and figures are not "visual" in their own right. Moreover, letters and numerals are not "verbal" in their own right. When the meaning of a sign is understood so that its meaning must be construed by the interpreter, then we regard it as "visual" (Osagawara, 1998: 111).

While the two criteria groups fall into fallacies in completely differentiating pictures from words, this third criterion makes it clear when we perceive something as a "visual." A visual image contains an infinite amount of information in comparison to a verbal text, according to Petterson (1988). This means that people always have greater freedom in interpreting visual information than verbal information. Therefore, it can be said that "the more redundant the meaning of the sign, the more we perceive the sign as visual" (Osagawara, 1998: 119). The point of this criterion is that its measures are constructed from the relationship between the signs and their interpreter. While the decoder or interpreter of the sign did not participate in the decision of classification in the two previous criteria groups, the interpreter's role is essential in this last criterion. To the degree that the meaning of the sign is more clear for the interpreter, the signs are called verbals; and as they become more ambiguous, they are called visuals and visual signs (*ibid.* p. 117).

In this paper, hereafter, visual images mean the visuals referring to perceivable objects, and "visual," following Osagawara's definition, means a formal and functional concept, the way we interpret and process signs such as pictures when the meaning of a sign is redundant for the interpreter. Likewise, a sign is "verbal" if it is related to symbols, cognitive skills, custom, habit, convention, schemata, a priori, etc. However, the same author notes that visual and verbal are inseparable and indispensable aspects of communication. If signs do not have any set meanings, and therefore are all visual, we cannot communicate any thoughts (Osagawara, 1998).

In many studies, it is frequently assumed that arguments are part of the verbal elements of the message, while cues reside in the visuals. Also, in one study, for example, it is posited that product-relevant pictures in ads are more likely to be perceived as arguments than as cues, whereas pictures devoid of product relevant information are perceived as cues (Miniard, et al. 1991). Although a more sophisticated perspective has been taken on visual images, we must go far beyond that. When visual images are verbally processed, we must take them as one of the message variables just as we do the central verbal argument in a message.

Conversely, processed as pure visual, visual images should be treated as non-message variables or mechanical variables such as size, typeface, and use of color, and be considered as a matter of aesthetic style in messages. However, because a visual image cannot be categorized completely into one of the two features, there should always be an operational division of the sub-elements in a research setting.

Visual Forms of Communication

K. L. Alesandrini. 1984. "Pictures and Adult Learning." *Instructional Science*, Vol. 13, pp. 63-77.

A. C. Saunders. 1994. "Graphics and How they Communicate." In, D. M. Moore and F. M. Dwyer (eds.), *Visual Literacy: A Spectrum of Visual Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications, Inc.

Saunders (1994) identifies several categories of prepared forms of visual message or visual forms of communication: symbols (pictographic or abstract), maps, graphs, diagrams, illustrations or rendered

pictures (realistic to abstract), photographs (still or moving), three-dimensional models, graphic devices and elements.

Alesandrini (1984) offered three categories for visuals: representational, analogical, and arbitrary. Representational visuals share a physical resemblance to the referent object or concept. Analogical visuals show something other than the referent object and imply similarity. Arbitrary visuals bear no resemblance to the referent object or concept, but rather offer some organizational or layout feature that highlights a conceptual or logical relationship of the visual's components to each other.

II. The Two Main Streams in Research

Because visual information is abundant in persuasive messages and a crucial determinant of memory and attitudes towards them, it is important to examine how people interpret and evaluate visual information. In their recent article, McQuarrie and Mick (1999) distinguish four approaches to the study of visual images in the consumer research area, each characterized by its conceptual and methodological orientation. First, the archival tradition conducts content analyses to describe the frequency with which various types of visual elements appear. Second, the experimental tradition has its strength in rigorous causal analysis combined with theoretical specification mostly applied to consumer processing of visual elements. The reader-response approach in which extended depth interviews are sometimes used emphasizes the meanings that consumers draw from visual contents. The text-interpretive perspective draws on semiotic, rhetorical, and literary theories to provide a systematic and nuanced analysis. Several of these traditions have been closely linked with a great deal of mutual borrowing.

Here, however, I would rather simply suggest two main perspectives in conducting research on visual persuasion: the information processing approach and the meaning approach. Typical empirical investigations of message effectiveness are conducted in the traditional information processing approach. On the other hand, the meaning approach emphasizes that people actively assign meaning to a communication message rather than simply drawing information from the message. This review of the literature takes a quick look at the research trends and suggests that the research issues and focuses of the two perspectives are quite different from each other.

The Information Processing Approach

The research stream of the information processing approach to visual images, which focuses on effects, can be divided into several sub-areas. A primary advantage of imagery is that it helps us compensate for the limitations of short term or working memory. Images serve to reduce the information processing burden by representing spatial information in a concise manner (Hodes, 1998). This is what is done through visual attention, which is generally conceptualized as a brain operation that produces a localized priority in information processing and that improves the speed and reduces the threshold for processing events (Deubel and Schneider, 1993). In free viewing or an undirected attention task, it may be the visuals rather than the verbals to which the eyes first go. Another but related advantage is the ability to hold people's attention. Many studies indicate that inclusion of a picture makes a message more attention-getting and more likely to have its verbal content read (Rossiter, 1981).

The most studied research theme in the area, however, is mainly concerned with the memorability of pictorial stimuli and the effect of visual images on the formation of, or change in attitude toward the object of the communication. Many studies have been conducted in the line of the so-called picture superiority effect, which means

that visual images are more effective than words in affecting recall and attitude formation. Childers and Houston (1984) found that when messages are transferred to the audience in a way by which messages cannot reach a deep processing level, messages with visual images will be more effective than messages only with words in obtaining recall. Attribute information in an ad is recalled better when it is presented both as a picture and in words (Houston, Childers, and Heckler, 1987). In other studies, the memorability is still higher when a picture is related to the message's central argument (Edell and Staelin, 1983), and it is affected by previous knowledge held by the audience (Smith, Houston, and Childers, 1984). All this empirical evidence supports the conclusion that when visual images are congruent with verbal arguments in meaning, and thus are processed more verbally rather than visually, the memorability of messages with visual images is even superior to verbal-only messages.

Some researchers would like to investigate the effect of visual images in terms of reinforcing message arguments. For instance, Unnava and Burkrant (1991), examining the role of visual images in the processing of verbal information, argued that pictures that exemplify verbal information enhanced recall only when the verbal information is of low imagery.

Many researchers believe that the characteristics of visual images result in superior memorability of pictures over words because the greater number of memory codes for pictures act as multiple retrieval routes to those pictures. Visual information brings about a type of information processing called dual coding, which involves the simultaneous use of both a verbal and a non-verbal code (Hodes, 1998). According to the dual coding theory, verbal and nonverbal information is processed in functionally independent but interconnected systems, and the formation of two codes, which are verbal and visual, in memory is more likely for pictures than it is for words (Paivio, 1975). Similarly, Mitchell's (1986) dual component model, based on Paivio's (1971) dual coding theory of memory, posits that both visual and verbal elements have two ways in which they can influence memory and evaluation, through a cognitive route and an affective route. In his interpretation, visual elements in persuasive ads may affect brand attitudes in two ways: one, via verbal inferences based upon the visual information presented, may result in the formation of beliefs, and another, via the visual element itself which is emotionally evaluated, may have an effect directly upon attitudes toward the ad (Mitchell, 1986).

Even when people more easily recall pictured information than verbal information, this picture superiority effect does not influence memory-based preferences (Costley and Brucks, 1992). Hirschman and Solomon (1984) argued that although the visuals induced familiar feelings, a message with visual imagery was rated lower in rational evaluation than a verbal-only message.

The Meaning Approach

Barbara J. Phillips. 1997. "Thinking into It: Consumer Interpretation of Complex Advertising Image." *The Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 77-87.

Linda M. Scott. 1994. "Images in Advertising: The Need for a Theory of Visual Rhetoric." *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 21, pp. 252-273.

Hazel G. Warlaumont. 1995. "Advertising Image: From Persuasion to Polysemy." *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*," Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 19-31.

While many empirical studies on the traditional side have mainly dealt with various models of pictures and words and their interrelationships in persuasive messages, some researchers on the interpretive and qualitative side have begun to move away from the information processing perspective and have instead examined visual images as meaning. Their interests lie in the development of a theory of visual rhetoric.

Recently, it has been theorized that persuasive images create metaphors in the same way as verbal messages. For example, Scott (1994) assumed that visuals are a convention-based symbolic system and must be cognitively processed, rather than absorbed peripherally. Urging a pluralistic program for studying visual persuasion, her well-written article has stimulated and produced many subsequent

studies.

Some of the following studies are focused especially on multiple meanings in visual images (e.g. Warlaumont, 1995; Phillips, 1997), thus standing closer to the definition of "visual" as being ambiguous and redundant. Representative of this stream is Phillips' study (1997). In her exploration of consumers' interpretations of pictorial metaphor, it is noted that receivers' interpretations of visual images generally match the intentions of the messages' producers, and that receivers use various forms of cultural knowledge to infer meaning from visual images in messages — although the art directors assert that they create those with only one level of meaning (Phillips, 1997). On the other hand, using a melding of cultural studies and cognitive psychology as a theoretical backdrop, Warlaumont (1995) suggested that ambiguity in a visual message does tend to involve the reader and invite polysemy or multiple readings.

These results implicate communication practitioners neither in delight or in disappointment, even if people tend to look for positive rather than negative meanings (McQuarrie and Mick, 1992). The receivers know the purpose of persuasive visuals and may look only for positive dimensions of similarity between the images in a message, but that does not mean that they necessarily respond positively to the message.

There may be no room for truly ambiguous visual or polysemous readings in persuasive communication as long as receivers of persuasive communication pursue meaningful clarity in interpreting the visuals and senders of persuasive messages have the intention to make their communications successful. The persuasive images have their own rhetoric, and in practice, any unintended inference or miscomprehension would be minimized by target marketing and long-running campaigns (Phillips, 1997: 38). In a large majority of the cases, the polysemy or multiple readings in the persuasive visuals are merely the results of message producers' strategies.

III. The Roles of Visual Images in Persuasion

Scott S. Liu. 1986. "Picture-Image Memory of TV Advertising in Low-Involvement Situation: A Psycho-physiological Analysis." *Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, Vol. 9, Nos. 1 & 2, pp. 27-59.

Edward F. McQuarrie and David Glen Mick. 1999. "Visual Rhetoric in Advertising: Text-Interpretive, Experimental, and Reader-Response Analysis." *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 26, pp. 37-54.

Larry Percy. 1983. "A Review of the Effect of Specific Advertising Elements upon Overall Communication Response." *Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, Vol. 6, pp. 77-118.

Larry Percy and John R. Rossiter. 1992. "Advertising Stimulus Effects: A Review." *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 75-90.

The visual aspects obviously play important roles in persuasion. Many important roles have already been explained in the previous chapter. To summarize them: visual images in persuasive messages reduce the information processing burden, make a message more attention-getting, and reinforce message arguments. Also, it is believed that visual images have the superiority in memory over words.

Besides, there are a few additional things to be said about the advantages in visual persuasion. In the line of the "attitude toward the ad" research tradition in advertising, it is argued that visual images as executional elements evoke overall liking of the ad even though there is considerable confusion in interpreting research (Percy and Rossiter, 1992). The attribute of pictures in persuasion that is of most interest to message senders is the ability to create mental images in the receiver's mind. Especially, some unique visual presentation forms give persuasive messages an unusually high chance of being registered as merely

pictures or images in the receiver's memory. According to Liu (1986) in his explanation of advertising, exposure to visual images will often result primarily in right-brain processing and picture-image memory that contains iconic as well as non-iconic elements. Here, the iconic elements refer to the pictorial or gestalt aspect of a picture-image and are often employed in recognition tests by showing the subject a picture and asking if he or she has seen that picture before. The retrieval of such an icon merely helps a consumer identify the advertised product, and the non-iconic elements of a picture-image memory resulting from right-brain processing basically consist of associations with impressions or, more specifically, emotional impressions.

The iconic elements of such a memory provide the basis for identification and verification of the advertised product in the purchase situation, while the non-iconic elements provide the valuative and affective basis for the actual purchase action. This is particularly true for low-involvement products, to which a consumer seldom applies any significant cognitive reaction but in preferences and purchases relies mostly upon emotional reactions.

More recently, in the conceptualization that characterizes complex ad images as figures of rhetoric from which consumers infer ad messages, McQuarrie and Mick (1999) argue that rhetorical figures of visual images can be expected to have two primary effects on a receiver's response.

The first is increased elaboration, and the second is a greater degree of pleasure. A rhetorical figure is an artful deviation, relative to audience expectation, that conforms to a template independent of the specifics of the occasion where it occurs (McQuarrie and Mick, 1996). "Elaboration" refers to the extent to which information in working memory is integrated with prior knowledge structures, the extent to which a reader engages a text, the amount of interpretation occasioned by a text, or the number of inferences drawn. Rhetorical figures stimulate elaboration by their artful deviance and the interest it adds to an advertisement. Also, the authors argue that Barthes' (1985) notion that texts that allow multiple readings or interpretations are inherently pleasurable to readers is with good reason applicable to persuasive texts, and that the increased enjoyment while processing the ad text makes it probable that consumers will regard the overall ad more favorably.

IV. Critiques of Visual Persuasion

Commercial communication — that is, advertising — has been charged with a number of ethical breaches, most of which focus on its apparent lack of social responsibility. Pollay (1986) suggests that advertising has profound consequences due to its pervasiveness, stereotypical portrayals, manipulative and persuasive nature, preoccupation with materialism and consumption, frequent use of sex appeals, and lack of information. The greater part of these issues are mainly related to the visual element, rather than the verbal element. The four important topics in the literature on criticism in visual persuasion are identified and briefly summarized here: 1) image manipulation, 2) idealization of the visual image, 3) stereotyping, and 4) use of sexual appeals.

Image Manipulation

In examining the literature criticizing visual persuasion, the first issue we are faced with is that of intended manipulation of visual images and its unintended social consequences. Social impacts of visual persuasion are discussed from various theoretical perspectives, and most of the arguments tend to be merged into the issue of the relationships between visual images and reality. Although further research work is still needed on the question of whether or not visual images in media messages should reflect reality or at least be made with

attempts at reflecting it, many researchers, focusing on unintended but negative social impacts of visual images, call visual manipulation to account and claim that it causes negative impacts.

With the advent of powerful computer tools, image manipulation has become a common practice in image production, yet most people have no idea that so much alteration is taking place (Lasica, 1989). In commercial art and advertising, image manipulation has been accepted practice as long as it did not misrepresent facts (Cifuentes, Myers, and McIntosh, 1998). For instance, Jaubert (1989) categorized photographic manipulation by process: retouching, blocking, cutouts, recentering, and effacement. And, nowadays, these techniques are very common and easy to use with a popular imaging program.

Visual images in media have been manipulated in the production and reproduction stages for a variety of motives. Zelle and Sutton (1991) explained the two main reasons for image manipulation: the first was undoubtedly a need to compensate for the limitations of photographic materials, and the second was the desire to edit subject and image to exaggerate a particular viewpoint.

Non-objectivity and the Active Subject

The notion of manipulation is connected with the phenomena of non-objectivity and intentionality. However, it might be correct with regard to some aspects of this phenomenon to be interpreted as natural, inherent to human nature and communication. This is because people and their communication are not a passive mirror of society (Kaftandjiedv and Stoyanova, 1998: 150).

Arguing her own term of conventions of picturing which represents differentiated social agreements of producing and interpreting different families of visual messages, Kauffman (1997) posited that interactions between conventions of representation and real life differ widely according to image class. According to her, the social rules for advertising allow a relatively loose relationship between ad images, which are characterized by formalism, and real world referents, while relationship between the news image, which is characterized by realism, and its real world referent is believed to be direct, concrete, and reliable. The same analytic skills are not typically applied to both categories of images. Formalism of the images in persuasive messages is achieved through elaborate staging and manipulation of the image by commercial specialists. As long as persuasive images are read as persuasive, there is diminished possibility for the images to be read as truthful.

Although image deception has become accepted in the advertising and entertainment industries, we should adopt photo-manipulation guidelines to prevent dishonest reporting in factual and product information. In some cases, figures should include a label stating that photo manipulation was used for enhancement of the message. Also, if photo manipulation is used to convey a generic concept without misrepresenting a specific image, we would call this honest (Cifuentes, Myers, and McIntosh, 1998).

Idealization of Visual Images

Marsha L. Richins. 1995. "Social Comparison, Advertising, and Consumer Discontent." *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 38, No. 4, pp. 593-607.

Related to the manipulation issue above, one important research focus is given to idealization of the visual image. Advertising and the media have been criticized for creating idealized images and thus making a frequently used source of information into a standard about what ought to be in one's possession, life-style, standard of living, and appearance.

For instance, one conspicuous consequence of idealized images has been said to be eating disorders in women, including anorexia nervosa and bulimia. An organization called Boycott Anorexic Marketing has been formed to "curtail the practice of featuring wafer-thin models in ads by identifying companies considered to be culprits and asking consumers not to buy their wares" (Elliott, 1994: 41). Although the number of studies investigating the relationship between the media and eating disorders is limited, thumbing through popular

magazines filled with beautiful models may have little immediate effect on the self-images of most women. Still, one clearly cannot rule out potential effects of long-term media exposure to cultural standards of beauty (Cash, Cash, and Butters, 1983). Thornton and Moore (1993) concluded that with long-term comparisons such as this, particularly with the pervasive presence of idealized media images in our culture and the continued, and perhaps increasing, emphasis placed on physical appearance, there exists the potential for bringing about more significant and lasting changes in the self-concept.

It is claimed that several characteristics of an advertising image itself or of the techniques used in its production can result in idealization. According to Richins (1995), three such characteristics are described below. First, one feature of many idealized media images is the depiction of highly desirable circumstances that can be achieved by only a few members of society. Second, media images are idealized in that they almost necessarily present an edited version of life. Third, technology and special effects are often used to make media images appear more perfect or ideal than they otherwise are.

Exposure to idealized images leads consumers to compare, often unconsciously, their own lives with those represented in idealized advertising images. It has been observed that taken collectively, media images present a rather idealized version of life. Individual images, as well, may be idealized. This is particularly true of advertising. Idealized images can stimulate the desire for more through at least two mechanisms. First, the ubiquitous presence of idealized images in advertising leads to self-comparison with those images. Second, the self-comparison with idealized images results in an upward shift of consumers' expectations or reference points (Richins, 1995).

Even though people often tend to respond motivationally to idealized images to protect their self-values (Suh, 1998), it appears that repeated exposure to idealized images generally raises their expectations and influences their perceptions of how they and their lives or appearances ought to be.

Stereotypes in Visual Persuasion

Charles R. Taylor, Ju Young Lee, and Barbara B. Stern. 1995. "Portrayals of African, Hispanic, and Asian Americans in Magazine Advertising." *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 38, No. 4, pp. 608-621.

The social and cultural impact of visual persuasion must be a result of the interaction with other media contents. The recent critical analyses on media texts has made us conscious of how media images stereotype and exclude on the basis of race, gender, and social class.

For example, negative stereotypical depiction of minorities or their exclusion from advertisements in mainstream media has been found to have harmful social effects. In their content analysis of magazine advertisements to examine advertising portrayals of minority groups in the United States, Taylor and his colleagues (1995) find that some ethnic stereotypes are powerful, whereas others seem to be fading. African-Americans now frequently appear as professionals in business settings. However, settings continue to perpetuate the stereotype of Asian-Americans as being uniformly hardworking and the stereotype of Hispanic-Americans as family-oriented, since they appear more frequently in family settings and relationships than other groups.

Also with the issue of gender, which is most frequently stereotyped, we can find substantial evidence. Traits of a person in an advertisement often are conveyed without many cues, yet many reveal the very essence of the person (Kolbe & Albanese, 1996). This is particularly true of masculinity and femininity, which are readily conveyed, very important in terms of interpretation, and heavily laden with meaning in our society (Bem, 1984). Gender differences in interpretation were found and could be traced back to differences in sensitivity to symbolic meanings within the visual images.

Sexual Appeals

The use of visual sexual portrayals has increased, and sexual appeals have become more explicit, using illustrations containing nudes and suggestions

of intercourse more frequently. In addition, advertisers' assumption that sex sells also has been noted in numerous articles both in the general and business media. Print advertising, especially, has been a common venue for the use of female sexual stimuli. Advertisements characteristic of the genre, such as the continued run of controversial print advertisements for "Obsession" perfume and cologne by Calvin Klein, typically feature a nude couple or solitary female in a suggestively compromising position, according to Henthorne &and LaTour (1995: 561).

The literature examining the use of sexual stimuli in commercial messages is rich and varied, and the purpose of most of the studies is merely to examine the communication effectiveness of visually explicit sexual stimuli. Courtney & Whipple (1983) made an extensive review of studies examining the effectiveness of sexual appeals and concluded that: 1) attractive models lead to more attention, 2) the use of overt sexual stimuli leads to lower levels of recall and appeal evaluations, and 3) unless the product is sexually related, the effectiveness of the use of sexual appeals must be questioned.

Compared with the vast volume of the effects research, ethical considerations on that issue are not so easy to find. Anyway, one of the central issues of the sexual stimuli controversy currently facing advertisers is believed to be the perception of continued traditional sex-role stereotyping of women (Boddewyn & Kunz, 1991). This traditional sex-role stereotyping is thought by many social critics to contribute to the perceived continuing injustice and inequality for many women. Additionally, there appears to be no reduction in perceived sex objectification in recent years, even though female roles have substantially changed to more professional depictions (Ford & LaTour, 1993).

V. Visual Persuasion and Visual Literacy

A Definition of Visual Literacy

Jean Trumbo. 1999. "Visual Literacy and Science Communication." *Science Communication*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 409-425.

Visual literacy is defined as a holistic construct that includes visual thinking, visual learning, and visual communication (Trumbo, 1999). First, visual thinking involves "the incorporation of visual images as part of conscious and preconscious thought" (*ibid.* p. 411). And, it also involves how we organize mental images using shapes, lines, colors, and compositions to make them meaningful. Visual thinking can occur at a number of levels of consciousness. It may be highly conscious with great, focused mental effort; or it may be barely conscious, as in daydreaming. In any case, one of the major uses of graphic language is to communicate the result of visual thinking to other people. Visual representation as a product of visual thinking is meant to prompt innovation and exploration.

Second, visual learning is "a process of developing visual images for instructional purposes" (Trumbo, 1999: 415), and it is also the process by which we use visual information to learn. There are two components to visual learning: the process of gaining awareness of the meaning of visuals and the process an individual uses to interpret meaning from a visual representation. Visual learning involves gaining familiarity with the icons and systems of symbols that constitute specialized vocabularies and then interpreting the meaning associated with a particular representation (Couch, Caropreso, and Miller, 1994).

Third, visual communication involves "the use of visuals to express ideas and convey meaning to others" (Trumbo, 1999: 420). Communication is a process of sharing information with others; it is also a means of sending and receiving messages using visual images and representation to structure the

message. Lester (1995) defines visual communication as an optically stimulating message that is understood by the receiver. According to him, the goal in visual communication is to produce powerful images that enable the viewer to understand and remember their content.

New Focus in Visual Literacy

Dennis M. Dake. 1991. "The Visual Definition of Visual Creativity." *Journal of Visual Literacy*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 99-118.

Paul Messaris. 1998. "Visual Aspects of Media Literacy." *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (Winter), pp. 70-80.

Visual images used in persuasive communication are widely and primarily associated with their uses in frivolous entertainment, slick advertisement, and manipulation of consumers, and therefore are routinely condemned by media critics. This is also the easiest way to explain the reason why much attention should be given to visual literacy. Over the area of visual persuasion research as a whole, social scientists have typically concerned themselves either with the reception and effect of visual contents or with the consequences of them. Within social science, different disciplines have their own particular inflections.

Researchers in psychology, communication, consumer behavior, educational science, and sociology have contributed in their own ways. But, it could be agreed that a prevailing preoccupation of existing approaches in terms of visual persuasion has been to do with the power of the visuals as persuasive tools and the required protection of the audience from its harmful influences.

It is true that such an argument is related to the usefulness of visual literacy. It can be argued that visual literacy is useful primarily for purposes of self-defense, as a knowledge base for resisting and counteracting the baneful influence of mendacious ads, sensationalistic movies, and the like. However, this is a pessimistic view of the holistic construct of visual literacy. More optimistically, it can be argued that, by acquiring visual literacy people enrich their repertoires of cognitive skills and gain access to powerful new tools of creative thought (Messaris, 1998).

Dake (1991) contends that in addition to the ability to intelligently decode messages already embedded in visual forms, an ability to actively generate new visual forms for communication is defined as being necessary to visual literacy. What is needed, if visual communication is to become a shared literacy, is a clearer understanding of the natural ability for making visual forms that is possessed by every individual. Also, Berger (1998) notes that much of the information we encounter is of a visual nature, and it is important that everyone know something about how images function and how people learn to read or interpret images.

As defined earlier, visual literacy is a holistic construct including visual thinking and learning as well as visual communication. Although visual literacy is needed to protect people from the misused power of visual persuasion, its focus might be put on the more positive side with equal justification.

VI. Conclusion

In the course of just over ten years, our understanding of visual images and their effects and impact has been greatly enhanced, and today the visual element is understood to be an essential, intricate, meaningful, and culturally embedded characteristic of contemporary persuasive communication. However, detailed theoretical specifications for visual persuasion have yet to be fully constructed.

First, there needs to be more attention paid to the conceptual distinction between verbal and visual in persuasive communication. It should be noted that

visual and verbal elements are inseparable and that both are indispensable components of communication.

Second, more interdisciplinary research is desperately needed in this area. There is ample need and opportunity for investigations that span multiple traditions in visual persuasion and draw on the strengths of each (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999: 38). With the recently-developed interpretive analysis of visual persuasion which offers us a way of understanding how styles can evoke emotional and cognitive responses that determine acceptance or rejection of persuasive messages, the traditional effectiveness research may possibly make conspicuous progress in the process of choosing illustrations, photographs, fonts, and other elements of visual persuasion.

Third, future research should also extend the ethical issues examined to other important areas of concern to visual persuasion critics and to the public. Ethics is an area which requires each individual to take a stand. In the end, each individual must not only decide what is right and what is wrong but must also be able to justify these personal decisions to critics. When making these difficult moral choices, there are many places to turn for guidance, including personal conscience, company policy, industry standards, governmental law or regulations, and organized religion (Zinkhan, 1994). And, it should be noted that critics of the visuals carefully differentiate among image classes and insist that the standard for any regulation must follow the conventional rules of each image class (Kauffman, 1997), and that to judge visual images as intrinsically lightweight or manipulative in comparison with texts is to forget that it is possible to misuse any form of persuasion.

Lastly, it is important to recognize that while the tools of visualization and visual representation are all evolving quickly, the potential for visual representation to carry meaning or to be understood in an accurate way by an audience is an important issue for researchers to examine.

For many reasons, but especially in light of the computer-driven imaging revolution sweeping across every facet of culture, we can no longer afford to see images as the substanceless, yet ironically dangerous, enemy. Nor can we limit our definition of literacy to reading, writing, and calculating (Stafford, 1997). Thus, there is not only the need for training to build awareness of intentionality and artifice in visual images, but also the need for training to comprehend visual images. At the same time, heightened attention should be given to visual literacy in educational curricula — not in competition with verbal learning, but as a valuable complement to it (Messaris, 1998).

Definitely, the explanation and interpretation offered here to describe the study of visual persuasion has been very lightly sketched. Visual persuasion currently attracts a great deal of research attention, but much research remains to be done.

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Persuasion and the Moving Image

— W. E. Biernatzki, SJ

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Truth in Photography

When photography first appeared, in the late 1830s, it was credited with a high degree of objectivity, an exact reproduction of scenes as they were in reality. The advent of motion pictures, in the 1890s led some to argue "that moving images were even more 'truthful' since they were less easy to doctor" (Deacon, et al. 1999: 186-187). While a still photograph might be retouched or air-brushed, it was felt to be physically impossible to retouch the many images that constituted a motion picture film, and that consequently the latter was thoroughly reliable and truthful, producing "a 'warts-and-all' capture of social action" (*ibid.* p. 187).

That sanguine interpretation was not accurate, even for the cinematic technology of that time, and digital computer image manipulation, exemplified, among many others, by the film *Titanic* in which literally hundreds of "actors" were computer-generated, has turned the impossible into the visually commonplace for today's movie and television viewers. The implications of today's visual media manipulation and the public's familiarity with it are extensive and complex (cf. Deacon, et al. 1999: 200-201).

Added to the arsenal of special effects, trick camera work, and other devices already in possession of the moving image industries before the computer came on the scene, these recent developments have brought the "dream factory" (Powdermaker, 1960) to a point where practically any visual effect that can be conceived of also can be translated to the screen.

The flip side of this is that the general public has become so used to being deceived that most now expect deception as the rule, rather than the exception. Lies emanating from high places compound the problem, perhaps explaining the popularity of paranoid fantasies such as American television's *The X-files*, in which fear of betrayal is the rule — betrayal by "aliens," by one's superiors, and even by one's own senses that no longer can be relied upon to tell the difference between true and false perceptions.

Despite this prevailing atmosphere of cynicism and distrust, billions continue to be poured into the production of advertising, while the propaganda mills of governments and a vast array of special interests have never been so busy or productive. The resulting picture therefore is

extremely complex and poses daunting challenges to the would-be media analyst.

Language, Image, and Meaning

Deacon and his collaborators (1999: 185) stress "that meanings in popular media are created through the *interplay* of language and image," and that the two have to be analyzed together, not in isolation. This interplay contributes greatly to "the peculiar and sophisticated power of contemporary iconicity" which helps make critical communications research so imperative (*ibid.* p. 189).

Ron Mottram (1990: 320) has distinguished "three principal functions all films serve: the artistic, the industrial, and the communicative." The same functions characterize television, as well as film. The artistic function concerns "composition, color, sound, montage (the order of the separate shots), lighting, decor, camera placement and movement, performance, and the ordering of space and time" (*ibid.*). Calling a production "art," *ipso facto* sets it up for comparison with "painting, sculpture, photography, dance, theater, literature, and music" (*ibid.*). Every moving image production includes examples of some or all of those other arts.

At the same time, every film or television production is an industrial product. whose purpose is usually to make a profit or to fulfill the educational or propaganda goals of a state-controlled media industry, and its content is shaped accordingly.

Films and television programs would not be made if they were not intended to be shown to audiences; therefore, they are always communicative, disseminating information, propaganda, entertainment, or other kinds of messages. "Finally, all films are cultural and social documents that help communicate the times in which they were made even if they were never intended to do so" (Mottram, 1990: 322).

As Mottram emphasizes. these three functions — the artistic, industrial, and communicative — "are interdependent and embedded in a total context of culture, economics. and technology" (1990: 322). The impact on an audience of the moving visual image, especially when accompanied by stereophonic sound and displayed in full color on a wide screen, is bound to be significantly different and more complex than that of a still photograph or other static image. The impression of reality that it gives is bound to be greater.

"Flow"

Enhancing that impression even more is the "flow" of broadcast media experience. especially that of television with its succession of moving images (Williams, 1974; Corner, 1999: 61-69; Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), which synchronizes with the natural psychological stream of sense perception and thought.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1974) used the term "flow" in a psychological sense, rather than referring specifically to mass media. and has developed it in that context. For him, flow is "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter: the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990: 4). Csikszentmihalyi regards it as a quality of well-integrated, purposeful personalities.

Raymond Williams on "Flow"

In media studies, Raymond Williams gave special prominence to the concept of "flow" as the sequence of different program categories "available in a single dimension and in a single operation" in television broadcasting *systems,* in contrast to programs considered in isolation (Williams, 1974: 87).

> In all developed broadcasting systems the characteristic organization. and therefore the characteristic experience. is one of sequence or flow. This phenomenon. of planned flow, is then perhaps the defining characteristic of broadcasting, simultaneously as a technology and as a cultural form. (Williams. 1974: 86)

Williams distinguished the flow of a

broadcasting system from the homogeneous experience of a single theatrical production or feature film. Flow is present on television in even the most helter-skelter hodgepodge of unrelated bits and pieces of comedies and tragedies, interspersed with varied commercials, news, weather reports, etc. a "single irresponsible flow of images and feelings" (Williams, 1974: 91-92). It gives its own sort of pleasure to the viewer, distinct from that of a more coherent viewing experience.

Psychology, Systems, and Flow

Although Williams' idea of broadcasting system flow recognizes that it often is kaleidoscopic and incoherent, nevertheless it is analogous to the integrated involvement in an activity described as flow by Csikszentmihalyi. It involves the audience in an experience that is absorbing and, at least in some sense, enjoyable.

Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow is more clearly characterized by balance, integration, enjoyment and pleasure than that of Williams. The disorientation possible in a television viewing experience of flow that consists of sharply disjunctive contents, as described by Williams (1974: 91-92), may be involving, even mesmerizing, pleasurable in a stimulating way, but not especially irenic or integrating.

Although acknowledging the value of the "common-sense" understanding of the role of Williams' sense of flow in television viewing, Corner, for one, feels that "the term cannot really sustain the weight of theory which has often been placed upon it... Flow has become something of a totem in television theory internationally" (Corner, 1999: 60). Nevertheless, flow, in both Williams' and Csikszentmihalyi's meanings, can be an important factor in the process of holding and persuading a television audience.

What Is "Persuasive"?

Caution needs to be exercised in trying to decide what might be most persuasive. For example, although color photos, still or moving, are more realistic, black-and-white photos tend to be regarded as more trustworthy, and, accordingly, "most news photos are still printed in black-and-white" (Deacon, et al. 1999:, 195). This seems strange, because the world is experienced in color, but "the explanation lies in the social history of visual experience in the modern city" (*ibid.*). Color had come to connote glamor and "fabricated dream worlds of luxury and leisure rather than the mundane world of everyday life" (*ibid.*). On the other hand, amateur film of newsworthy events is more credible in color, because it is common knowledge that few amateur photographers use black-and-white film or videotape any more (*ibid.*, pp. 195 and 214).

Camera angles, lighting, and many other factors affect the way the final product, whether still or moving, is perceived by its audience. The use of time, sound, and various kinds of movement add further dimensions, and further potential for interpretation or distortion, to cinema and television that are not present in still photography (Deacon, et al. 1999: 201-207). "The social reality which film or television may appear to reveal is never innocent of the procedures that have produced it" (*ibid. p.* 198). The potential is great for all kinds of manipulation by a director or editor skilled in persuasion.

Someone trying to produce a true and accurate documentary, on the other hand, cannot rely solely on the film's iconography, which is almost inevitably distorted, but must try to recreate the total atmosphere of the original scene: "...the project of documentary film or television rests most importantly on its potential for enabling us to 'see and feel', more clearly than before, the conditions of other people's lives and the texture of other people's experience" (*ibid.* pp. 198-199). Paradoxically, some fictionalization is necessary to recreate the true meaning of a scene which the unadorned use of technology has distorted!

Pictures or Words?

Furthermore, although "one picture is worth 10,000 words," it may take another 10.000 words

to explain the true meaning of the picture. Whether pictures can "argue" without words is a controverted issue among rhetoricians (Birdsell and Groarke, 1996), but even if some pictures can do so, most seem to need their "10,000 words," or so, of explanation (Fleming, 1996).

Journalists do not have that many words with which to work, in picture captions or even in the accompanying stories. A "long" story in even the *New York Times* would rarely run more than 1,000 words. Dialogue, subtitles, etc. are necessary in a moving-image production to accurately situate its images and explain to the viewer what is going on. Even the most well-intentioned of journalists are in danger of using the "concocted quotation" — which no one in the event actually said, but which summarizes the impression the journalist wants to convey — and prejudicial or otherwise "loaded" words can easily creep into what the authors call a "captional interjection," summarizing a picture's meaning in only an emotion-loaded word or two (Deacon, et al. 1999: 215-220).

It is only a small step from such unintentional lapses to distortions with persuasive intent, which can be convincing if the narrator is the only authority for the details of the story. The periscope view of the sinking Argentine cruiser *Belgrano* and its drowning crew, frontpaged by a British tabloid during the Falklands War, with the caption, "Gotcha!" comes to mind as one of the most obsene examples of a captional interjection in recent years.

Interaction between words and visual images also can move from the words describing a situation to illustrative pictures, which seem to "prove" that what has been said is true.

> It is an effect at the forefront of television news production values. Because of this, spoken discourse in television news *seems* always to turn to the visual images for verification of what is said by the newsreader or news correspondent "there at the scene". For what images of particular events and situations seem to offer is the actual witnessing of reality. (Deacon, et al. 1999: 220)

The same authors go on to caution that "the task of image analysis is to turn this seemingness of seeing inside out" (*ibid.* p. 221). The analyst must, instead, try to understand "how the visual images in television news are built up and built into a constructed generic package" (*ibid.*). To do this, the analyst must

> attend to the anchorage of the apparently self-evident meaning of visual news images in spoken commentary or text. The images are rarely sufficient unto themselves either in primary terms of what specifically they depict or in secondary terms of conveying some abstract notion or explanation (*ibid.*).

"Seeing Is Believing"

Television news producers often appear to prioritize stories on the basis of the visually most sensational or shocking tape footage available, regardless of its real news value. "As the saying cynically has it, 'if it bleeds it leads'" (Deacon et al. 1999: 223). But the authors warn that, "The value of news as entertainment is a serious threat to its value as information" (*ibid.*).

But, if there is a credible linkage with a broader context, picturing that is "sufficiently strong in revelatory/dramatic character (high in its impact upon the viewer, 'self-evident' in its significance)," may be able "to crystallise the whole report and to enter into public circulation with a force no other form of contemporary journalism could possess" (Deacon, et al. 1999: 224, quoting Corner, 1995: 60-61). The power of its "particularisations (not necessarily directly proportional to their yield of 'new' information) sets up a datum...to which all claims and counter-claims about 'what really happened/is happening' are forced to refer in order to cross the threshold of public credibility" (*Ibid.*). Visual imagery can, in such a case, go far to establish national and international agendas.

The Power to Entertain Is the Power to Persuade

The power of the moving-image media to give pleasure is emphasized by Corner and related by him to their power to persuade. On the one hand, television has been accused of being the modern equivalent of "bread and circuses," distracting the population and keeping it uncritical of those who control the prevailing ideology. But the pleasures instilled by television also can be used "in securing unreflective support for particular political and social positions" (Corner, 1999: 103). Among the means he cites are:

> the use of humour to reinforce prejudice, the use of strongly nationalist aesthetics (including music and dance) to promote xenophobia, the use of various types of sexual objectification, and the depiction of violence (including sexual violence) in ways which encourage kinds of spectator enjoyment all are examples of influence working *through* pleasure. (*ibid.*).

Conclusion

The persuasive power of the visual image, whether still or moving, should not be underestimated. Newly developing technologies may, on the one hand, make it even more powerful. At the same time, however, some technologies can be used to evade at least the more overt efforts to persuade through the media. The VCR and DVD allow one to view personally-selected films in the privacy of one's home, and even programs recorded from commercial broadcasts can be "fast-forwarded" to avoid seeing the commercials.

Ideological messages imbedded in the films themselves by their producers are more difficult to recognize and avoid. There is little problem with those that are "politically incorrect," which are easily spotted against a contrasting cultural background; but those that are "politically correct" but nevertheless "wrong" by most moral standards are more difficult to recognize and defend against.

The only promising refuge from the storms of image persuasion that threaten to engulf us in this media age seems to lie in "media education," or "media literacy education," which attempts to equip children and adults with enough awareness of the tactics of media persuasion to be able to guard against them. Awareness of the need for media education seems to be spreading, and there is hope that it will eventually become part of every school curriculum, and that parents will be made conscious of its importance.

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Current Research

(NB: These current research listings necessarily include many researchers who may not be directly concerned with "visual persuasion" but whose interests tend to suggest their acquaintance with topics related to it to a degree that they might be able to serve as contacts for information about such research in their respective countries. Sources of information are indicated in parentheses after some listings: "IAMCR" indicates a paper presented, or at least accepted for presentation, at the July, 1999 meeting of the International Association for Media and Communication Research, held in Leipzig, Germany. "IVLA" indicates the same for the 1998 meeting of the International Visual Literacy Association, in Athens, Georgia, USA)

Austria

Andrea Griswold (Institut für Volkswirdtschaft, Wirdtschaftuniversitat Wien, Augasse 2-6, 1090 Vienna), in studying the political economy of television production found that "digitalised TV can minimize the public good characteristics of broadcasting. It enables a perfect individualisation or, in other words: a straight price mechanism is made possible to regulate the digitalised TV market." Digital TV may change television production patterns. (IAMCR)

Belgium

Steven Eggermont (Department of Communication Science, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) found that television viewing motivations of the over-60 age group "vary when living conditions such as loneliness, need intensity, and life-satisfaction are taken into account." Both very isolated and very sociable people showed higher than normal viewing levels, but with different motivations. (IAMCR)

Jurgen Minnego (Department of Communication Science, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) studied fear of

crime and television use, replacing the variable, "television exposure" with "exposure management," relating the intensity of an individual's feelings of fear of crime to his/her conscious management of exposure to TV crime content. (IAMCR)

Jan Van den Bulck (Department of Communication, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) studied knowledge of American police techniques ("Miranda warnings," etc.) among Flemish children. Findings suggest "that a linear approach to effects underestimates the influence of television. In other words: light viewers live in the television world, too." (IAMCR)

Brazil

Flailda Siqueira (Universidade de São Paulo and Pontificia Universidade Católica de Campinas) carried out a longitudinal study of masculine gender representations in Brazilian advertisements since 1970, noting greater changes in the 1990s than previously. They are attributed to the increasing influence of the feminist movement. (IAMCR)

Denmark

Vibeke Pedersen (University of Copenhagen) found that a new prime-time Danish soap opera has marginalized and trivialized women characters as a cost of going mainstream, in contrast to a daytime slot. (IAMCR)

Germany

Uwe Hasebrink (Hans-Bredow-Institut, University of Hamburg) chaired a special workshop at IAMCR, 1999, on, "Daily Talks and Young People's Perception of Reality. Broadening the Cultivation Perspective." Papers and presenters were **Uwe Hasebrink**, "Beyond heavyviewing: A quantitative approach to cultivation analysis," **Hans-Bernd Brosius** and **Patrick Rössler** (University of Munich), "Massive exposure. An experimental approach to cultivation analysis," **Ingrid Paus-Haase**, "Reconstructing young people's constructions of television talks. A qualitative approach to cultivation analysis," and **Friedrich Krotz** (Hans Bredow Institut, University of Hamburg), "Fun and fear. Linking cultivation analysis to reception analysis." (IAMCR)

Christina Holtz-Bacha and **Eva-Maria Lessinger** (Institut fuer Publizistik, University of Mainz) and **Markus Moke** (University of Bochum) studied audience reactions to the content as well as the format and style of election posters. (IAMCR)

Rüdiger Steinmetz (Institute for Communication and Media Sciences, University of Leipzig) researched "constants and changes in TV programming" in former Eastern Germany since 1989, under the influence of "Western colours and formats." (IAMCR)

Karl Tasche and **Wolfgang Donsbach** (Department of Communication, Dresden University of Technology, Dresden) using a typology of two styles of television use — "Ritualized" and "Instrumental"; or "affective" and "cognitive" — did a longitudinal study based on viewers' diaries to study personality profiles relevant to delay of gratification of groups preferring the two styles (IAMCR).

Werner Wirth (Institute for Communication and Media Science, University of Leipzig) found that emotionalization of information, "a central dimension of infotainment," is related to a linear decrease in the perceived information quality of news for print-oriented and more highly educated, but not for heavy television viewers and those with a lower formal education; while the perceived societal relevance increases linearly for both groups with the increasing degree of emotionalization of a news program. (IAMCR)

Japan

Miki Kawabata (Fukushima College for Women, Fukushima-shi, Tokyo) and **Shunji Mikami** (Tokyo University) studied TV news viewing and environmental awareness in Japan, and found a negative correlation between "amount of TV exposure (excluding TV news)" and respondents' "environmental concern and their environment-friendly behaviors." (IAMCR)

Korea

The Korean Association for Visual Culture was established in May 1999 by an interdisciplinary group of researchers including **Myung-Jin Park** (Department of Communication and Information, Seoul National University) and **Yong-Jin Won** (Dongguk University, Seoul). The Association published a book for its inaugural conference titled, *How Are Images Living* (in Korean).

Taewon Suh (Visiting Fellow, CSCC, Saint Louis University, USA), author of the review article in this

issue of *Trends*, wrote his doctoral dissertation at Sogang University (Seoul) on "Female Consumers' Social Comparison with Advertising Models and Motivational Responses," studying the effect on women's self-images of their perceptions of "ideal" physical types represented by female models used in advertising.

Mexico

Silvia Molina y Vedia (Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, National Autonomous University of Mexico), in a study "framed into Niklas Luhmann's self-referent and autopoietic system theory," concludes that "political news in Mexican television demonstrates the existence of prominent intolerant practices and its counterpart, a first order identity." (IAMCR)

Netherlands

Claes H. de Vreese (The Amsterdam School of Communications Research, University of Amsterdam) has been involved in a cross-national project (Danish, Dutch, and British) which included his project on the impact of news frames on public perceptions. "This experiment showed that frames in the news were capable of directing respondents' trains of thoughts about the introduction of the EURO." (IAMCR)

Norway

Knut Hellend (Department of Media Studies, University of Bergen, Fosswinckelsgate 6, N-5007 Bergen) studied "how television news — in difference from the press — operates with a 'negative reference system'. In television news there is seldom systematic information of the status and the origins of the news pictures although the textual claim for authenticity is inherent in that medium." (IAMCR)

United Kingdom

Myria Georgiou (London School of Economics) studied the role of new media (two satellite television channels, from Greece and Cyprus, and a local cable channel in Greek) in the construction of the identities of Greek Cypriots in London, compared to old media (London Greek Radio). (IAMCR)

United States

Fiona Clark, David Messerschmidt, and **Leighton Wingate** (University of Washington, Seattle, WA) studied the use of the Internet for fund-raising by non-profit and non-governmental organizations and found that it not only gives them access to otherwise difficult to contact demographic groups, but also that "the interactive, multi-sensory nature of the Internet also presents NGOs with the opportunity to create a higher level of involvement with the organization, which may translate into increased levels of donations." (IAMCR)

John J. Cochenour, Landra L. Rezabek, and **Guy Westhoff** (University of Wyoming) have studied the interpretation of visual icons from sepulchral visuals to determine categories of visual meaning.. (IVLA)

Patrick Daley and **Beverly James** (Department of Communication, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824) studied a programming model developed by KYUK-TV, Bethel, Alaska, that "offers relevant insights in how Native ownership and control of television is a fundamental form of cultural persistence that is both traditional and future-oriented." They "offer recommendations on how a media policy in Alaska ought to be established on Native cultural grounds as they themselves have worked out these patterns." (IAMCR)

Russell Gazda and **Michael G. Flemister** (Arizona State University) have studied the implications of psychological theories of cognitive information processing for the design and production of video for instructional multimedia programs.

Joseph Straubhaar (Radio-TV-Film Department, University of Texas) studied satellite television reception patterns in Latin America, Asia, and the Middle-East to test the hypothesis "that attempts to cover even a single region succeed only when they address a group of nations unified by culture and language..." (IAMCR)

Yael Warschel (Annenberg School of Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA) has reviewed current projects that use communication to manage conflict and explore the question of how effects can be best achieved in lieu of normative belief theories in communication. The study suggested that "providing agents with the means to express their hate through a channel other than violent behavior and an incentive with which to do so, may be more successful than trying to change their normative beliefs." (IAMCR)

Beth A. Wiegmann (Polo Community Unit District 222, Polo, IL) has studied the interpretation of messages on the various web sites oriented toward teaching visual literacy via the web. (IVLA)

Acknowledgments:

Carl F. Starkloff, SJ - St. Louis

John Padberg, SJ - St. Louis

Book Reviews

Reviewers:
W. E. Biernatzki, SJ (WEB)
Ann D. Kiburz (ADK)

Aamidor, Abraham. *Real Feature Writing.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xiii, 161. ISBN 0-8058-3179-7 (hb.) $39.95; 0-8058-3180-0 (pb.) $19.95.

Aamidor draws on his 14 years experience of feature writing for Midwestern U. S. newspapers, as well as university teaching. He regards features as

> the news below the surface ... the shadow truths we don't always recognize, but that affect us all the same ... the mysterious world on the other side of the mountain and all the amazing people and places and things that we do need to know about, even if we don't know it yet. (p. viii)

In describing how to write features, the author emphasizes structure:

> In each chapter of the first two sections you'll find an introduction to the topic, including advice on structuring and outlining your own stories... The introduction in all cases is followed by one or two real newspaper feature stories that illustrate the point of the chapter. (p. xii)

Those stories are then analyzed, and "each chapter closes with a suggested writing assignment or two" (*ibid.*). He also regards the book as a "'reader,' that is, a collection of worthwhile stories to read even if it's just when you're on that long plane ride over Thanksgiving break, or if you have a few free hours in the evening" (p. xiii).

The chapters of part I are categorized by types of features: "the profile," "the trend story," "the pro and con story," and "the news peg." Part II continues with approach techniques: "The Focus Story," "Problems and Solutions," "The Journalistic Essay," and "Point of View." The more diverse chapters of part III are about "the lead," "observation for detail," "interview techniques," "best use of quotes," "copyediting for features," "using databases," "breaking into newspapering," and "spell checkers."

The references provide a bibliography (pp. 155-156).
— WEB

Bennett, Milton J. (ed.). *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication: Selected Readings.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc. 1998. Pp. xiii, 272. ISBN 1-877864-62-5 (pb.) $22.95.

This reader contains twelve selections, several from works originally published between 1956 and 1994, that embody many of the seminal thoughts that have grown into the core of today's field of intercultural communication studies. The editor defines his purpose more narrowly than the broad survey that might be implied by the title, saying that although intercultural communication has two major schools — "the theory-and-research school" and the "theory-into-practice school" — the book is intended to represent the latter. He describes his goal as

> to present basic concepts from a variety of perspectives which, when taken together, explicate the practical aspects of intercultural relations and present a compelling case for improving intercultural communication skills through education and training (pp. ix-x).

The book is meant to be an introduction to intercultural communication as seen from that school's view and an overview of its important concepts (p. x).

In an introductory chapter (pp. 1-34) Bennett presents a "current perspective" of intercultural communication, including its basic concepts — such as *culture* — assumptions, processes, etc. Dean Barnlund's 1989 article, "Communication in a Global Village," continues Bennett's introductory theme. Then Edward T. Hall's 1991 article, "The Power of Hidden Differences," explores six historical "revolutions" that established the current patterns of cultural differences with their varying conceptualization of time, space, and of the very nature of communication. James A. Banks then discusses multicultural education.

Benjamin Lee Whorf's "Science and Linguistics" gives his very influential ideas of how language influences our perception of the world. Marshall Singer presents a perceptual approach to culture. Sheila J. Ramsey deals with differing communication styles of Americans and Japanese. Thomas Kochman discusses black and white Americans' different cultural styles. Edward C. Stewart, Jack Dnaielian, and Robert J. Foster present an analysis of culture at the levels of "*behavior, values, assumptions*, and generalized *Cultural forms*" (p. 157). LaRay M. Barna considers the "stumbling blocks in intercultural communication."

In the next chapter, Bennett, himself, suggests that, in intercultural relations, we sometimes have to "overcome" the Golden Rule — since, because of their differing culture, many might *not* want to be treated as we would like ourselves to be treated. Janet M. Bennett's discussion of "transition shock" puts "culture shock" in a broader and less exotic perspective.

Finally, Peter S. Adler goes "beyond cultural identity" to reflect on multiculturalism.

End notes and/or suggested readings after each chapter are supplemented by a list of "Additional Readings" (pp. 247-250). — WEB

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Media Analysis Techniques*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA/London/New Delhi: Sage, 1998. Pp. xx, 220. ISBN 0-7619-1453-6 (hb.) $49.95; 0-7619-1454-4 (pb.) $23.95.

The first edition of Berger's *Media Analysis Techniques* appeared in 1982, and a "revised edition" came out in 1991, between the first and this "second" edition. The latter contains an enhanced discussion of methodology and new chapters on advertising and learning games, plus exercises and activities, a glossary, study questions, and topics for discussion (p. xii).

Berger says that creative people need to be analytic as well, in order to know what they are doing. "It's the theory that drives the practice..." (p. xi).

Part I consists of four chapters on four major approaches to analysis: semiotics, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and "sociology" — the last "in the broadest sense possible": the study of "how groups and institutions function" (p. 95). In each of these chapters Berger describes how media analysts of particular persuasions would go about analyzing media products.

In part II the various approaches are applied to particular media products. Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* is subjected to a Marxist analysis. American football is analyzed using both Marxist techniques and those of sociology. An advertisement for French perfume proves highly amenable to a Freudian analysis. Then "all-news radio stations are subjected to a Marxist interpretation" (p. 162).

Finally, in an Epilogue called, "Shmoos and Analysis," Berger says that like the Shmoo — an American comic strip "animal" that loved to offer itself as food to people, in any form desired (steak, ham, roast beef, etc.) — any of the approaches to analysis discussed will take different forms, depending on the point of view of the particular analyst using them (pp. 171-172).

An appendix presents "a number of simulations, activities, games, and exercises (which I refer to collectively as *learning games*) that involve applying various aspects of media analysis techniques to the popular arts and the mass media" (p. 175).

As was mentioned above, a glossary has been added to the new edition (pp. 191-208). References are collected at the end (pp. 209-211). The book is enlivened by the author's cartoons. — WEB

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Media Research Techniques*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA/London/New Delhi: Sage, 1998. Pp. viii, 175. ISBN 0-7619-1536-2 (hb.) $48.50; 0-7619-1537-0 (pb.) $22.95.

In the Preface, the author says he wrote the first edition of this book "because I thought it would be a good idea to enable students to try their hands at doing research themselves" (p. vii). The second edition follows on the success of the first, with "added chapters on experimentation, historical research, comparative research, and participant observation to provide additional techniques for students to employ" (p. vii).

Chapter one, "Guided Research Projects," describes research in general, its rewards and pitfalls — one of them being that "people are very complicated and hard to figure out." They also lie in response to surveys (p. 10). He says that the goal of the book is not to turn students into professional researchers but to lead them step by step through a number of research projects that will help them learn how to conduct research (p. 12).

Chapter two advises that researchers keep a research "log," "...to record your thoughts and speculations about the projects. In this log you will 'talk to yourself' about the problems you face in doing the research projects, ideas relative to the projects, what your findings mean, and other things of that nature" (p. 15).

Subsequent chapters deal with content analysis, survey interviews, social roles (studied by observing the ways roles are portrayed in television soap operas), depth interviews, rhetorical analysis of magazine advertisements, library research on audiences of talk shows, focus groups, experiments testing "the impact of peoples' previous exposure to humor on their assessment of a humorous television program or film" (p. 101), participant observation of video game players, historical research, and comparative analysis of the popular and scholarly press. All these chapters in part one suggest simple, inexpensive projects relevant to the type of research being explained.

Part II, "Writing and Thinking," tells what to do with the

research findings after you have gathered them. Chapter 14, "Writing with Style," remarks that in writing a research report "It is not a bad idea (even if it isn't true) to assume that all readers are reluctant and would rather be watching television" (p. 123). Chapters 15 and 16 suggest ways to avoid common writing and reasoning errors. Finally, chapter 17 is on "Writing the Research Report," describing format, style, use of quotations, references, etc.

Two pages of references close the book, which also is embellished, usually at the ends of chapters, by Berger's own cartoons.

— WEB

Corner, John. *Critical Ideas in Television Studies* (Oxford Television Studies series). Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. 1-139. ISBN 0-19-874221-5 (hb.) $52.00; 0-19-874220-7 (pb.) $19.95.

As the author describes it,

> This book looks at some of the ideas about television which have emerged in academic study. It does this through a sequence of ten short interconnected chapters, each one of which cuts into the protean character of the medium under headings indicating broad aspects of form and function. (p. 1)

Those chapters are titled: "Introduction: Research and Criticism," "Institution," "Image," "Talk," "Narrative," "Flow," "Production," "Pleasure," "Knowledge," and "Television 2000: The Terms of Transformation."

In that last chapter, Corner describes the current state of British television as being "fully within a period of radical change, the direction and consequences of which cannot yet confidently be forecast" (p. 120). He nevertheless says that "it is now possible to see the steady emergence, underneath the local variations, of a new international model and indeed, less directly, a new social and cultural profile for television" (*ibid.*). The influence of that new model varies in different countries, and, rather than "some final homogeneity," the movement is "towards a new and deep level of interconnection and interpenetration across variant national and area systems, affecting some dimensions of television immediately and directly, others more slowly and only through an indirect or rebound process" (*ibid.*).

Chapter 8, "Reception," notes that this focus on "the processes by which understanding and significance are produced by viewers from what they watch, within the shaping contexts and habits of viewing, was the most significant new focus in the television research of the 1980s," and that it continued into the 1990s" (p. 80). The author credits the development of reception studies with helping

> to form the agenda of recent television studies. It has raised questions about perception and comprehension, about kinds of viewing pleasure, and about the social condition of viewing which were often under represented in earlier work (p. 92).

In chapter 9, Corner moves to a more intensive analysis of the "pleasure," sought by the audience in so much of their reception behavior. Types of pleasure he discusses include visual pleasure, pleasures of para-sociality, dramatic pleasures, pleasures of knowledge, pleasures of comedy, pleasures of fantasy, and pleasures of distraction, diversion, and routine (pp. 94-99). In considering pleasure as a research issue, the author feels that "the key question here concerns the mechanisms by which pleasure is produced both in terms of significatory organization and viewing activity" (p. 100). At one level, this is an attempt "to identify particular kinds of text/viewer interaction" through description and explanation (*ibid.*). At another level, "it is often evaluative, routing the debate about pleasure back to debates about 'high' and 'low' cultural forms and to the taste hierarchies which exist within television" (*ibid.*).

Considerations of the pleasures of televised sex and violence "raise questions about the relationship between the realm of fantasy and the realm of real values and attitudes... on how these realms are seen to be interconnected..." (p. 103). Corner notes that the effects of television violence on viewers are not directly proportional to "the seriousness of the violence as it would be measured in real life" (p. 105). To assume that it is, "is a frequent mistake in arguments about televised violence and can be found in some research on it. It is, rather, the manner in which the viewer is invited to watch the violence" (*ibid.*).

The references supply a substantial bibliography (pp. 129-135).

[For more citations from this book, see pp. 18-22, above.]

— WEB

Crutcher, Mark. *Lime 5: Exploited by Choice.* Denton, TX: Life Dynamics, 1996. Pp. 318. ISBN 0-9648886-0-2 (pb.) $19.95.

The debate over abortion is one of the most polarized and intense in American society today. "A good argument could be made that over the last twenty years or so, no subject has been more widely discussed or written about than abortion" (p. 9).

Despite the debate's intensity, or perhaps partly because of it, reliable information about abortionists, abortion clinics, and the women who undergo abortions is hard to come by. Apart from an understandable reluctance to discuss a delicate subject, the author claims there is a bias in government agencies and in the media against reporting the damage done

by the legalized abortions which the *Roe vs. Wade* decision of the United States Supreme Court, in 1973, was supposed to have made "safe, legal, and rare." The book is intended to document, insofar as possible, not the unquestioned harm done to the aborted "fetuses"/"children" (the term depends on which side of the debate you favor), but the harm done to women who have abortions, to the abortionists themselves, and to others who work in abortion clinics.

Crutcher says, frankly, that the book's "goal was to produce an expose on the abortion industry as a whole" (p. 10), but his enquiry was hampered by a lack of reliable statistical data.

> To begin with, gaining full access to accurate data would require the cooperation of the abortion industry as well as the state and local government agencies responsible for compiling such data. Unfortunately, due to their political agendas... they have little interest in reporting abortion industry disasters, and lots of interest in covering them up. Since the mainline media, as well as some elements within the medical establishment, are participants in the cover-up, all research in this field becomes totally dependent on whether abortion-injured women seek redress in the legal system. (pp. 11-12)

Consequently, the book is based on a large number of cases which are regarded by the author as merely the tip of an iceberg of unfathomable dimensions. Hundreds of the cases his team investigated and believed to be true could not be used in the book because "if the woman involved didn't file a suit, report it to the medical licensing board, or call the police, we didn't even keep a record of it much less consider it for the book" (p. 12).

Using reports from both "pro-choice" and "pro-life" sources, including practicing and former abortionists, the book's eight chapters cover many negative aspects of abortion as it is practiced in the United States today.

Chapter 1, "Safe and Legal," reports on case after case of documented malpractice and maltreatment of women in abortion clinics (pp. 11-82).

Chapter 2, on "rape and sexual assault in the abortion industry," claims that such assaults are common in abortion clinics, where the woman is "often alone, drugged, powerless, and with virtually no defense against the predator" (p. 83). Many — probably most — such incidents go unreported, because the victims do not want it to become public knowledge that they have had an abortion. Most "women who are assaulted by an abortionist don't perceive that they are in a position to do anything about it" (p. 84).

Chapter 4, "Cooking the Books," attacks the U.S. federal Centers for Disease Control for allegedly intentionally distorting data on abortion abuses and malpractice. Crutcher says,

> when I started writing the book...I had no reason to question that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) was anything other than what it appeared...As our research continued, however, we were getting suspicious that the flawed abortion data being released by the CDC was not the product of ineptitude, but of dishonesty and manipulation. By the time we discovered that a large percentage of CDC employees have direct ties to the abortion industry, we were no longer suspicious, we were convinced. (p. 135)

Chapter 5, "Vacant Souls," describes how abortionists, themselves, are ravaged by doing abortions. As one abortionist confessed, "As a physician I'm trained to conserve life and here I am destroying life... You know that there is something alive in there that you're killing" (p. 173).

Despite abortion's legalization, Crutcher says that abortionists live under a cloud. They are not looked upon favorably by the medical community, even among pro-choice advocates (p. 179).

Although "doctors learn early in their medical training not to be bothered by blood and guts... many abortionists and their staff seem to remain bothered by the sight of an abortion, even after many years in the business" (p. 197). Cases are cited to show that, although those who work in the clinics try to remove themselves from its realities in many ways, they cannot do so when faced with crisis situations, such as the death of a woman or an accidental live birth. The author says that the latter situation is often resolved by drowning or suffocating the viably delivered baby, an act that is still defined as "murder" in most states, but rarely is prosecuted (pp. 190-206).

RU 486 (Methotrexate), the so-called "do-it-yourself" abortion pill, is said to have been promoted by abortionists, despite its serious dangers to the woman who uses it, partly to allow the abortionist to distance him/herself from having to see the results of the abortion (p. 199).

This book's title comes from another "distancing" technique: In one case a woman "was told to answer to the name 'Lime 5'" while at the abortion clinic, rather than her real name. Not only did this distance the clinic's staff from her as a real person with a real name, but it also hindered her ability to sue for malpractice after the abortion was botched. "She could have her abortion as Lime 5, but she couldn't sue under that same name" (p. 200).

Chapter 6, "The Hidden Killer," presents evidence that a rise in breast cancer rates in the United States is related to an increase in first pregnancy abortions (pp. 223-237).

Chapter 7, "Just Sit Down and Shut Up!" discusses the difficulty victims of abortion malpractice have in obtaining justice through the legal system. It is especially difficult to claim psychological injury from an abortion, even though one Dallas abortionist is quoted as calling "a local Planned Parenthood representative's assertion that women never suffer negative postabortion reactions 'outrageously dishonest'" (p. 261). One study, cited by the same abortionist, suggests that "about 160,000 American women are psychologically injured by their abortions each year" (*ibid.*).

The final chapter, "A Contract With American Women," suggests nine reforms needed to protect women from the dangers they now face in undergoing a legal abortion and in trying to cope with its aftermath.

In his "Epilogue," Crutcher chastises mass media, which like many politicians and medical organizations and review boards, he says have been brainwashed by the abortion industry to ignore the damage abortion does to many women:

> The other institution to abandon these women is the media. Today, the decision-makers in the American press are almost completely under the thumb of the abortion industry, and they simply refuse to tell this story. In fact, many don't want anyone else telling it either. Several national publications refused to run ads for this book. For example, *USA Today*, returned our check for over $75,000 after pre-approving our ad copy. We were told by the advertising department that it got kicked back by someone "higher up" the corporate ladder. When we called this person, we were summarily dismissed after being told there was basically nothing we could do about it... And this scenario was repeated with several other publications. (p. 278).

He goes on to conclude: "Obviously, if you have read this book, you now know at least a small portion of what *USA Today* and their ilk have withheld from you all these years... a sense for the abysmal toll abortion takes on the women who submit to them and the devastation it wreaks upon the people who perform them" (p. 279). — ADK

Deacon, David, Michael Pickering, Peter Golding, and **Graham Murdock.** *Researching Communications: A Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis.* London/New York: Arnold/Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. xi, 427. ISBN 0-340-73193-1 (hb.) $75.00; 0-340-59685-6 (pb.) $24.95.

One goal of this book is to reinvigorate students' enthusiasm for original research, which the authors feel may have been constricted by the apparent conflict between the two perspectives of cultural studies and media studies (p. ix). The authors therefore set out "to explain and illustrate the entire range of methods necessary to research communications," to show the strengths and weaknesses of all of them, but also their possible complementarity.

Since this book was referred to extensively in the text (above, pp. 18-23), only a brief outline of its contents will be presented here.

Its fifteen chapters discuss how to approach research, documentation, selecting and sampling, asking questions, handling numbers, counting contents, analyzing texts, unpacking news, viewing and interpreting images [two chapters referred to extensively in the text above], observing, listening, taking talk apart, and using computers. The last chapter goes "beyond methodology: the what, how and why of researching communications."

A substantial glossary (pp.388-401) and bibliography (389-415) are appended. — WEB

Dias, Patrick, Aviva Freedman, Peter Medway, and **Anthony Paré.** *Worlds Apart: Acting and Writing in Academic and Workplace Contexts.* Mahwah, NJ/ London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 1999. Pp. xii, 253. ISBN 0-8058-2147-3 (hb.) $59.95; 0-8058-2148-1 (pb.) $29.95.

This book is all about writing, and not at all about acting, in the theatrical sense. The "acting" of the subtitle refers to the activity of the various contexts — academic and otherwise — in which writing plays an important role. The authors — two from Carleton University and two from McGill University — draw one immediate distinction between the types and uses of writing found in the academic and non-academic milieux: in the former, "writing calls attention to itself and, more often than not, is regarded in isolation from the larger social and communicative action to which it is so intrinsically bound." But, in the "non-academic workplace settings, writing is seldom regarded (when it is regarded at all) as apart from the goals, occasions, and contexts that engender writing" (p. xi).

The book is the result of a 7-year ethnographic research collaboration between Carleton and McGill universities that studied various academic and workplace settings. It examines "writing as it is embedded in ... settings where social relationships, available tools, historical, cultural, temporal and physical location are all implicated in complex and intricate ways in the decisions people make as writers ... with complex and probably unsettling implications for writing theory and the teaching of writing" (*ibid.*).

Part one comprises two introductory chapters, on "...researching writing at school and work" and "situating writing." The three chapters of part two deal with university writing, its social motive, complications and tensions, and a study of writing in a particular profession: "Writing and the Formation of the Architect." Part three is on "workplace writing," with chapters on "the complexity of social motive in workplace writing," on "distributed cognition at work," and, continuing with architecture as a case study, "From Words to Bricks: Writing in an Architectural Practice." Part IV, "Transitions," has chapters on the differences between students' and workers' learning processes, on "transitions from university to workplace writing," and a concluding chapter summarizing the differences the earlier chapters had revealed about the similarities and differences between writing in university and work contexts.

The authors close by addressing the following questions and observations highlighted by their research: "Can we subject old timers and the work they do to critical analysis?" "Novices

and interns who enter workplaces with critical attitudes can be disruptive and even abrasive," "Are we helping students and interns by asking them to innovate?" and "Professionalism comes at a cost to self-identity" (pp. 233-234).

They suggest that school settings should replicate workplace settings to keep students' writing skills attached to their workaday settings (p. 235).

References are collected at the end (pp. 236-245).

— WEB

Eckhouse, Barry. *Competitive Communication: A Rhetoric for Modern Business*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. xvi, 288. ISBN 0-10-511590-2 (pb.) $29.95.

The first edition of this book (1993) was called *Competitive Writing*, but has now been changed to include oral, as well as written communication. More substantially, increased attention has been paid to rhetoric and argument, and "rhetorical ethos" has been more extensively treated to link rhetoric and argument more closely to the more prosaic but necessary treatments of editing and readability (pp. xiii-xiv). The "book argues that communication in modern business is essentially a *competitive* activity, a rhetorical venture in which writers and speakers attempt to gain advantage over other forces that contend for their audience's attention" (p. 1).

Thirteen chapters and three appendices discuss the general relationship of rhetoric to competitive advantage, competition and order in a world dominated by information, the relation of classical argumentation to modern business, "refutation: argument as inquiry," "...presenting the case," unethical classical fallacies in arguments, "...argument and credibility," conciseness, word choice, syntax, punctuation, grammar, "Electronic Ethos: Computer Revision," and sample documents illustrating "principled organization" (Appendix A), "Argumentation" (Appendix B), and "Revision" (Appendix C).

The author is professor of rhetoric and management communication at Saint Mary's College of California.

— WEB

Ekman, Richard, and **Richard E. Quandt** (eds.). *Technology and Scholarly Communication*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1999. Pp. xi, 442. ISBN 0-520-21762-4 (hb.) $45.00, £35.00; 0-520-21763-2 (pb.) $19.95, £14.95.

The papers in this volume consist of the first reports from a large-scale study initiated and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to examine how utilization of new information technologies might help solve problems of research libraries and university presses stemming from increasing publication costs and resulting in reduced acquisitions by the research libraries (p. ix.). The papers were among those presented at a conference held at Emory University in 1997 to discuss findings of early projects in the study — which, between 1994 and the book's publication, had involved "30 grants totalling $12.8 million in support of projects that attempt to evaluate the effects on actual patterns of scholarly use and measurable costs when electronic approaches to scholarly communication are introduced" (*ibid.*).

Any attempt to measure and evaluate scholarly productivity brings together financial considerations, on the one hand, and both the quantity and quality of academic work on the other. When those considerations are applied to determining the performance of information technologies in scholarly activities, many unknowns complicate the task. Cost factors are hard to evaluate, and "one area that we know even less about than costs is usage and demand" (p. 8).

The editors caution that the study has not yet yielded any final answers. The likelihood of future growth in scholarly use of information technology is universally recognized,

> But some of the more important and interrelated questions are the following: (1) How will the costs of electronic and conventional publishing evolve over time? (2) How will products be priced? (3) What kind of use will be made of electronic information products in teaching and in research? (4) How will the use affect the productivity of all types of academic activities? (5) What will be the bottom line for academic institutions as a result of the changes that are and will be occurring? (p. 9)

The book's four parts contain papers on "technological fundamentals" (3 chapters), "electronic publishing: empirical studies" (7 chapters), "use of electronic journals and books: empirical studies" (8 chapters), and "visions of the future" (7 chapters). The book closes with "summary comments" from a librarian's perspective, by Deanna B. Marcum, President of the Council on Library and Information Resources, Washington, DC. She notes that, while the papers show the promise of technology for accessing information,

> far less clear are answers to the following questions: 1. Can technology reduce the cost of scholarly communication? 2. Do students learn better when using technology? 3. Are libraries organized to take full advantage of the possibilities for enhanced access? (p. 417)

The contributors all appear to be based in Anglophone North America. They are predominantly librarians and information specialists. Various interests are represented among them, including comparative literature, classics, monastic manuscript studies, political science, Eastern

European studies, law, and economics, as well as information sciences (pp. 429-430, "Contributors").

A selected bibliography is appended (pp. 421-427).

— WEB

Finkelstein, Barbara, and **Elizabeth K. Eder** (eds.). *Hidden Messages: Instructional Materials for Investigating Culture.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc. 1998. Pp. xi, 178. ISBN 1-877864-56-0 (pb.) $26.95.

The editors present four "conceptually sound, practical, user-friendly instructional units" to help teachers "integrate cultural content into their curriculum" (p. ix). The four instructional units, or chapters, are titled: "Seeing the Invisible: Exploring Culture through Objects," "Seeing through Words: Autobiography and Autobiographical Fiction as Vehicles for Cultural Understanding," "Seeing through Images: Cultural Learning Through Film," and "Seeing through Language: Preparing Second or Foreign Language Learners to Explore Culture.

Chapters are variously subdivided into lessons or readings, some with appendixes and/or bibliographies and workbook-type questions.

The major intercultural encounter featured throughout the book is between Japanese and Americans. For example, activities for chapter three are centered on class viewing and discussion of the film *Tora, Tora, Tora*, about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, with an effort to put it into historical and cultural context.

Chapter four is illustrated with cartoons and drawings as well as reproductions of newspaper feature articles, to aid students' understanding of stereotyping.

There is no general index. — WEB

Garrison, Bruce. *Computer-Assisted Reporting.* Second Edition. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Pp. xi, 487. ISBN 0-8058-3020-0 (hb.) $89.95; 0-8058-3021-9 (pb.) $34.95.

Computer-assisted reporting (CAR), "the application of computers to gather information for a news presentation" (p. 11), has been developing since the 1970s and already has caused impressive changes in the ways journalists work. Garrison cites many leading journalists as predicting that in the future there will be no books about CAR, any more than there are, today, books about "telephone-assisted reporting" or "fax-assisted reporting." CAR will have become "a mandatory and equally common part of newsgathering." But, he goes on to caution, "it is not yet" (p. viii). Recognizing that books cannot be written and published fast enough to keep up with all the ongoing technological developments in CAR, he says:

> This book is a beginning place. Its purpose is to introduce readers to CAR and to describe how leading journalists are using personal computers for newsgathering in modern print, broadcast, and online newsrooms. (p. viii)

The book's 17 chapters are grouped into five parts and supplemented by four appendixes and a glossary.

The two chapters in part I, "Introduction," are devoted, first, to describing CAR uses in journalism and its many advantages, and second, the use of personal computers, including practical approaches to setting up CAR in a newsroom.

Part II deals with online news and information in 6 chapters. They discuss the character of online information, online and CD-ROM databases, using the Internet, government databases, accessing public databases, and the use of portable computers in CAR.

Part III, on "Elementary Information Management," has two chapters covering, respectively, news research and "word processors and personal information managers."

Part IV, "Advanced Database Reporting Strategies," consists of six chapters on "merging data analysis with news stories," "building and editing databases," "spreadsheets and basic data analysis," "relational databases and mapping," "statistics and advanced analysis," and "survey research as CAR."

The single chapter in part V, "Goals for Journalists," is titled "The Computer-Literate Journalist." Journalists, like other professionals, range in their relation to computers from those who like them and are adept at using them, on the one side, and "technophobes," who avoid them as much as they can, on the other (p. 417). In between are a majority, who see the value in computers but for various reasons have not become especially proficient in using them for other than routine tasks. Since "computers are the best reporting tools of this generation and will be as basic to journalism of the next two or three generations of journalists as telephones have been" (p. 438), managers of news organizations are urged both to make the necessary hardware and software available to their reporters and to provide opportunities for them to learn to use the technology to its fullest.

Appendix A lists CAR-oriented World Wide Web Sites. Appendix B lists some basic government resources on the World Wide Web. Appendix C suggests some World Wide Web search engines. Appendix D describes the data library of the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting (NICAR), and lists the databases available for purchase from it as of the first half of 1998. The glossary consists of ten pages (pp. 453-463) of definitions of technical terms and relevant acronyms.

Most of the references are to sources published between 1990 and 1997, and include a few online sources.

— WEB

Garrison, Bruce. *Professional Feature Writing*, Third Edition. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xiv, 587. ISBN 0-8058-3017-0 (hb.) $89.95; 0-8058-3018-9 (pb.) $45.00.

In the Preface, Garrison advises that this is an advanced book, suitable for "advanced student writers and beginning professionals. Readers should have a foundation in writing basics from beginning writing and reporting classes to get the most from this material" (p. xi). The book "focuses on newspaper, magazine, newsletter, and on-line publication with emphasis on daily newspapers and consumer magazines," and it "emphasizes three primary aspects of feature writing: introduction and writing skills/basics, article types, and the collegiate and professional writing life" (*ibid.*).

The author lists several "significant changes" from the second edition. These include adding more contemporary examples of quality feature writing, "considerable new material on computer-based research tools" and more detailed discussion of online research tools, an examination of online publications as markets for feature writing, and an appendix listing URLs of reference and information sites on the Web.

The four chapters of part one, "The Basics," describe "feature writing in the 21st Century," "finding a good feature article idea," "researching feature article ideas," and "the writing and editing process."

Part two's eleven chapters, collectively titled, "Types of Articles," cover "descriptive and color writing," "the human-interest article," "profiles and personality sketches," "seasonal features," "entertainment features and critical writing," "aftermath, follow-up, and depth series articles," "travel writing," "service features," "personal experience articles," "writing humor in feature articles," and "writing science and technical features."

In part three, "The Collegiate and Professional Writer," three chapters discuss "writing feature articles on campus," "freelance writing and marketing," and "surviving in the freelance business."

Appendixes A through F describe World Wide Web resources for feature writers, suggest guidelines for contributors, a sample letter of agreement to write a travel feature, the texts of the codes of ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists and the American Society of Journalists and Authors, and suggest ways of "protecting yourself in the magazine recession (or any other time!)."

The reference list is extensive (pp. 562-575). — WEB

Glasser, Theodore L. (ed.). *The Idea of Public Journalism*. Foreword by Cole C. Campbell. New York/London: The Guilford Press, 1999. Pp. xxxiii, 229. ISBN 1-57230-460-X (pb.) $21.95.

Should the goal of journalists be only to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; or should they be public journalists, offering ways to remedy the deficiencies they find? Although many journalists believe they are just in "the truth business," Cole C. Campbell, author of this book's foreword and editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, sees their role more as "problem-solving" (p. xiv), creating a resource the public can turn to for guidance as well as information.

Campbell believes that, too often, journalists see themselves only as "seekers of an already extant truth for which we cannot be held accountable for merely sniffing out" (p. xv). But he sides with philosopher Richard Rorty, who argues that all inquiry — journalism as well as philosophy and science — should aim at problem solving as well as seeking the truth (p. xv). The contemporary world, which sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson has described as "drowning in information, while starving for wisdom" (p. xvi), has a special need for problem solvers and synthesizers, who can present the information in a useful way.

Campbell feels that this broadened perspective of journalism's goals "could recast how we cover everything, moving the discussion away from who wins or loses power to what problems we ought to solve and how we might tackle them" (pp. xv-xvi). And, the need for synthesizing talent is not limited to journalists but extends to all citizens of a democratic society: "If we want the world to be run by democrats in the next millennium, shouldn't as many people as possible master the skills of synthesis?" (p. xvi). Within the democratic process, the journalist's special role is to present the news in a serviceable way, so the public can use it to their best interests. He asks whether, in this way, elections could become, as they should be, "a time for performance appraisals of incumbents and a job selection process for all aspirants to office?"

He sees journalism becoming "a philosophy of attentiveness — a system of thinking about what to pay attention to and how to pay attention" (p. xx). But to do this properly, journalists need a degree of humility:

> We can help order the flow of what's worth discussing immediately and what might wait for another day, as long as we see ourselves as partners with, and not [more] clever than, the people and communities we serve. (p. xxiv)

According to Campbell, the journalism of the twenty-first century should build its beats "around the troubles and joys in people's lives," not around institutions and agencies, and it should keep presenting imaginative descriptions of an ideal future, pressing to change things for the better. "We must perpetually act to keep democracy alive. At rest, everything disappears" (p. xxvii).

In Chapter 4, "The Common Good as First Principle," Clifford G. Christians argues that if satisfaction of the common good is the primary goal of public journalism, we must decide what the common good really is before pursuing it. "But activating the public" toward the common good, as

Christians points out, "will be directionless unless we can bring the idea of the common good into its own" (p. 67). That is because the common good must begin to take place on small, individual levels throughout society, and grow to permeate the grand sphere. As Christians explains,

> When we contextualize individual rights within communal goods, when we insist on promise keeping rather than contract, when we go beyond the lingual order to communities as moral entities, then the common good comes into its own conceptually. (p. 79)

Christians uses the dramatic and inspiring example of the final years of the life of Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Archbishop of Chicago, as an illustration of

> the way public life can be phrased in moral terms. The media appealed on a primal level to readers and listeners about ordinary human values. The moral commitments of Joseph Bernardin activated their conscience, whether they were Roman Catholics or not. (p. 79).

Christians says that public journalism can voice ways to go about achieving the common good. It provides "the appropriate arena, day and night, day after day, to give the common good the attention it deserves" (p. 80).

Chapter 8, "Journalism and the Sociology of Public Life," by John J. Pauly, Chairman of the Department of Communication at Saint Louis University (and, concurrently, Acting Executive Director of the Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture and Publisher of *Communication Research Trends*), says that public journalism understands journalists' societal role. They do not merely report on public life. Pauly says, "Journalists help make public life what it is (or isn't)" (p. 135). They paint a picture of public life, framing the public's vision. But what is public life all about? "From what sort of social relations might democracy be created? And what role should journalists play in fostering those relations?" he asks (p. 135).

Many journalists believe public journalism is nothing new, that they have always simply surveyed the environment and reported the facts, uninfluenced by any sort of higher controls. Yet, according to Pauly, many journalists wonder what their roles really are. They ask, "But just what is it that we, as journalists, really do? And what ought we be doing to make democratic life possible?" (p. 136).

Journalists have a bad name in many circles. To be publicly accepted, Pauly thinks journalistic roles must be defined and understood. Journalists must realize that they do more than just report the facts to "anyone who chooses to read them" (p. 136). They must also use criticism more effectively, not destructively, but for the benefit of both the criticized and their critics.

Citing a prevailing negative reaction by journalists to criticism directed at themselves, Pauly asks, "How can an institution that does such a poor job of listening to its own critics possibly be entrusted with the work of creating the fair and lively dialogue that a multicultural society needs to survive? (p. 137).

The leaders of popular social movements "have often considered the commercial dailies part of the establishment, a mouthpiece for the forces impeding popular democracy" (p. 145). That complaint may still be raised, but according to Pauly the papers' roles are changing: "The daily newspaper can no longer control the distribution of information or command a community's advertising base, as it was so accustomed to doing" (p. 146).

Consequently, "the daily newspaper no longer holds any particular pride of place in American life" (p. 146). This raises the question of whether this apparently declining institution is an appropriate vehicle for carrying out the kind of grassroots democratic reforms public journalism advocates envision. Pauly nevertheless believes there is hope, but only if journalism itself is redefined.

"What public journalism needs, in short, is a culturally informed theory and practice of feature reporting," he explains. Reporting has always focused on telling about the politics of the time. "A democratic society, however, needs feature reporting to encourage the social solidarity and empathy that make public life possible" (p. 147). The goal of journalists should be storytelling, not just informing. News is emotional, not merely facts, and emotion is carried by storytelling and dialogue. This conceptualization goes somewhat beyond the deliberation of conversation focussed on specific problems, which is the aim of public journalism. "Dialogue may lead anywhere, and it allows groups to discover together things they could not know singly" (p. 149). But to make such a conversational journalism work "journalists would need to develop a sociology of public life that acknowledges how their own professional practices and organizations inhibit dialogue" (p. 149).

This long review has emphasized those contributors to the book who have been most closely associated with the CSCC and *Trends*. A sketch of other contributions is desirable to give a more comprehensive idea of the book's contents. In the first three chapters, the editor first describes public journalism, then Jay Rosen describes its development, and James W. Carey defends it against its many detractors among more conventional journalists. After Christians' chapter on the common good, Thomas C. Leonard rounds out Part I by showing how public journalism aims to make readers into citizens. Part II, "The Challenge for Public Journalism," includes John Durham Peters' discussion of the challenges facing public journalism and democratic theory. Michael Schudson then focuses critical scrutiny on public journalism's idea of "public," and, after John Pauly's exploration of journalism and the sociology of public life, Barbie Zelizer views public journalism as a "new neighbor" in the neighborhood of U.S. journalism and how it might become a bona fide resident (p. 168).

Finally, three appendixes deal with how to evaluate public journalism (by Steven H. Chaffee and Michael McDevitt), whether public journalism can help meet the need to reinvent the American press (by Hanno Hardt), and a selected and annotated bibliography (pp. 210-222). — ADK

Goldstein, Jeffrey H. (ed.). *Why We Watch: The Attractions of Violent Entertainment.* New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. Pp. x, 270. ISBN 0-19-511820-0 (hb.) $49.95; 0-19-511821-9 (pb.) $17.95.

Communication Research Trends recently devoted a double issue (Vol. 19, Nos. 1 & 2 [1999]) to "children and television," a major part of which was focussed on violence in that medium, and others, and its effect on the young. Goldstein's book is, at the same time, demographically broader and topically more specific — asking, as it does, why many of us, regardless of age, seem to enjoy being "terrorized" by violent entertainment.

In his introduction (p. 2), the editor notes that violence is ubiquitous, expectedly so in drama and sports, but more surprisingly in religion, too, as is illustrated by the paperback edition's cover picture of Saint Sebastian, pierced by numerous arrows, side-by-side with fighter Mohammed Ali looming triumphantly over a downed opponent. Rather than news and "reality TV," the book concentrates on violent drama, which is what concerns most people when the issue of violent media arises.

The nine contributors, seven from the United States and one, each, based in Britain and the Netherlands, cover a wide range of violent entertainments in their ten chapters — two of which, plus the introduction, are by the editor. They deal with violence in sport, fascination with death, war toys and violent video games, children's literature, "children's attraction to violent television programming," the way the movie *Bonnie and Clyde* "served...to redefine the nature of acceptable on-screen violence, violence in religion, and the psychology of the appeal of portrayals of violence" (the latter by psychologist Dolf Zillmann).

Finally, in chapter ten, the editor directly confronts the question,"Why [do] we watch?" considering violent entertainment in terms not only of its portrayal and its audience, but also "by considering the context in which it is witnessed and the times in which it is experienced" (p. 214).

He sums up the features most of the book's contributors have cited as generally common to the attractiveness of violence. Audiences are typically males, more aggressive than average, in need of sensory stimulation, in search of social identity or bonding, curious about the forbidden, needing to see justice portrayed or restored, and with an ability to maintain emotional distance from the violence. Violent images are used by viewers for mood management, to regulate excitement, and as an opportunity to express emotion. Violent images are more appealing if seen as unreal, exaggerated, engagingly fantastic, predictable in outcome, and if they have a just resolution. violent entertainment is more attractive if experienced in a safe environment, but it also is more attractive in times of war or other periods of general social violence (p. 223, Table 10.1).

Violent entertainment appeals to only a minority of the general audience, but that appeal is persistent and neither likely to disappear nor to be easily substituted for. Violence probably cannot be eliminated from entertainment, but "it is up to the image makers to put violence in perspective," and it is up to the public to demand that they do so (p. 225).

The references provide a substantial bibliography (pp. 227-253). — WEB

Graham, Andrew, Christian Koboldt, Sarah Hogg, Bill Robinson, David Currie, Martin Siner, Graham Mather, Julian Le Grand, Bill New, and **Ian Corfield.** *Public Purposes in Broadcasting: Funding the BBC.* Luton, UK: University of Luton Press, 1999. Pp. v, 159. ISBN 1-86020-561-5 (pb.) £10.95.

In the Foreword, Patricia Hodgson proclaims that "Broadcasting is a British success story," and that as technologies converge and services — radio, television, online, etc. — expand "they have the potential to drive real economic growth via a vibrant, combined service sector" (p. 1). But there are real fears that more will mean worse, "through fragmentation of audiences and investment" (*ibid.*). Public concerns about maintaining services of the BBC at a high level have risen to such a degree that even a Conservative government "increased the level of the licence fee — for the first time in fifteen years — to pay for them" (*ibid.*). More recently, "the new Labour Government has now established its own review of the BBC, re-opening the debate about public purpose and funding" (*ibid.*). The essays in this book were "commissioned as a contribution to that debate," starting "from the premise that society has particular expectations of broadcasting which the new and expanding commercial market cannot guarantee to meet. Each essay then explores aspects of the funding and delivery of those public expectations and purpose" (pp. 1-2).

In the course of this debate "about what audiences should expect of the BBC beyond 2000," the three traditional purposes of the BBC — information, education, and entertainment — are reaffirmed, and new ones are added: to ensure universal access to the new technology, "to engage audiences in new experiences and to act as a trusted guide in a world of abundance," to support citizenship and democracy by supplying citizens with the information they need for full participation, and to serve as "a showcase for British talent and the gold standard for news and information" around the world (pp. 2-3).

An "Executive Summary," at the beginning (pp. 5-15), makes it easy to absorb the book's essential arguments without reading it. Then, in chapter one, Andrew Graham discusses "broadcasting policy in the multimedia age," chapter two, by Koboldt, Hogg and Robinson, deals with "the implications of funding for broadcasting output," in chapter three, Currie and Siner confront the BBC's challenge of "...balancing public and commercial purpose" in adapting to the major technological changes, chapter four, by Graham Mather, describes "a European approach" to "competition and public purpose," Julian Le Grand and Bill New speculate about "broadcasting and public purposes in the new millennium" in chapter five, and in chapter six Ian Corfield "addresses the question 'how does and should broadcasting and particularly the BBC serve the socially excluded?'" (p. 137).

Corfield notes that while poverty and social exclusion *tend* to go together, they are not necessarily co-extensive. Social exclusion might develop over the next ten years by entrenching a society in which 30 percent are poor, 30 percent are well-off, and the rest are in the middle, by "increasing division between the information haves and have-nots," and by "increasing problems associated with an aging society" (p. 140). It is suggested that the BBC could help meet these needs by directing more programming to the socially excluded — where it is now outdone by ITV — by "providing a universal service that generates a sense of inclusion," by maintaining its tradition of "having a brand that people value and trust," by "offering value for money and an appropriate funding regime," and "by running effective educational campaigns" (pp. 141-148).

References follow each chapter. — WEB

Harris, Marvin. *Theories of Culture in Postmodern Times*. Walnut Creek, CA/London/New Delhi: AltaMira Press (Sage), 1999. Pp. 224. ISBN 0-7619-9020-8 (hb.) $46.00; 0-7619-2021-6 (pb.) $22.95.

Harris, now Graduate Research Professor at the University of Florida, is one of America's most published anthropologists, noted especially for his controversial book, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (1968). He describes the present volume as a "more modest project" than a revised edition of *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* would have been, but it is "a sketch of the themes and issues that need to be addressed after three decades of intellectual warfare among the anthropologi" (p. 13).

He expresses some concern about the degree to which postmodernism has dominated the discipline — tempting him to call the book, "The Fall of Anthropological Theory" — but he hopes "this volume will help to push the pendulum back toward the science-oriented side" (*ibid.*).

An opposite concern that runs through the book is that a return to science might also revive a pseudo-scientific racism, which had been thought to be dead and buried thirty years ago (p. 14).

The chapters range widely over many, often controversial issues in anthropology — so widely that he, himself says, "One may legitimately wonder if the chapters here share a unifying logic that merits their being joined together in a single book" (p. 14).

Part I, "Conceptualizing Culture," consists of four chapters: "What Is (Are) Culture(s)?" "Emics and Etics," "The Nature of Cultural Things," and "Science, Objectivity, Morality." In the latter chapter, he defends "Enlightenment notions of reason and truth" against their detractors at both the postmodern and conservative ideological extremes (p. 64).

Part II, "Biology and Culture," attacks resurgent racism head on, with chapters titled, "De-Biologizing Culture: The Boasians," "Biologizing Inequality," "I.Q. Is Not Forever," "Neo-Darwinism," and "Confronting Ethnomania." The chapter on "ethnomania" attacks the ethnocentrism and racism that make excessive claims for the accomplishments of one or other ethnic group and have contributed so much to the viciousness of recent, often genocidal, ethnic clashes.

Part III, "Explanatory Principles," looks at two terms important in anthropological theory, "holism" and Harris' own earlier preoccupation, "cultural materialism." He specifies that the latter "is concerned with the locus of causality in socio-cultural systems, and not with the ontological question of whether the essence of being is idea (spirit) or matter" (p. 141). The third chapter in part III (ch. 12) takes on postmodernism directly, especially its anti-scientific bent.

Part IV, "Macroevolution," addresses two great historical developments, the "Origin of Capitalism," and "The Soviet Collapse." In regard to the latter, he remarks, "although the malfunctions of neocapitalist systems remain less catastrophic than the malfunctions of the Soviet Bloc, they are nonetheless a source of great instability and pressure for change," vis-a-vis damage to the environment, ethnic conflicts, housing shortages, "bureaucratic hypertrophy," corruption, etc. Continuing to clarify his "cultural-materialist" theoretical orientation he insists that

> it does not follow from the primacy of infrastructure that the material restraints imposed on the rest of social life diminish our freedom to intervene and direct the selection of alternative futures ... Rather, it merely increases the importance of having robust theories of history that can guide conscious human choice. (p. 190)

References cited are listed at the end (pp. 191-212).
— WEB

Harris, Richard Jackson. *A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication.* 3rd Ed. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xvii, 337. ISBN 0-8058-3088-X (hb.) $36.00.

Harris emphasizes the importance of media psychology by noting that our whole lives are influenced by the media — often more than we know (p. xv). Not only is the subject important, but the media change rapidly. "Seldom does the content of a textbook become obsolete so fast as when it deals with the media" (p. xvi). Therefore this edition has had to embody many changes, additions, and updating.

Twelve chapters cover both the usual range of media topics and some that place added emphasis on values and ethics.

After a general introduction to the place of communication in society, the second chapter discusses "how we study media scientifically," through research and theory. Following chapters deal with distortion in portrayals of groups, advertising, communication of values, sports, news, politics, violence, sex, prosocial media, and finally, "Living Constructively with Media: Taking Charge in the New Millennium."

A question-and-answer series at the beginning of the chapter on values notes studies that indicate the following: Five out of six scenes of suggested sexual intercourse or innuendo seen on TV in the United States are between persons not married to each other (and the ratio is much higher for soap operas and R-rated movies). "While 89% of Americans claim some religious affiliation, only 5% of TV characters do. A member of a rock group told viewers on a TV show "that they should steal their CD from Virgin Megastores," thereby forcing the stores to pull the CD from their displays for fear of massive thefts (p. 96). These examples suggest a severe disjunction between TV values and those of the society it sometimes claims only to "mirror."

Boxes, in each chapter, highlight particular points, cases, or research results, including a considerable amount of international material.

A very long list of references provides a substantial bibliography (pp. 271-317). — WEB

Kaid, Lynda Lee, and **Dianne G. Bystrom** (Eds.). *The Electronic Election: Perspectives on the 1996 Campaign Communication.* Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xviii, 415. ISBN 0-8058-2779-X (hb.) $89.95; 0-8058-2780-3 (pb.) $39.95.

American presidential campaigns and their culminating elections have been of special interest to communication scholars for many years. That interest has increased during recent years as rapid developments in media technology and their rapid dissemination among the population have changed, with similar rapidity, the character of media communication and, inevitably, of the electoral process itself.

The contributors to *The Electronic Election...* focus on the 1996 election, researching it as the campaigns developed and comparing it to the electronic — but not quite *so* electronic — elections of 1988 and 1992. They ask: "What role is electronic communication playing in the 1996 election?" Their research draws on "content analyses, news coverage. Internet sites, political advertising and debates" (p. xii).

The book's 26 chapters are grouped into three sections: part one "provide[s] a comprehensive look at how the media and candidates tried to control the messages in the 1996 campaign" (p. xii). "Part II features eight studies examining the content and effects of presidential commercials, as well as spots used in U. S. Senate and state gubernatorial races" (p. xv). "Part III concludes the volume with an examination of political malaise, the use of new media to engage the electorate, European influences on campaign communication, and a summary and analysis of the team's overall research result" (p. xvii).

Various trends are noted in the papers. In the 1996 campaign, compared with earlier campaigns, there was "less straight news about the candidates and the issues and more commentary (often negative) from journalists themselves" (p. 3). The three major broadcast networks devoted only half the amount of nightly air time to election news during the latter months of the 1996 campaign as they had in 1992 (p. 6). The "tone of coverage" leaned substantially more to the Democratic nominee than to the Republican in both 1996 and 1992, while it had been somewhat pro-Republican in 1988 (p. 7, Table 1.1, and pp. 8-11).

Mark B. Hovind sees melodrama creeping into news coverage: "...where journalists of the past created melodrama for theatrical purposes, modern-day journalists now use the theatrical practice of melodrama in presenting reality" (p. 18). Each side in the 1996 campaign utilized Web sites that "provided the interested visitor with a wide range of issue statements and campaign information that, when used responsibly, could work to the benefit of an informed electorate," but the Web sites of both sides have to be checked for misinformation and to ensure a balanced perspective (p. 62).

Historical factors can exert long-term influence on political behavior. For example, the Cherokee Indians "have historically aligned themselves with the Republicans... [because] of the actions of Democratic President Andrew Jackson, who was responsible for driving the Cherokees from Georgia in the 1830s..."; although that loyalty is now breaking down among younger Cherokees (pp. 284-285).

The inability of the candidates or the media to generate much enthusiasm among eligible voters for the 1996 election was illustrated by "the nation's lowest rate of participation [in a presidential election] since 1924" (p. 319). Causes of this decline are complex, but the media seem to play a role, and respondents indicated a dislike of polling news, which seems to determine the results before the election, dissuading people

from voting (p. 332). The persistently negative tone of political news coverage also appears to generate cynicism about political involvement (p. 369).

The references are extensive (pp. 371-393). — WEB

Kuhn, Annette, and **Jackie Stacey** (Eds.). *Screen Histories: A Screen Reader*. Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, 1998. Pp. vi, 233. ISBN 0-19-815946-3 (hb.) $60.00; 0-19-815949-8 (pb.) $24.95.

The editors feel that cinema history has been the "poor relation of film studies" in both Britain and the United States (p. 1). Two bright spots have been the *Historical Journal of Radio, Film and Television*, now published in the U.S. and the British journal *Screen*, which "published more than twenty articles on the history of film and television between 1990 and 1997 (p. 2). Kuhn and Stacey have brought together some of this latter work not only to make "some excellent scholarship more widely available," but also to mark "*Screen's* contribution to an ever-expanding body of work in film and television history" (*ibid.)*.

The editors' "Introduction" provides a brief sketch of the development of cinema historiography, noting, especially, "an expansion in the breadth and depth of historical research in screen studied" during the 1990s (p. 7).

After the introduction, the 14 chapters are grouped into four parts. Part I, "Reception Histories," contains "...Reflections on the Audience in Film History," by Robert C. Allen, "Hollywood Memories," by Jackie Stacey, and "The Popular, Cash, and Culture in the Postwar British Cinema Industry," by Janet Thumin.

Part II, "Institutional Histories," contains articles on "Copyright Protection in Theatre, Vaudeville, and Early Cinema," by Jeanne Allen, "...CBS and Television," by William Boddy, "...Warner Bros. and Sound," by Douglas Gomery, "The Disney-Fleischer Dilemma: Product Differentiation and Technological Innovation," by Mark Langer, and "*Baby Face*, or how Joe Breen made Barbara Stanwyck atone for causing the Wall Street Crash," by Richard Maltby.

Finally, Part IV deals with "Textual Histories," in articles on "...The Development of Narrative Perspectives in Early Cinema," by Ben Brewster, "Narrative/Diegesis: Thresholds, Limits," by Noël Burch, and "...*The Lonely Villa* and the de Lorde Tradition of the Terrors of Technology," by Tom Gunning.

Seven of the contributors are based in the United States, four, including the two editors, are at British institutions, one is from France, one from Canada, and one from Australia (pp. 231-233, "Notes on Contributors").

An appendix lists all articles on screen history that appeared in *Screen* from 1972 to 1997 (pp. 228-230).

There is no index. — WEB

Montagu, Ashley. *The Natural Superiority of Women*, 5th Edition. Walnut Creek, CA/London/New Delhi: AltaMira Press (a Division of Sage Publications), 1999. Pp. 335. ISBN 0-7619-8981-1 (hb.) $49.95; 0-7619-8982-X (pb.) $19.95.

This book is not a "feminist" disquisition of the 1990s, as the title might seem to suggest, but it is a serious rebuttal to extreme biological determinist arguments by a prominent physical anthropologist and was originally published in 1953.

Montagu is a "Boasian" — a student and follower of Franz Boas, one of the founders of American anthropology early in the 1900s — and, consequently, firmly committed to challenging the misinterpretations of Darwinian theory that had led to the development of racism and correlated theories of women's "natural" biological inferiority to men. The central thesis of Boas and his students — a perspective which came to dominate most modern anthropological theory — laid emphasis on culture for shaping human behavior in many ways that had previously been credited to biological inheritance. Montagu's view of race was most powerfully expressed in his 1942 book, *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*, and he had a prominent role in drawing up the 1950 UNESCO "Statement on Race," which put that world organization on record against any claim of a scientific basis for racism (p. 8).

In the Foreword, Susan Sperling notes a revival in recent years of a so-called "scientific racism" (p. 11). Most disturbingly, she comments, this revival includes some advocates with respectable academic credentials, and it extends to gender studies, as well as the study of race: "Biological reductionism and stereotyping also pervade some of the mainstream discourse on gender within the academy. A recent literature in the new discipline of 'evolutionary psychology' posits innate differences in basic behaviors of men and women" (pp. 11-12).

Sperling goes on to emphasize Montagu's positive role in the debates about race and gender current in the 1940s and 1950s:

> Montagu's recognition of the complex relationships between culture and biology, his "insistence on the principle of multiple and interlocking causation," as Aldous Huxley wrote in his forward [sic] to Montagu's first edition of *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (1942), his studies of gender, and, finally, his deconstruction of the Western ideology of male dominance are important contributions to the history of gender studies. (p. 13)

In his own preface to this fifth edition, Montagu describes changes from earlier editions, as follows:

> I have endeavored to leave the book essentially as it was written, except that I have brought it up to date, with the latest findings and figures available up to the time of publication. I have also added a certain amount of new material. The results of recent research have in many places enabled me to present the earlier data in reinforced form. (p. 41)

Montagu's justification for his use of the words "natural superiority" in the title predicts that it will cause most men to smile, "while women, alarmed, will rush to the defense of men, as women always have and always will. I hope that what I have to say in this book will make women even more willing to do so, for men need their help more than they sometimes seem to know" (p. 49).

Chapter one outlines his basic thesis:

> It is not only possible to show that most of the things that have been said about women to their disadvantage are false; it is also possible to show that women are naturally biologically more richly endowed with genes that contribute to adaptability and cultural survival than are men. Women, on the whole, possess a greater number of biological advantages than men, yet it is not their number but their overall quality that is important. These many qualitative differences confer biological advantages upon females. ... The traditional mythology has made it possible to bypass the facts or to render one insensible to them. (p. 61)

Chapter two describes the subjection of women to men as a relatively recent development of agricultural societies, not characteristic of earlier human societies.

Chapter three explores "the social determinants of biological 'facts' and social consequences," and says that "the evidence indicates that woman is, on the whole, biologically superior to man" (p. 91). Male envy of the woman's childbearing ability is discussed, as is the rise of a double standard in sexual morality. Montagu says that, while he does not regard premarital intercourse as a desirable thing, the extreme emphasis on chastity in Western culture "has, in effect, produced in most persons brought up on the tradition of the Western world a calculated ignorance of the facts of human growth and development...harmful to the healthy development of the individual and therefore to the healthy development of society" (p. 110).

Chapter four cites examples of the biological superiority of women, and chapter five, "When 'X' Doesn't Equal 'Y'," explores some possible genetic causes of aspects of female superiority. Chapter six then argues that women are sexually superior to men in terms of "sexual behavior of a kind that confers survival benefits upon all who participate in it, as well as creative benefits upon all who come within the orbit of its influence" (p. 148).

In responding to the question, "are women more emotional than men?" in chapter seven, the author says that much of women's so-called "emotionalism," and deviousness, too, is often "because men have forced them into that oblique approach" (p. 176). He may, however, be going a little too far when he says, "Most of their faults women owe to men, while men are indebted to women for most of their better qualities" (*ibid.*). Montagu thinks that women do have more "intuition" than men and "that women are able to identify themselves with other persons more effectively than men and that they are able to do so because of their more profound feeling for people" (p. 178).

Subsequent chapters deal with women's automobile driving and financial capabilities, supposed intelligence differences, creativity, concern for others, and mutual aid.

In chapter 13, "Changing Traditions," the author discusses the need for gender roles to change in order to functionally adjust to changes in technology and culture. But he adds some comments that he expects to be less pleasing to many feminists, such as, "While the feminist movement has done much good...it has to some extent demeaned the family, and the unsurpassably important role of mother, wife, and child..." (p. 257), and "What must always be the primary consideration is the wellbeing of the child...there is no substitute for a loving mother, not even a loving father..." (p. 269).

Although the Victorians thought that men had the difficult task of "civilizing" their women, the author reverses this in chapter 14, viewing the "woman's task" as civilizing men. "Civilization is the art of being kind, an art at which women excel" (p. 279).

Appendix A contains the text of the "United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women," of November 7, 1967; and in Appendix B Montagu describes "...the origins of my views on the natural superiority of women." Those views began to develop in childhood, when he became aware of women's more sincere and sustained sympathy and concern for children, in contrast to the perfunctory and transitory affection shown by men (pp. 297-298).

The notes are often substantive, and contain the bibliographical references (pp. 303-323). — WEB

Ray, Sally J. *Strategic Communication in Crisis Management: Lessons from the Airline Industry.* Westport, CT/London: Quorum Books (Greenwood), 1999. Pp. viii, 260. ISBN 1-56720-153-9 (hb.) $65.00.

"Be prepared!" is a good motto, but can you effectively prepare for a crisis? This book "examines organizational crises in the context of the airline industry and the communication strategies employed by airlines when responding to various issues associated with a major air-carrier crash" (p. 1). While no plan of crisis management is flawless, a lot can be learned from the airline industry's actions in the heat of crisis. A plane crash is a very significant event. Many people, as well as businesses, are in jeopardy. And the media add to the crisis by making everything that happened common knowledge. Airline

industries are therefore especially alert to the need to prepare for such situations. "For this reason, the airline industry has much to teach crisis managers in other industries" (p. 1).

Once an airline crash is sensationalized by the media, many members of the public tend to fear that air travel is not a good idea, causing airlines to suffer many cancellations and a decline in bookings. It does not matter whether this was the first accident an airline had in years. People see one accident as too many. "The airline industry operates under a distinctive public standard of zero major accidents" (pp. 1-2). Safety is therefore a key concern in the airline industry. Technological advancement and thorough investigation by dedicated safety professionals keep the industry's safety record high.

Many different safety professionals play parts in making the US airline industry's safety record strong. "It is the day-to-day management of the industry, as well as the professionalism of employees, that keeps everything going" (p. 2). Plus, several agencies promote US airline safety, including the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) (p. 2). Due to the broad and serious focus on airline safety, crashes occur rarely, and when they do occur, airline industry actions blossom, in an effort to make flight safer.

Because airline accidents cannot be predicted, many complex issues develop when they occur. "In order to survive the crisis, the airline must strategically communicate to victims and/or their families, the media, the public, other airlines, manufacturers, government agencies, stockholders, officers, employees, and future customers" (p. 5). The airline must get the situation under control quickly. Other organizations, whose crises may not be as abrupt, severe, or widely publicized as those of the airlines can therefore learn a lot from plans of action worked out by the airline industry.

The five parts of this book look at the various stages of crisis, from the pre-crisis to the post-crisis phases. Part I sketches relevant aspects of the airline industry and the general concept of organizational crisis management. Part II focusses on the pre-crisis stage, a period in which airlines constantly live and must "prepare for the worst." The contributing role of factors present in this stage — organizational communication defects, morale, maintenance deficiencies, etc. — in the actual event may not become apparent until the post-crisis investigation. Two crashes, Northwest Flight 255, at Detroit in 1987, and American Flight 191, at Chicago in 1979, are discussed in detail, with stress on what the post-crisis investigations revealed about pre-crisis factors.

Part III, "Crisis Stage," starts with a chapter telling what to do when a crisis occurs, "Disaster Strikes! Confronting Crisis." While many different responses are seen to be effective in dealing with an emerging crisis, several basic principles are essential: "An organization in crisis must be visible, show concern and compassion, and demonstrate efforts to correct the problem to ensure similar tragedies do not occur" (p. 95). These principles are simple to state, but not easy to apply in the heat of an actual crisis (*ibid.*). The many different factors in a crisis situation are discussed, from implementation of the pre-crisis plan through the differing perceptions of organization and stakeholders, uncertainty, stress, involved groups, victims, community, government, elected officials, and, not least, the media. "What media choose to present and the manner in which they convey the information creates a strong impression on organizational stakeholders" (p. 104). The importance of communication during a crisis is discussed, since, "Communication is critical to controlling a crisis" (p. 108). Several principles of crisis communication are given, including advice about dealing with the media. The crash of Delta Airlines Flight 191, near Fort Worth, in 1985, is described, and it is noted that the crash was less harmful to the airline's public image than the Northwest 255 crash had been to Northwest's image because of better crisis management and a better pre-crash image of the airline. "Companies must have credibility for messages to be heard by stakeholders. The absence of corporate credibility will likely perpetuate the crisis" (p. 132). The still-controversial crash of TWA flight 800 off Long Island, in 1996, is also discussed, with emphasis on TWA's communication with families which was publicly criticized by politicians.

Part IV deals with the post-crisis situation, particularly as related to the investigation and assignment of responsibility. Pan American flight 103's crash in Scotland, in 1988, USAir flight 427's crash near Pittsburgh in 1994, and the ValuJet flight 592 crash in the Florida Everglades in 1996, are the cases discussed.

Chapter 14 summarizes lessons learned from the airlines' experiences that can be applied to other industries. Among them are the cultivation of a responsible corporate culture, awareness of "the challenges of applying a rational plan to an irrational situation," the need for prompt, concerned, and sensitive communication, understanding of mass media processes, and adaptation of "defensive" statements to "the unique crisis situation" (pp. 241-249).

A brief selected bibliography is appended (pp. 251-252).

— ADK

Roberge, Gaston. *The Faithful Witness: On Christian Communication*. Anand, Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash. 1999. Pp. 118. (No ISBN — pb.) Rs 92.00 ($10.00).

Father Gaston Roberge, SJ, formerly Secretary for Social Communication to the Jesuit Superior General, and now back at his earlier post at Chitrabani Production Centre and Professor at St. Xavier's College, in Calcutta, directs this book to Christian communicators to assist them in reflection and discernment regarding their vocation. It is organized as a workbook, simulating a computer website, with a menu — bibliography, exercises, prayers, questionnaires, subject index, table of contents, and "texts, biblical" — that can be

"accessed" in any order. "It does not matter where you start as long as you end up with your own, personal, coherent, view (p. 5).

Topics, usually filling one page each, are arranged in alphabetical order. Some examples include, "attitude of the Church regarding the communication media," "body language," "change in culture, change in theology," "developmentalist ideology," "future of television," "institution and Church," "internet," "MTV," "technology and humans," "*Wired's* weird words," and many more.

The topics are interspersed with black-and-white illustrations, some as original comic strips, others as ink-brush drawings by Chittrovanu Mazumdar, reminiscent of the style of Georges Roualt.

The book is essentially a meditation book, designed to stimulate individual thought and prayer. — WEB

Roberts-Miller, Patricia. *Voices in the Wilderness: Public Discourse and the Paradox of Puritan Rhetoric.* Tuscaloosa/London: The University of Alabama Press, 1999. Pp. xii, 209. ISBN 0-8173-0939-X (hb.) $34.95.

The author says that her "conversion" "to a distinctly non-Puritan dialogic way of imagining argument" was the beginning of her interest in Puritan rhetoric, fueled by the realization that refusal to dialogue still dominated much American rhetoric and argumentation. She says, "In the simplest sense, I have ended up writing about the American Puritans as a result of my puzzlement that dialogic rhetoric has failed to convert everyone" (p. ix).

Roberts-Miller remarks that historians of rhetoric, "whether American, British, or Continental," generally leave out Puritanism. "Instead, these histories typically move from the Renaissance directly to the Enlightenment..." (p. 2). Nevertheless, the Puritans dominated much of the intellectual life of colonial North America, affecting to a degree even those who claimed to follow the ideas of the Enlightenment and even shaping the underlying American ideology. As the author's classroom experiences suggest, the same pattern of exhortation and "Jeremiad" is very much alive and active in contemporary American rhetoric. How much of this can be attributed to the surviving influence of Puritanism and how much is due simply to the perennial contrariness of human nature is uncertain. Roberts-Miller nevertheless sees enough possibility of the former to justify an hypothesis:

> I will speculate that many of our current problems with argument, especially our cultural and pedagogical inabilities to enact a public sphere in which argument is a form of *inquiry*, can be explained as the ghost of the Puritan spirit that haunts our culture and classrooms.
> (p. 1)

Chiefly, however, she wants to use the case study of Puritanism as an analogy. Following a method suggested by Charles Taylor, Roberts-Miller "uses a historical period as a case study: an era or community becomes part of an analogy that might help to explain the same phenomenon in other eras and communities" (p. 4). She argues that the Puritan failure to achieve discursive conflict resolution was due to their "models of the mind, argumentation, the self, and language" that prevented people with differing views from engaging in dialogue (*ibid.*).

The book's six chapters review various dimensions of the study. Chapter one, "Ghost in the Sphere," discerns the survival of Puritan "monologism" in what Jürgen Habermas has called the "public sphere," wherein, ideally, "arguments and not status determine decisions" (p. 7).

Chapter two looks at some of the theological and philosophical tenets of Puritanism that help explain the character of Puritan rhetoric. Chapter three follows a strand that ran through chapter two: "the role that the Puritan epistemology played in the complicated seventeenth-century public sphere," and it raises the paradox that many criticisms of Puritan discourse, "such as that it is monologic," would have been seen by them as "congratulation" (p. 44). It concludes that "Puritanism precludes controversia because Puritan ontology and epistemology reject that one might learn by contemplating the opposition" (p. 82). (*Controversia* is defined as a suspension of judgement in dialogic argumentation that keeps it open to further debate [p. 45])

Chapter four paints a dim picture of Puritan rhetoric: "In Puritanism, analysis, critical thinking, and explication are not part of rhetoric..; mediation is a sin; all that is left to rhetoric is a set of intellectually vapid tricks for the display of various static propositions" (p. 114). Embellishment can be used in a sermon before an audience already in agreement, but it cannot "provide a method for people who genuinely disagree to understand one another... If the display of truth does not work, and this limitation of rhetoric exhausts the possibilities of discourse, then one is left nothing but violence" (p. 117).

Chapter five, "Prophets in a Howling Wilderness," modifies the negative impressions of Puritanism that dominated the earlier parts of the book, arguing "that although Puritan discourse was ... monologic, it is neither useful nor accurate to criticize the practice of Puritan discourse on the grounds that it was hegemonic, nor to claim that it was never dialogic" (p. 118).

Chapter six moves back to contemporary applications, in the classroom and in argumentation in general. Some provision must be made within a public sphere that values dialogue for the many who cannot seem to argue in any but a monologic way. Their perspective often is described by them as "wronged and persecuted, self-sacrificing and heroic, so dedicated to the hard truth that they refuse to compromise, no matter how great the threat... Prophetic rhetoric has a limited number of roles for anyone who participates in public discourse: the good, the bad, and the neutral" (p. 169). This monologic argumentation remains so widespread that it must

be taken into account. A functional dialogism, in response, "must itself be capable of understanding just how seductive the certainty and stasis of monologism can be. That is, dialogism must itself be able to include monologism in a dialogue about discourse" (p. 180).

The endnotes are, for the most part substantive (pp. 181-192), and the list of "Works Cited" is extensive (pp. 193-204).

— WEB

Seiter, Ellen. *Television and New Media Audiences*. (Oxford Television Studies series). Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. xii, 154. ISBN 0-19-871142-5 (hb.) $65.00; 0-19-871141-7 (pb.) $19.95.

The author, a professor of communication at University of California, San Diego, carried out qualitative research on television audiences, with emphasis on children. She admits at the outset "that qualitative audience research can do little to confirm or deny" the hypothesis that "television produces violent behavior in children and causes disruptions in the classroom" (p. 2). But she goes on to say,

> Qualitative research can, however offer an interpretation [of a classroom scene she has just described] ...that takes account of the contextual factors at work here, and the various uses of television as a form and topic of conversation with others in social settings. The primary contribution of ethnographic audience research since the 1970s has been its demonstration that media consumption is embedded in the routines, rituals, and institutions — both public and private — of everyday life. The meanings of the media ... are inseparable from and negotiated within these contexts. (p. 2)

Chapters are devoted to a description of qualitative audience research and its theoretical foundations, "Feminist Methods: The Parents' Support Group," lay theories of media effects, the pre-school impact of various programs, television and the internet, and (chapter five - co-authored by Karen Riggs) "TV Among Fundamentalist Christians: From the Secular to the Satanic." Writing from a liberal, feminist perspective, the authors at least profess an awareness of the danger that they, themselves, might stereotype their subjects:

> As feminist intellectuals explore the terrain of Christian fundamentalism and its female adherents as a kind of absolute other, they might do well to bear in mind Karen McCarthy Brown's warning about what she describes as "the crossfire of projections that occur when fundamentalists and scholars describe one another." (p. 112)

The final chapter summarizes some of the insights qualitative research has provided into the behavior of television audiences, as well as some of its difficulties and pitfalls. Some "obstacles are rooted in the academic institutions that effectively sponsor such research" (p. 134). Institutions are impatient, but "if done well, ethnographic research takes a long time." The unfortunate result of many ethnographic audience studies, therefore, is that they "remain unwritten, as drawers full of transcripts and field notes left behind after funding ran out, collaborative teams split up, or researchers hurried on to the next topic before completing the analysis" (*ibid.*).

In closing, Seiter relates her "domestic ethnography" of the television and internet audience to "the public realms in which these [studies] circulate ... Television audience studies should work to change television itself as well as the popular representation of the audience" (p. 140).

The bibliography is substantial (pp. 141-148). — WEB

Singer, Marshall R. *Perception and Identity in Intercultural Communication* ("An Abridged and Revised Edition of *Intercultural Communication: A Perceptual Approach*"). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1998. Pp. xv, 295. ISBN 1-877864-61-7 (pb.) $24.95.

The earlier edition of this book was published in 1987 by Prentice-Hall, and has been called a classic in the field of intercultural communication. In the present edition, the contents have been both condensed and updated, and the new title is meant to represent the contents more accurately.

Singer diverges from what he sees to be the view of many anthropologists, "that if the concept of culture was to have any meaning it had to be applied only to very large groups like total societies or large language or ethnic groupings" (p. xii). He prefers to say that all groups have their own cultures, "then to examine — for each total society — the groups that comprise it" (*ibid.*). In this way he avoids the confusing term "subculture," and feels able to express more clearly the ways in which group cultures overlap and integrate with each other.

Chapters are dedicated to "the role of culture and perception," "the role of culture and identity," "the communication process" (subtitled: "It is Not Possible to Not Communicate"), and "Communication at Different Levels of Analysis: Organizations, Groups, and Nations Don't Communicate, People Do." Chapter five consists entirely of bibliography (pp. 239-275).

Figures illustrate the various relationships of individuals, groups, and cultural contents discussed in each chapter.

— WEB

Singhal, Arvind, and **Everett M. Rogers**. *Entertainment-Education: A Communication Strategy for Social Change*. Mahwah, NJ/London: Lawrence

Erlbaum Associates, 1999. Pp. xiv, 265. ISBN 0-8058-3235-1 (hb.) $59.95; 0-8058-3350-1 (pb.) $29.95.

Can the mass media experience, such as watching television or listening to the radio, be socially persuasive? Believers in the entertainment-education strategy promoted by this book see it as a very effective tool. According to the editors,

> Entertainment-education is the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, and change overt behavior. (p. xii)

Viewers of the Peruvian soap opera, *Simplemente Maria*, thirty years ago, were seen to identify with the lead character as a role model for their behavior, causing the sale of the objects that seemed to be associated with her success to skyrocket. The entertainment-education strategy has now spread to 75 countries. It "has promoted family planning, adult literacy, HIV/AIDS prevention, sexual abstinence for adolescents, gender equality, preservation of the environment, and responsible parenthood" (p. xii).

On the negative side, many media sources promote unhealthy behavior, such as violence and irresponsible sex, boosting those actions' popularity and the sale of products that promote such behavior.

But, as long as the promoted behavior is positive, the entertainment-education strategy is good for both the viewers and commercial sales. It "has the potential to create a situation in which the educator's goals and those of the commercial media institutions can both be realized in a win-win situation" (p. xii).

Nevertheless, the strategy, still in its developmental stages, is not foolproof. By presenting their pros and cons and the general history of the entertainment-education strategy, this book is meant to serve as a key reference for this tool's future success.

The first eight chapters look at the various stages of the strategy's development, from its beginnings to the expected outcomes of the process. They draw on a wide range of examples, generally soap operas but also music, from Mexico, India, Africa, Britain, the Philippines, and elsewhere, representing both television and radio productions. Many references are made to research on the effectiveness of family planning campaigns that have used the strategy, notably the Indian television soap opera, *Hum Log* (pp. 73-104).

The final chapter, "Lessons Learned About Entertainment-Education," looks at what has come to be known over the years about the process. It first identifies the factors that determine the strategy's effectiveness, then takes a look at some ethical dilemmas. Formative and summative evaluation research is suggested to identify ethical concerns. It aims to "(a) analyze the target audience's needs and aspirations, (b) produce relevant and user-friendly media materials, and (c) understand the intended and unintended effects of the intervention" (p. 218). Seven important ethical dilemmas are identified, the foremost of which "centers around a fundamental question: Is it right to use the mass media as a persuasive tool to foster social change?" (*ibid.*). The authors deny that persuasive communication as such is unethical, and they add that it "cannot be eliminated in a democratic society" (*ibid.*).

Finally, Singhal and Rogers predict a successful future for the strategy, if it is implemented properly. They argue that it can help resolve a number of current social problems:

> As a communication strategy, entertainment-education holds promise not just for the hundreds of millions of students in the world's classrooms, but for the billions of audience members who each day tune in their radio sets, rev-up their stereos, and flip open a comic book. (p. 227)

A glossary and extensive references (pp. 231-248) are appended. — ADK

Smith, Jeffery A. *War and Press Freedom: The Problem of Prerogative Power*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1999. Pp. xi, 324. ISBN 0-19-509945-1 (hb.) $45.00; 0-19-509946-X (pb.) $19.95.

This is a history of the American experience in trying to balance the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment right of "freedom of the press" against the serious, frequently life-or-death necessity of controlling information flow during times of war. Smith, a specialist in First Amendment studies, traces the American idea of press freedom from its origins in the Enlightenment and British moves towards press freedom, such as *Cato's Letters*, published in British newspapers in the 1720s, which made the point that published information about officials' actions was necessary so people could "evaluate the performance of their servants in official positions," and that "honest leaders would want to have their actions subjected to such scrutiny and that only the guilty had anything to fear" (p. 28).

By the time the Constitution and Bill of Rights were written, prior censorship of the press, according to no less an authority than Sir William Blackstone, had become impossible under English law (p. 31). While the independent United States became firmly committed to guaranteed press freedom, on paper, even legislation, let alone practice, gave rise to numerous violations — among the most serious being the Sedition Acts of 1798 and 1918.

The necessity of national self-defense and the realization that information is a weapon have created special tensions between the press and the government in wartime — tensions that surfaced just as strongly during the Gulf War of the 1990s, as they had during the conflict with revolutionary France (pp. 75-90) in the 1790s, the War Between the States

(1861-65), the two World Wars, or the Vietnam War.

The Alien and Sedition Act of 1798 was so anomalous that Congress avoided doing anything comparable for over 100 years. As Smith describes it, "After the Alien and Sedition Act of 1798 proved damaging to the Federalists, no serious consideration was given to passing such legislation again until World War I, when enforcement of the Espionage Act and Sedition Act was politically costly to the Democrats" (p. 221). But after 1918, government control of information became haphazard — a question of presidential prerogatives or military expediency, as defined by generals in the field (pp. 91-125).

The First World War set patterns for the "bureaucratization of wartime censorship" which were more systematically imposed in the Second World War and carried over into the period of the Cold War, the Korean War, and Vietnam. As early as 1914, the Supreme Court had come to regard constitutional provisions as "'organic living institutions' evolving over time" (p. 128). "With the idea of a 'living' constitution came a paternalistic government of unenumerated powers and of centralized controls reaching even the most basic rights of expression" (*ibid.*).

Part three of the book mulls over "the risks of repression." Although the military's management of its press relations during the Gulf War often raised hackles in the media,

> the Marines did a relatively good job of working with the press in the Gulf War because they adopted the attitude that coping with the media is necessary. "We didn't view the news media as a group of people we were supposed to schmooze," said Chief Warrant Officer Eric Carlson. "We regarded them as an environmental feature of the battlefield, kind of like the rain. If it rains, you operate wet." (p. 197)

But technological developments have made relations between the media and the military extremely problematic, with censorship often virtually impossible, although "officials who cannot stop the flow of mass communication can find ways to delay stories until they are no longer news and to divert attention with easily gathered, government-processed information." Also, "journalists themselves can be less than honest and informative" (p. 220).

The book is an argument for freer reporting of military actions, with mutual sensitivity on both sides:

> Unless they can control all means of transportation to a war and all means of communication from the battlefields, military authorities must be prepared to work with the news media. Journalists should be able to accept self-imposed limits if they are mutually agreed upon and truly intended to protect themselves and soldiers. (p. 226)

The endnotes are substantial (pp. 229-312).

— WEB

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Happy Holidays
to our readers

May the year 2000 be filled with joy and peace!