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Once Upon a Time for the Soul A Review of the Effects of Storytelling in Spiritual Traditions

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Once Upon a Time for the Soul

A Review of the Effects of Storytelling in Spiritual Traditions

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In West Africa, when a person in the village becomes sick, the Healer will ask them, “When was the last time that you sang? When was the last time that you danced? When was the last time that you shared a story?”

—Cox (2000, p. 10)

Now God sometimes tires of making people happy and always mixes some misfortune with good luck, like rain with sun. The queen fell ill, and neither the learned doctors nor even the quacks could do anything for her.

—From *Donkeyskin*, an oral folktale

1. *Homo Narrans*: Story Mind/Story Soul

Among the People, who know such things, it is said that First Storyteller crept close at night and listened to the Gods talking in their sleep—so that each tale the Teller collected contained the *breath* of the Gods. Humans are storytelling beings. Humans, in fact, have been described as story-telling animals by MacIntyre (1981). People have a need for symbols to help them understand and represent their understanding of the world. Fisher (1985, 1987), a scholar who foregrounded narrative frameworks for understanding human communication, suggested that people might be best understood as *homo narrans*, since we organize our experiences into stories with plots, central characters, and action sequences that carry implicit and explicit lessons. If, as Fisher argued, people inherently pursue a narrative logic, and all humans are essentially storytellers, then the sharing of stories is a powerful

tool for helping people make sense of their spiritual values, share those beliefs with others, and, thus, profoundly understand their own minds and souls.

Stories are among our most basic units of communication. We are socialized by *narrativity*, though we may be educated by *rationality* (Fisher, 1985). The role of stories in social explanation has been analyzed in fields as diverse as psychology, sociolinguistics, political science, history, anthropology, law, and communication. Human beings think, perceive, imagine, and make moral choices according to narrative structures (Sarbin, 1986).

While the effects of sharing narratives has been well documented for children in educational settings—to carry culture—and for those who are ill, relatively little scholarly attention has been directed toward how listening to narratives affects members of spiritual tra-

ditions and communities. Storytellers themselves, however, have long recognized the power of narratives to move listeners from the pain of the moment to a happier-ever-after (Sunwolf, 1999), with powerful narratives provoking intense flashes of insight for listeners who are in need, either physically or spiritually. Despair, trauma, illness, and grief create frightening forests of pain, with unfamiliar roads; in such a context, listening to stories for those who suffer may suggest new pathways out of dark forests (Sunwolf, 2003).

The oral tales came *before* the written texts, in all spiritual traditions. It has been long-recognized within the Judeo-Christian tradition, as one example, that the sacred texts were themselves seeded by oral stories, which carried not only performance goals but traditional teachings (Campbell, 2002), since larger narratives (the Pentateuch or Deuteronomistic histories) needed the abbreviation of the story-structure from oral everyday life, from which these epics were composed. More background into oral and written traditions and the effect of lack of general literacy is provided by Nidith (1996).

At the outset, to focus the discussion here, three terms will be clarified: spirituality, faith, and religion.

The term *spirituality* has numerous meanings, often used inaccurately as a synonym for religion or, pejoratively, as a synonym for nontraditional, noninstitutionalized religions (New Age experiences, for example). Here, we draw upon several useful definitions from practitioners outside religious organizations. Canda (1988) defines spirituality as the “human quest for personal meaning and mutually fulfilling relationships among people, the nonhuman environment, and, for some, god” (p. 243). Bullis (1996) defines spirituality as “the inner feelings and experiences of the immediacy of a high power . . . as the relationship of the human person to something or someone who transcends themselves” (p. 2), suggesting that spirituality is a divinely focused but altered state of consciousness. In discussing the essential need to fold spirituality into compassionate social work, Angell, Dennis, and Dumain (1998) argue that spirituality is “an intrinsic human question drive, or need,” which is woven into an individual’s response to their own perception of God (p. 616). *Spirituality* is broadly conceived here, as a dynamic ongoing search within individuals for personal meaning in relationship with a higher divine power.

Since *faith* is a core theme of stories told within spiritual traditions, it is useful to look at its general meaning. Within the Judeo-Christian tradition, the

Letter to the Hebrews states that faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Heb. 11:1). People come to believe in the likely occurrence or existence of events (Angell, *et al.*).

Of the three terms, *religion* may be the easiest to define as it is generally accepted to be manifest in an organization of those who share core values and beliefs. There is general agreement, both within and without specific religious organizations, that a religion is a group of believers within an organization or institution who, together, accept a common set of beliefs, practices, and rituals regarding spiritual concerns and ethical issues (Angell, *et al.*, 1998; Krippner & Welch, 1996). As a result, spirituality is the less doctrinal, ritualized, and, perhaps, less tangible practice and belief system. Here, an intersection is offered to frame the discussion of stories; attention is given to the use of oral stories within spiritual practices, faith-generating goals, and religious institutions. I take the position that people have a basic need for spirituality to help them make sense of the world, frame their choices about what to believe in or what to reject, determine what to value, and guide behavioral choices. Religions offer more specific structure, support, and foundation for that core spiritual need. Storytelling is a critical tool for fulfilling those needs and goals.

Oral stories, in fact, may be a uniquely appropriate tool for feeding spirit because stories carry emotional punch. A powerful tale is always grounded, not in plot, but in emotion, which the oral nature of storytelling highlights. Emotion, in turn, is the soul’s unique dwelling place. The manner in which a tale’s emotion is communicated is less understood.

Any investigation of a story’s emotional plot involves paying attention to a story’s essence. Harold Scheub, the Evje-Bacom Professor of Humanities and Professor of African Languages and Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, collected oral tales by *walking* more than 6,000 miles through South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho. Always Scheub was driven by the question, “What is the essence of story?” How does the teller convey meaning? One storyteller he learned from was Nongenile Masithathu Zenani, who admitted she was frequently engaged in the struggle between tradition and contemporary social trends. She explained how she understood the deepest part of “story”: “Storytelling is a sensory union of image and idea, a process of recreating the past in terms of the present” (1998, p. 218).

2. Story Structures

story (stōr•é, *n.* **1.** a narrative, either true or fictitious. **2.** a way of knowing and remembering information; a shape or pattern into which information can be arranged and experiences preserved. **3.** an ancient, natural order of the mind. **4.** isolated and disconnected scraps of human experience, bound into a meaningful whole.

While the above “definition” of story is, in fact, my own weaving together of several useful perspectives, it invites us to pay attention to story structures. Although limited attention has been paid to story structures within spiritual traditions by scholars, some findings have appeared. When Father Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R., is asked where he finds all his stories, he says he always replies simply, “How is it that you miss them?” (Cavanaugh, 1992, p. 1). Tales for the telling are everywhere, in multiple forms.

Homiletic stories told by preachers in the Christian tradition usually include tales recounted from the Old or New Testament; autobiographical narratives about their own conversion, commitment, or ministry; and stories of congregants. Our initial distinction between spirituality and religion is useful here, because storytellers have long acknowledged that it is not necessary to share a religion to be profoundly touched by its tales:

I don't know that I am a very religious person, but the Old Testament does appeal to me—much more than the New—and it has always seemed to me that those simple Dutch friends of my childhood came straight out of the Old Testament. The open country, the flocks and herds, the patriarchal life, the slow traveling, their simple faith, and the influence of the bible on their everyday life all made a great impression on me, and this impression has never been effaced. (Pauline Smith, South African writer, cited in Scheub, 1998, p. 243)

These stories have such broad appeal due to their themes and characters. Themes are broad in range and include repentance, forgiveness, resurrection, and the need for social justice (Schuetz, 1986). In addition, story structures themselves include thematic aspects

(i.e., right and wrong, suffering, fellowship with God or others, immortality, the role of the church). Within the Judeo-Christian traditions, even familiar stories are told denominationally, that is, differently (a Jewish rabbi will tell a different story than an Anglican bishop about Moses, God, and the burning bush, for example). The repetition of theme throughout creates a structure with persuasive power.

Motifs or sets of linguistic images that recur in the tales stand in contrast to themes. Rather than making a moral point, motifs are significant patterns of images that heighten narrative appeal, tumbling upon one another so that one image may lead to the next. Ultimately, motifs lead the listener to the meaning of the story. As with themes, characters can form part of such motifs.

The Jewish distinction between “halakah” and “haggadah” may help illuminate the distinct format of story. *Halakah* is a reasoned reflection on religious law, abstract in nature. *Haggadah* is “the way of metaphor and picture” (White, 1986, p. 17). Ask a rabbi a question, you get a story. The Gospels, from the Bible, are haggadic in nature.

The language of storytelling within religious contexts generally comes from everyday language, or the words of the people in their ordinary lives. Storytellers often use “I” or “we” and “us” to bring the tale home. They sprinkle vivid words throughout to portray scenic detail. Scheutz (1986) describes how story-preaching involved role-playing, dramatizing, performance interpretation, with an attempt to persuade audiences both by content and by telling style. In story, both verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication are present and relied upon.

Fables are short stories that rely almost exclusively on the use of animals as characters. As a result, the fable focuses our attention on the behavior and universal dilemmas of life, rather than on particular people. Revised and adopted by each culture that has been exposed to them, fables appear widely in literature, usually with moral imperative explicitly stated or implicitly derived at the immediate end of the tale. Although he was not fond of moralizing, Martin Luther employed fables in his preaching and teaching. He taught that fables contain wisdom in a concise and sim-

ple format, and once wrote, “After the bible, the writings of Cato and Aesop are the best; better than all the opinions of the philosophers and jurists” (White, 1986, p. 21). As a wisdom tale, the fable is related to the proverb, though it allows for more plot; some refer to fables as extended proverbs. A fable, for example, shows how vain and greedy people end up suffering the consequences of their foolish choices; a fable demonstrates that little boys who “cry wolf” too often are ignored and devoured.

Parables, another form of story structure, have been a popular form for spiritual storytelling. William Bausch (1999), a priest of the diocese of Trenton, New Jersey, has been a voice for the celebration of storytelling for preachers around the world. He points out that parables are wisdom bearers, and cites Matthew 13:34, “Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing.”

Bausch situates the dilemma of storytelling and spirituality squarely in the center of media effects, citing the concern of George Gebner of the Annenberg Center for Media Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, who observed that for the first time in history, the major stories children learn do not come from their relatives, but from global profit-making media corporations (1999, p. 1). Having set out to redress the balance, Bausch collected over 350 tales for

preachers and teachers designed to “judge, provoke, and stimulate the spiritual imagination,” relying in part upon story structures (short but deep) for the selection of included tales. Noting the recent proliferation of “cute” stories, Bausch argues such tales perpetuate media shallowness (“literary twinkies, all sugar and no nourishment,” p. 2).

William White, a Lutheran pastor from Michigan, has instituted a guide to the use of stories in churches. White (1986) pointed out decades ago that the communication revolution brought about by the advent of television dramatically altered the expectations of congregations from their preachers. No longer content to have a person in the pulpit read, people-in-the-pew expect the speaker to make contact visually, as well as intellectually, with language that is vivid, concrete, and clear. Further, television and cable have now given people more spiritual choices: home pastor, preacher down the road, or one of the many smiling faces (with full orchestra and costumed chorus) on the television set every Sunday morning—*story battles*, of a sort, since television is a storytelling medium. White argues that television changed the *reading* of a sermon from a misdemeanor offense to a felony (1986, p. 15). New media may force us to pay better attention, but storytelling has always been both an instrument of faith as well as a powerful tool of communication.

3. Story Listening Effects

There was once a merchant whose wife lay sick, and so, when she felt her end drawing near, she called for her only daughter to come to her bed. Urgently, in a voice full of love, she told her child, “Be pious and good, and God will always take care of you. Everafter, too, will I look down upon you from heaven, and thus you will never be without me.” And then she closed her eyes and expired. That daughter went every day to her mother’s grave and wept bitterly.

—Aschenputtel

(An early version of a Cinderella-type tale, adapted by the author from many sources. Originally an oral folktale collected in Germany by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, the Grimm Brothers).

The magical words “Once upon a time . . .” that often start a traditional folk or fairy tale induce a soothing, familiar, light trance. Indeed, “holding an audience

spellbound,” is often used to describe an audience’s altered state of listening to a great tale told well, and psychologists have claimed that storytelling performances contain many of the conditions necessary for inducing trances (Sunwolf, Frey, & Keränen, in press). One psychotherapist-storyteller described such listener-trances as an inner-directed state of consciousness, such that although listeners’ eyes may be on the storyteller, their consciousness is turned inward (Martin, 1993). Benson (1975) describes the Relaxation Response, synthesizing western medical data with eastern religious practices. When listeners are relaxed, they are open to more active retention of what is being said, less defensive, and the internal processes of their own wonderful bodies begin “healing” (blood pressure lowers, pains fade, breathing becomes softly rhythmic, the heart beat slows, and stress hormones cease production). The “storylistening trance” was first identi-

fied by Stallings (1988), who was interested in the biophysiology of adults listening to told tales, and later investigated by Sturm (2000). Adult listeners to folktales were found to be aware of their own profound altered states of consciousness, including a sense of experiencing the fictional story as real, identifying with story characters, plots, or roles (“I’m no longer sitting in a tent listening to someone tell a story, I was in those woods, I saw those animals,” Sturm, 2000, p. 290). Folklore and fairy tales come with familiar “inductions” for welcoming, healing trance:

It was a dark and stormy night . . .
Once upon a time in a far away land . . .
In a time when magic still existed, there was a
king . . .
Il y avait une fois . . .

The spoken tale itself continues the trance, and does not duplicate the literary tale: repetitions, rhythms of voice, silences, whispers, all enhance deeper relaxation.

Rooks (2001) argues that when our world is filled with grief and pain, seeing ourselves clearly is impossible, as a fogbank surrounds our minds. Since stories have the ability to catch us off guard, they penetrate through to our souls, without the need for immediate acceptance or awareness. However, Rooks urges for the effect of listening to a story when we are suffering: the story makes no judgments of us. A good story is one we can accept or reject, and, paradoxically, that freedom makes acceptances more likely. Daniel Taylor, a professor of English at Bethel College in Minnesota, writes that people today are confused about who they are, why they are here, and what they are supposed to do—questions that have traditionally best been answered by stories (1996, p. vii). In a very real sense, Taylor argues, storytelling helps people realize that they are characters in a larger story and that they share that story with a world of other characters. Helping people realize their roles in a broader story takes them

out of a narrow focus on *self*, urging them gently towards a focus on their communities and shared interwoven stories around them.

Not only storytelling, but *storylistening* now appears to have important effects documented by scholars interested in the communication outcomes of storytelling. Taylor, Aspinwall, Giuliano, Dakof, and Reardon (1993) conducted three studies to explore the coping benefits and limitations of stories people *hear* about others undergoing similar stressful events. Interestingly, cancer patients reported that positive stories about other patients were more helpful than negative stories, yet people most commonly told them negative ones (two-thirds of stories described were about others who had died or done poorly with cancer). The source of a story may influence how a listener perceives the tale. Taylor and colleagues postulated that the most effective stories may come from *similar* others or from experts. When the researchers manipulated the valence (positive or negative) and the source of stories told to college students facing midterm exams, stories with positive endings and those relayed by expert sources were regarded more positively than negative stories and those told by nonexperts (Taylor *et al.*, 1993). In the third study, three groups of students listened either to stories of another student’s poor college adjustment, average level of adjustment, or excellent success; there were two further story conditions (*informative story* condition, containing information relevant to improving college adjustment, or *uninformative story* condition). Negative stories made students feel lucky *by comparison*, whereas positive stories were perceived as offering a better role model and sense of hope.

This suggests that storytelling within spiritual communities can have powerful effects in helping members cope with painful events and challenges. “Story evokes a more powerful faith response than doctrine and concept,” (White, 1986, p. 16).

4. R_x: Soul Medicine, Spirit Pills

Long long ago, a man known as the Baal Shem Tov went to a most secret place in the forest. It is said that in this secret place, he lit a sacred fire, spoke an ancient prayer, and uttered a holy name. In that moment, Hope burned more brightly in the world. But it came to pass that in the next generation, his successor knew only the

Place, the Fire, and the Prayer. Yet, that was *enough* to preserve Hope. In each succeeding generation, another spark of knowledge was lost—until, at last, nothing remained, except the Story. But telling the Story was still *enough*.

—Adapted from an oral telling by
Doug Lipman (1996)

When hope is the needed medicine for a damaged spirit, story is the right prescription. A prescriptive approach to storytelling illuminates the power of face-to-face telling to feed or heal minds and souls in multiple ways. Telling and listening to stories in the context of spiritual traditions may operate in a number of dynamic ways. A functional story model is offered in Figure 1, which suggests that tales told and listened to within various spiritual contexts may function as (a) a way of connecting diverse people (relational narratives), (b) a way of learning (pedagogical narratives), (c) a way of creating (heuristic narratives), (d) a way of remembering (historical narratives), or (e) a way of foreflashing the future (visionary narratives). This model further invites us to acknowledge the permeable nature of these categories, since any told story may provide multiple overlapping functions for one or more listeners or tellers. A functional communication approach to thinking about the role of storytelling in relationships was first suggested by Sunwolf and Frey

(2001), who described the way interpersonal face-to-face storytelling helps both tellers and their audiences construct self (Who am I?); weave community (Who are We?); order experiences; represent reality; make sense of lived-events; share knowledge; or influence the values, beliefs, and actions of one another.

This review will use the categories of this Functional Story Model as a framework to present scholarship that examines the effects of oral storytelling, including scholarship from the perspective of various spiritual traditions.

A. Story Bridge: A Way of Connecting

As a bridge, a story represents a valuable paradox. Any tale can bring people together or can cast them asunder. Stories have the paradoxical ability both to hurt and to heal. The impact of stories that *hurt* has been experienced by all of us in our personal and professional lives: gossip, slander, or distorted rumors have devastating effects on the emotional and physical

health of the victims of the dark side of telling stories. In the Jewish tradition the ancient rabbis coined a term to describe the power of negative stories, "*lashon hara*," which means "speaking with an evil tongue." Limits were placed on what stories could be repeated, as it was understood that the very act of speaking a story gives weight to its words (Stone, 1996). This *hurting* power is counterbalanced by the *healing* power of story. Meade (1995), a therapist who trains other therapists on the use of healing stories, believes that new meanings hatch each time a story is told, both for the listeners and the teller.

People are forever telling stories about themselves, powerful sharing bridges to other people. Witherell, Tran, and Othus (1995) suggest that oral storytelling allows the audience to engage in a leap of *empathy* that binds them into

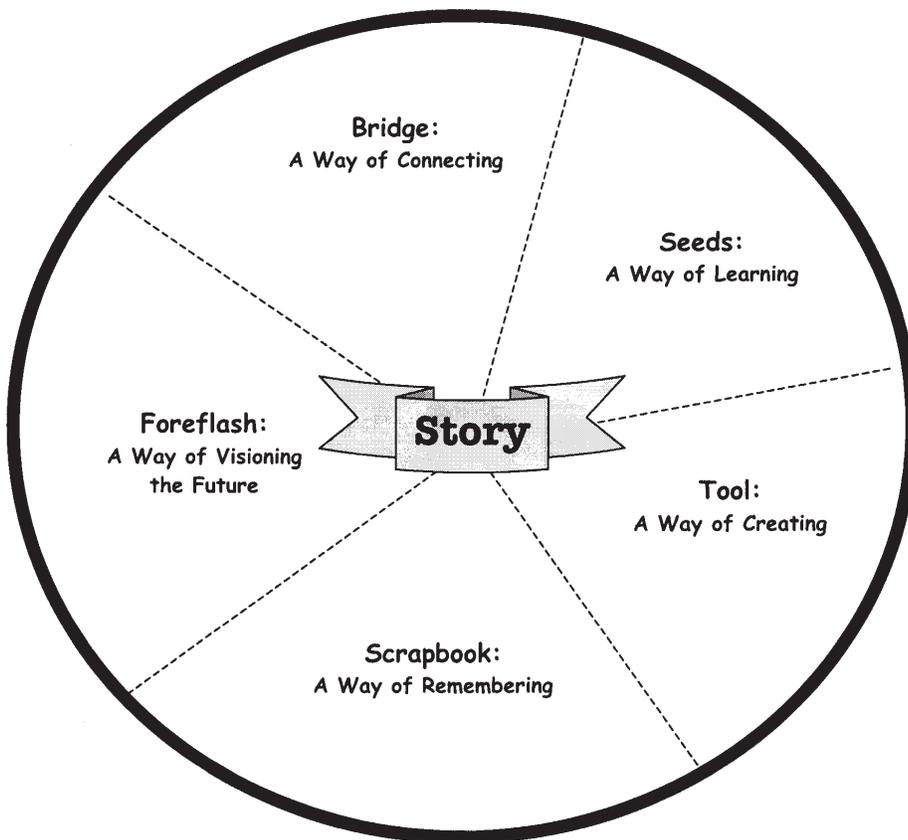


Figure 1. Model of five functions of oral stories for tellers and listeners. Note: Dashed lines between story types symbolize the permeable nature of each type (blending with one another and crossing boundaries). Model expanded and adapted from Sunwolf, Frey, & Karänen (in press).

wider relationships that provide bridges across cultures. Scheibe (1986) has found that for some people, the stories they have constructed for their lives (and that they share with others) actually seem to come to an end *before* their biological lives do. People who cannot see more “story” in their lives stop fully living.

B. *Story Seeds: A Way of Learning*

There was once a child who received an unusual gift. All of Baghdad celebrated the birth of the sultan’s son and costly gifts were brought by every noble, priest, and sage. A young sage was invited to the celebrations, but he came empty-handed. He bowed low before the sultan, speaking softly, “Today the young prince has received many precious treasures, rich beyond compare. Here is my humble gift. From the time he is old enough to listen, until he has reached manhood, I shall come to the palace each day and I will tell him stories.” The youthful sage kept his word and one day the prince was made sultan. He became famous for his wisdom. To this day, an inscription on a scroll in Baghdad simply reads: IT WAS BECAUSE OF THE SEED SOWN BY THE TALES.

Stories answer both “why” and “why not” questions, allowing listeners to learn through the tale. Scholarship on the process by which storytelling facilitates learning casts light, at the outset, on how the use of storytelling within religious traditions is often that of pedagogy. Livo and Rietz (1986) argue that in Story we are shown a truth about who we are and even why we are, since a tale takes the ordinary and binds it into all of human existence, revealing the significance of the trivial. In fact, scholars have long agreed that story frames help us organize experiences and learn from them; Polkinghorne (1988) argues that a story makes an individual event understandable by identifying the whole to which a single event contributes. Since this is one of the primary goals of organized religions (Why do bad things happen to good people?), story is valuable in helping people learn from the events in their lives.

Wanner (1994) has found that the process of sharing oral narratives values a particular logic of knowing: while written language may present deductive or inductive reasoning—spoken language presents a more dynamic view. For example, Gee’s (1985) linguistic analysis of a seven-year-old African American child’s story sharing time in school show-and-tell periods is evidence that the child might make sense of her experiences through an *oral* style of speech that differs from her teacher’s *literate* style.

Many religious traditions use “teaching stories” to influence moral choices. Hasidic Jews used story as the primary means of instructing their children and elucidating the meaning of the Old Testament (Mintz, 1968). Narratives appeared in many forms in early Christian sermons and devotional literature, as stories about the lives of saints, illustrations of proper religious life, fables from which preachers lifted morals, and even picture sheets to retrace orally the life of Jesus (Schuetz, 1986, citing also Gerhardson, 1961). Storytelling as a mode of religious persuasion flourished in the Middle Ages, and was a primary tool of 20th century religious evangelists in the United States.

Kaufman (1996) offers a comprehensive anthropological description of “wisdom” literature, including fables, apologues, parables, religious tales, anecdotes, moral tales, jokes, and proverbs. Such story types all come from a genre that contained a double communicative purpose (referred to in Spanish as *instruir deleitando*, stories that entertain, but, at the same time, teach). Stories have a powerful ability to teach morals, avoiding listener-repugnant lecture format. Archbishop Oscar Romero was influential, in part, because of his skill in sketching stories in which evil characters lose a struggle with good ones (Schuetz, 1984, 1986). I have previously argued that the persuasive effects of oral stories in carrying profound learning for the listener might be derivative of (a) a listener’s self-generated thoughts while listening to the tale, (b) the active cognitive participation of the listener during the telling of the tale, (c) the modeling of appropriate (or costly) behaviors and values in the plot of the tale, and/or (d) the introduction of events or consequences that provoke conscious deliberation (Sunwolf, 1999).

The role played by storytelling in the spiritual tradition of many Native North American indigenous people included the belief that a well-told tale would be remembered longer by the audience than saying either, “You should!” or “You should not!” (Bruchac, 1996). Sufi wisdom tales from the Middle East recognize the power of oral stories to make teaching points without marshaling the mental resistance that more sharply reasoned rational appeals trigger (Friedlander, 1992). The African “dilemma” tale carries profound moral teachings, often negotiated and renegotiated within the communities telling them. Dilemma tales function as an integral part of moral and ethical training in many African societies, ending with a question, to be settled by the listeners (Bascom, 1975). See the appendix of oral tales for examples of these dilemma tales.

The Upâya folktales from East Asia accomplish spiritual teaching through the technique of misdirection. Miller (2000) concludes that there is an intricate connection between the narrative strategies of the storytellers and the religious and moral messages contained within these tales. The structure of Upâya folktales is that a superhuman being is central who appears in order to bring about spiritual or moral improvement in a human being. There is, in effect, supernatural intervention in human affairs. The tales are informed by transcendental wisdom (*prajñâ*), that is, the clear-sighted knowledge of reality, as it truly is, which must include insight into the spiritual state of the person upon whom the supernatural power is to operate. The actions are driven by compassion to help others that comes directly from feeling their suffering as one's own, so deities are highly empathic. A primary example of the teaching power of these folktales is the famous "Burning House" parable, recounted by Miller, but summarized here:

The central character is a benevolent father, who has many children. The father returns home to see it is on fire, but that his many children are so engrossed in playing with their toys that they ignore their father's shouts to leave. So, he tells them a lie. He tells them he has brought wonderful new toys for them to play with, outside. Hearing this, the children all rush out, yet there are no new toys.

In this misdirection tradition, it is insisted that there is, really, no "lie." Rather, it is the working of the mysterious transcendental wisdom.

C. Story Tools: A Way of Creating

Stories can function as recipes for future thinking about behaviors and outcomes. In religious communities, social justice and change are core goals, in addition to personal enlightenment. Frey (1987), studying oral tales in Native American spiritual traditions, argues that "words" are themselves *generative*. Many spiritual traditions believe that the telling of a tale has the power to bring the told event into the present, and thus are both dangerous and sacred. In particular, some Native American people view their stories as tools of communication that operate by re-enacting powerful happenings, as well as creating new events (Sunwolf, 1999). Bruchac (1996) describes the manner in which Native people of the southwest have said that telling Coyote stories, for example, at the wrong time of the year is an invitation for the trickster (coyote) to visit

the teller—always bringing unwanted trouble. Our religious beliefs are living guides, always lighting the way towards the possibility of a future better time; thus stories are significant tools with which to accomplish those sacred believed-in futures.

LaMothe (2001) studied performances of faith in ordinary and extraordinary stories and rituals, arguing that a more complete understanding of the dynamics of faith emerge from examination of symbolic processes as bridges between the conscious and unconscious. LaMothe argues that storytelling, as symbolic activity, creates resolution between dialectical tensions that challenge faith (i.e., trust-distrust, loyalty-disloyalty, belief-disbelief, and hope-hopelessness). The stories of a religious community create new meanings and contexts for the enactment of belief, trust, loyalty, and hope.

D. Story Scrapbook: A Way of Remembering

Organized religions may be more "organisms" than "organizations," in that they thrive when carried from one generation to the next as living entities, dynamic and strong. Spiritually significant values, beliefs, and events can be carried from generation to generation by the story structure. The religious tale, as a result, belongs to the religion, not to the teller; authorless, the story is published again and again, riding on the breath of teller into the ear (and heart) of listener. The living spirit of the religious is given muscle and skeleton through story, so it can move through the people it serves. We know that narrative memory is strong, facilitating individual retention and recall. Schank's (1990) research into artificial intelligence, for example, has illuminated human memory and intelligence. Dr. Schank, an expert in artificial intelligence, has concluded that we can tell people *abstract rules of thumb* that we have derived from prior experiences, but it is very difficult for other people to learn from these. We have difficulty remembering such abstractions, but we can more easily remember a good story. He reminds us that all thinking involves some form of *indexing*. In order to assimilate a fact, we must attach it someplace in memory. Information without access to that information is not information at all. Memory, critical to the vitality of any religion, is, in effect, both created and preserved by the telling of stories.

Storykeeping, or the scrapbooking of a religious tradition's history, is prominent in many religious traditions. Native American tribes, as well as the diverse intercultural groups of Hawaii, are prime examples of groups who keep spiritual teaching from ancestors in their stories. Halper (1996), studying the Lakota Oglala

in the United States, describes the storykeeping responsibility that a Lakota storyteller shared with her. He described his role as keeping his people's spiritual identity, with high spirituality contained in his stories, always passed down from the ancestors. History was a valued theme, rather than modernizing the tales. He saw himself as a bridge between the present and the past, using story to join them.

One of the prominent collections ("scrapbooks") of sacred tales for organized religions in the world is the Bible, which is generally considered a sacred text by three world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Modern scholars believe the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) may have been written down by four or five writers between 1000 B.C. and 400 B.C., based, in part upon older oral traditions. While there are lively disagreements about the order and composition of the tales within the Bible, it is generally agreed that the New Testament was composed by a variety of writers some time between 60 to 110 A.D., with the contents of the New Testament formalized by Athanasius of Alexandria in 367 A.D., later canonized in 382 A.D.

As major collections of widely-shared spiritual stories, versions of the Bible are used by storytellers within religious traditions as foundational tools for story-preaching and story-teaching. The Internet Sacred Text Archive is one accessible source for comparing these storied texts, containing the King James version (cross-linked with Easton's Bible Dictionary), the Apocrypha, the Vulgate, the Greek New Testament, the Tanakh, and the Jewish Publication Society translation of the Hebrew Bible published first in 1917 (The Internet Sacred Text Archive, 2004).

E. Foreflash: A Way of Visioning the Future

A story listener is given permission by the tale to dream of what might-yet-be. In fact, our daydreams are storied. Narrative structures facilitate the imagining of future possibilities, as well as the contemplation of

hypotheticals (counterfactual or what-if thinking). Simms (2000) points out that as the characters in a fairy tale cross thresholds into other realms, the audience-listeners are drawn *inward*, past the boundaries of their logical minds "into vast space and communal presence" (p. 62). Simms' storytelling work for peace, with cultures around the world, has led her to the conclusion that the intimacy of storytelling allows a listener's logical mind doors to "fall open inward" (p. 62), making room for an experience of timeless space of mind and allowing us to dream awake.

Sufi tales are Persian, Arabic, and Turkish. The very word "sufism" is relatively new, a German coinage of 1821; Shah (1968) argued that no Sufi ignorant of Western languages would be likely to recognize it. It is used here, nonetheless, with apologies. Sufism is an esoteric teaching within Islam, tracing the transmission of the tales back to teachers from the prophet Mohammed.

Sufi wisdom tales recognize the unique power of stories to carry the listener to new behaviors, future possibilities that are *different*. Subtlety is a key device, where the meaning is not clear unless the listener carefully harvests that meaning from the tale. Generally, Sufi tales were told between teacher and student, not to great audiences and not for entertainment (Sunwolf, 1999). Sufi followers believe that a certain kind of mental activity can produce what is termed a higher working of the mind, leading to special perceptions whose apparatus is latent in the ordinary man (Shah, 1968). As with Native American spiritual leaders and tellers, Sufi followers believe that their teaching stories lose something critical when collected in written form, since oral tales are used more effectively when designed *for* one group or person (Goleman, 1992). While the Native American lesson story varies in length, depending on the context of the telling, one feature of the Sufi wisdom tale is its brevity (see Appendix for example), relying on the impact of economical expression.

5. Story-Preaching /Story-Teaching: Happily-Ever-Aftering in New Directions

"Where is God?"

[*Call of Teller to Listeners.*]

"We don't know—but the Stories do!"

[*Response of Listeners to Teller.*]

—Traditional call and response,
seeking of and granting of permission
to begin the storytelling.

Storytelling is one of the oldest forms of communication and has been used by every culture (Collins & Cooper, 1997). Nonetheless, the accessibility, appeal, and variety of videos and multiple cable movie channels have contributed to the separation of individuals from the powerful stories of the people around them—

and has further isolated many from a full awareness of their own rich storied-souls. In the following section, three paths that would enrich the practice and understanding of storytelling in spiritual traditions are shared: making new connections between teller and listener, creating new places for the tales to be shared, and supporting new research of real world person-to-person storytelling and storylistening.

What do stories do?
Affect us, nothing else.

—Primus St. John, *Dreamer* (1990)

A. Story Bridges: Making New Connections

Story bridges that truly connect people to one another, to ideas, to values, and to new understandings require that we pay mindful attention to the context of the telling. Scheub (1998) argues that “story” is the totality of activities that comprise the telling, each of which is a crucial ingredient. Here, I argue for attention to the telling, as well as the tale.

1. The Velcro® Effect

Bausch argued for the telling of shorter tales, like parables that “stick with the subconscious, perhaps even provoke a little discomfort—in a word, the stories that resonate with the human condition,” (1999, p. 2). The goal of a storyteller within all spiritual traditions is the same: To hold tightly to the listener’s many-faceted spirit. This story of story success might be thought of as the VELCRO® Effect.

George de Mestral discovered the secret of Velcro® while hunting in the Jura Mountains of France in 1941. After scrambling through woods and brush, his wool pants were covered with burrs, with incredible sticking power. He inspected them under a magnifying glass and found each had hundreds of tiny hooks engaged in the loops of his pant fabric. M. de Mestral made a machine to duplicate those hooks and called the new product VELCRO®, from the French words *velour* and *crochet*.

A listener’s mind and soul are covered with trillions of tiny hooks. Memorable stories will stick to these hooks. More loops and hooks is better. The goal of spiritual story-tellers is that of Gatherer: to continually seek tales that have powerful sticking power.

All stories are not created equal, a lesson continually to be learned from the proliferation of television and from the media seduction of the Shallow Story. Might one person’s shallow tale represent another person’s much-needed soul food? *Perhaps*. Yet, there are

richer tales for the gathering, and communities of story-hunters within religious traditions should be urged to find them. (See resources in Appendix.)

2. The Vividness Effect

What attracts many spiritual tellers to the folktale is the sense of *moral urgency* that rings from the stories. Folktales are full of virtual exclamation marks, “Watch out!” “Beware!” “Your choice matters!” “Here there be dragons!” In the folktale, what appears to be an insignificant choice often has near-cosmic consequences (White, 1986): a promise broken and the world goes wrong, a forbidden box opened and evil rushes out.

Vivid language carries credibility, triggers flagging attention, and has sticking power. Spoken language, in fact, always creates a more vivid effect on the listener than *recited* written language. The pace, rhythm, pauses, phrases are all *different*. Since written language consists of words preserved on pages, tellers are tempted to think of storytelling as words that come from the page—but are spoken out loud. The power of storytelling is different. Even when tales may be gathered in textual form, to touch the spirit they must be conveyed in oral language with the familiar cadence of everyday talk.

When we talk to one another in everyday life, the communication is rich and rhythmic. I am suggesting that tellers speak a tale. *Listen to it*. Is this the way you would talk, in everyday conversation? As a performing storyteller, now, I have learned from master storytellers to abandon my text-talk (so familiar to me as an attorney) and translate my face-to-face tales into more vivid story-talk. When we look at the text of a story, our minds cannot *see* the rich orality of the words. As a result, it is difficult to speak these words with the vividness necessary to touch another’s spirit. Below is an excerpt from a story I tell to illustrate this point. Look first at the written text; think how it would sound if read out loud. Then look at the oral format, which encourages the mind of the teller to pause, insert softness, punch words, linger on them. When your mind is “learning” from oral text, a **vivid delivery** is facilitated.

Written version:

Once, long ago, when magic still happened on a regular basis, there would be strangers who would sometimes show up on your doorstep. You didn’t know these people and you didn’t ever know they would be coming. Then your life would be changed forever. Sometimes for the better, sometimes not.

Oral format:

Once,
long **long** ago
when Mag-ic
s-t-i-l-l
happened on a *regular* basis,
there would be **Strang-ers**
who would *some-times*
show up
on *your*
doorstep.

You **didn't know** these people—

and you didn't **ever** **ever** know
they would be coming.

And then
then
your life
would be **changed,**
for-e-ver.

Sometimes for the better,
Some-times **not.**

While there is no right way to create an oral version from a found story's written text, your mind will remember the difference more completely, if you oralize the text before learning the tale. The second version is playful, which the spirit loves. Words are repeated, broken up, or cushioned between small silences. The telling is more intimate and everyday-familiar, going straight for the soul.

It is not enough to find the tales and be willing to tell them. The commitment to the story listener must be stronger for spiritual telling, so the story sticks a bit better. In fact, however, story-stickiness is not a difficult task to facilitate. Listeners do not need *more* stories, but more stories well-told.

B. Story Circles: Creating Places

Religions are also organizations, consisting of both large and small groups. The symbolic-interpretive perspective of group dynamics (Frey & Sunwolf, 2004) argues that the vitality of any group relies upon the members' symbolic activities. Storytelling, addition to ritual and symbols, are primary means by which a group's members bind themselves together as a group. If we expand our thinking beyond "pulpit," there are richer fields for the practice and sharing of spiritual storytelling. The Western world, in particular, has focused on preacher-to-congregant pulpit-embedded telling as anchor points for thinking about oral storytelling in religion. *Story circles* take a collective point-of-view of storytelling within a community of believers. A story circle, in which both tellers and listeners sit together in a round formation, creates community as well as drawing upon it. In the United States, which is experiencing a revival in traditional storytelling, there are today community story circles meeting every month in cities across the country. Tellers tell to listeners, who, in turn, become tellers, as one story triggers another. Professional and amateur, experienced and novice, all sit together and tell or listen as each is moved to do. Few places of worship in the United States, however, offer story circles for their members.

The power of these circles has long been recognized in psychotherapy, self-help groups, and, more recently, in health care teams. Cesario's (2001) work with tribal women supported her narrative argument that since many tribes are matrilineal, the use of talking circles (composed of five-15 Native American women who gathered to share information, support, and solve problems), in which storytelling is valued, is a key (underutilized) tool for healthcare providers. Scholars at the University of Washington's School of Nursing and the Yakama Indian Health Center found through listening to stories that illness tales for Yakama Indian women were part of a journey tale (Strickland, Chrisman, Yallup, Powell, & Squeoch, 1996). Cervical cancer was the leading cancer among Alaskan Native American women, who had a high incident of such cancer and the lowest cancer survival rates of any United States ethnic group (National Cancer Institute, 1993). Tribal leaders invited these scholars to work collaboratively with them after three of their respected elders died of cervical cancer in 1991. As a result of gaining access to the story circles of these women, the healthcare team discovered that the elders had the greatest influence on younger women starting the journey ("walking in grandmother's footsteps," p. 145); consequently, getting the Pap

test was retold (by elders) as an important part of becoming a woman, much different than the Western approach to health teaching that focuses on videotapes, classes, and printed brochures.

The soul's journey is no less in need of story circles. Within churches, story circles offer simple cost-free structures that provide a place for all five of the functional aspects of story sharing to thrive. Nurturing and keeping on-going members, while encouraging and connecting new members are a challenge for organized religions. Story circles can help. New congregants and senior members, young and old, male and female, diverse ethnicities, and those who are needy together with those who have something to give can sit together. Story circles can meet before formal services or after them, in conjunction with special events or by themselves, indoors or outside, in homes or in hospitals. White (1982) describes his early training as a preacher, noting that as a director of church groups in rural areas, for years his "rooms" were around campfires and under oak trees.

Since the organization of the circle is loose, the circle contracts or expands as people arrive or depart. While a starting time is needed, the circle ends when all listeners are finished listening; such a time is measured in minutes or hours, since spiritual goals are not clock-dependent. A 20-minute story circle for new members would, in fact, be a treasure for senior members. While cultures, such as those described above, that have story circles embedded in tradition have the model readily accessible, *homo narrans* loves the story circle whenever it pops up.

C. Story Knowledge: Expanding our Research

Surprisingly little scholarship has been devoted to the storylistening effect, having focused, for the most part, upon structures, functions, and cultural variations of storytelling. The listening effect, however, is of profound interest in the context of spiritual storytelling and, further, is within the domain of communication scholars. Sender, message, receiver, noise, context, all are vari-

ables that communication researchers are uniquely able to cast light on from many theoretical positions.

In addition to a lack of scholarly attention to the storylistener, there have been few researchers who have examined storytelling effects within cultural traditions. Stories told, the goal of the teller, stories from the spiritual teacher's perspective are all well-documented. How a tale is received by a particular listener, however, when the need or goal was spiritual or a question of faith, has been marginalized. Anecdotal accounts and thoughtful essays from preachers suggest, however, that the story effect is powerful for listeners. White (1982) describes his own story journey as a preacher:

Several years and a divinity degree later, I discovered the joy of the story in my rural congregations in southern Wisconsin. In those rigid, serious church services, the story was an occasion of relief and delight. As I began one of my tales, arms would uncross, brows would unfurrow, and people would lean forward. While they seemed to tolerate the sermons, they celebrated the stories. (p. 10)

White, a minister who urges story-speaking on everyone, speaks not only for preachers and teachers, but for scholars as well, when he shares his conviction that spiritual messages, in order to "get through" must be filled with pictures that stimulate people to open up to spiritual messages.

When we examine spiritual storytelling *effects*, we are always looking a communication. We need to understand more about the listener's experience of the myriad of tales being told throughout the world in spiritual contexts.

STORIES ARE MAGIC FOOD THAT IS OFFERED TO ANOTHER, AND WHEN RECEIVED BY THE HEART, IS NEVER USED UP.

FISHES AND LOAVES.

Appendix of Oral Tales for the Telling

A Teaching Tale in the Middle Eastern Tradition

Once there was a traveler who was loaded with many burdens. Around his neck an old millstone dangled; a heavy sack of sand hung on his back; a water hose was draped around his body. In his hands he carried a boulder. Chains dragged heavy weights around his

ankles. On his head, the man balanced a rotten pumpkin. Moaning and groaning, he moved forward but complained of the weariness that tormented him. A farmer met this traveler and asked, "Why do you load yourself down with this boulder?" The wanderer was surprised, "Awfully dumb, but I hadn't noticed it before." He

threw the rock away and felt *much* lighter. Then he met a merchant who asked, “Tell me, why do you trouble yourself with the rotten pumpkin on your head and those heavy weights you drag behind you?” The wanderer was surprised again, “Awfully dumb, I’m glad you pointed it out.” He took off the chains and smashed the pumpkin. Again, he felt lighter. *Yet he continued to suffer.* A housewife from a field watched him in amazement and said, “Tired wanderer, you are carrying sand in that sack, but what you see in the distance is more sand than you could ever want. Your big water hose is not needed, when there’s a clear stream flowing alongside you.” The wanderer dropped the hose and the heavy sand. Then he stood there and glanced down, seeing *for himself* the heavy millstone around his neck that caused him to walk bent over. He threw it into the river. Freed from his unnecessary burdens, the traveler wandered on, now delighting in the cool of the evening—and soon found both comfort and lodging.

—Traditional Persian tale,
adapted from Peseschkian (2000)

A Teaching Tale in the Sufi Wisdom Tale Tradition

While Sufi tales can often be longer, the classic Sufi Wisdom tales are short. The following Sufi teaching-story, structured to encourage thinking in a new way, is recounted by Shah (1968, p. 30):

“What is your house like inside?”
 “Very nice, Mullah, but there is no sunshine in it.”
 “Is there no sunshine anywhere near you?”
 “Yes, the garden has plenty.”
 “Then why don’t you move the house into it?”

Lesson Tales in the Native American Tradition

The following tale is adapted from Stotter (1994) and demonstrates a tight structure that provokes story bridge and invitation to insight about the value and dilemma of cultural diversity:

A Zuni Kachina emerged from the underworld. Attached to his back was a being from an ancient world. There they were, back-to-back, facing in opposite directions. The alien couldn’t see the world of the Zuni and so, of course, he didn’t understand it. Yet, they were attached. But still the alien had hope, for there was always the possibility that the Zuni would learn to turn around.

Then each could learn who the other is—and what the other might yet become.

The wonderful tale below is my summary of a spiritual tale that was originally collected by Joseph Bruchac from the Lakota people, (1996, p. 104). Lessons embedded in the tale pointed out by Bruchac include (a) we will find peace and fulfillment when we are able to look into our own hearts while thinking of the common good; (b) treasure seekers who journey far, beyond themselves, will be frustrated; (c) if we do not look into our hearts, we never realize who we are and our sacred value.

When the world was created, the great Wakan Tanka created all the directions. North, South, East, and West were created. Then Above and Below were created. But the last direction to be placed by Wakan Tanka, and the most powerful of all, was the Seventh Direction. Wakan Tanka feared that the human beings would misuse the power of the Seventh Direction if it was too easy to find. And so it was hidden. The place he chose was the last place most people would think to look—inside each person’s heart.

Moral Dilemma Tales in the African Tradition

The following are oral tales, owned by no person, but reported and described further in Sunwolf (1999). They are structured to provoke moral choices, debated publicly in the community during the storytelling. Each dilemma tale is preceded by a tribe connected with it, but all parts of Africa report similar tale structures and dilemmas:

Nkundo. The drum asked the canoe what use it was. The canoe replied, “I carry our master wherever he goes, carry others who pay him for the ride, and because of me our master catches fish. Of what use are you?” The drum replied, “I am the mouth of our master and of the entire clan. I warn people when war comes, and I send messages when our master wants to speak with someone at a distance. During the dances my voice speaks with joy and gives enthusiasm to the dancers. Am I not the most important of our master’s servants?” They went to their master to settle the argument. He bent over to think but has not yet spoken. Which has the noblest work?

Kono. A man was traveling with his wife, his mother, and his mother-in-law. While they were crossing a river, a large crocodile stopped their canoe and climbed in

with them. It said that it would let the man go, but he must give it one of the three women. What would you do?

Bura. There were four blind people: a man, his mother, his wife, and his mother-in-law. One a journey the man found seven eyes. He gave his wife two eyes and took two for himself. He gave one eye to his mother and one to his wife's mother. "He had one eye left in his hand. *Kai* a stalling thing had happened. Here was his mother with one eye looking at him. There was his wife's mother with her one eye looking at him. To whom should he give the one eye he had left? If he gives it to his mother, he will be ashamed before his wife's mother, and before his wife, because both of them are looking at him. If he gives it to his wife's mother, he fears the heart of his mother, because a mother is not something to be played with. This is very difficult indeed. If this thing would come to you, which would you choose?

Nkundo. A man and his wife had no children and they were very old. The man wept constantly for children—before eating, before sleeping, and in conversation—because he had a great desire for them. A ghost promised him 20 children, but all of the same sex. It asked the man whether he wanted girls or boys. The man asked his friends for advice. They went into council but still have not returned. Should he choose only boys or only girls? Which is better?

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Resources for Spiritual Storytelling

Books

For greater convenience in finding particular subjects, these resources appear in alphabetical order by title rather than by author.

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- Fresh Packet of Sower's Seeds: Third Planting*
- Sower's Seeds Aplenty: Fourth Planting*
- Sower's Seeds of Encouragement: Fifth Planting*
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Exemplar Audiotapes for Listening

- Anansi Time with Bobby Norfolk*, August House Publishers, www.augusthouse.com, Bobby Norfolk. [Collected tales from a visit to a small African village, where Norfolk was invited to a community-wide afternoon break at which elders told traditional stories.]
- Christmas at Grandma's*, August House Publishers, www.augusthouse.com, by Donald Davis, who holds a M.Div. from Duke University and served the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church for 20 years. [The spirit of Christmas in three family stories.]
- Joseph the Tailor and Other Jewish Tales*, August House Publishers, www.augusthouse.com, Syd Lieberman. [The wisdom and wit of traditional Jewish and Biblical stories.]
- Live and Thriving at the 30th National Storytelling Festival*, National Storytelling Festival, www.storynet.org, two volume CD featuring 18 different tellers and telling styles.
- Medicine Path, Healing Songs and Stories of the Northwest Native Americans*, Sounds True Recordings, Boulder, CO, told by Native teller Johnny Moses (Whistem-knee, Walking Medicine Robe) who is one of the greatest voices of Native American medicine.
- Raised Catholic (Can You Tell?)*, August House Publishers, www.augusthouse.com, Ed Stivender.

Soul of Hope, an Epic Tale of the Baal Shem Tov, 2 volume cassette, Story Power, www.storypower.com, told by Doug Lipman.

Still Catholic After All these Fears, August House Publishers, www.augusthouse.com, Ed Stivender.

Organizations

August House Publishers, www.augusthouse.com. This small publishing house in Arkansas devotes itself exclusively to publishing storytellers and is the largest publisher of the oral storytelling genre, through tales-written-into-text format, guides for telling and teaching, audios, videos, and CDs in the United States. They offer particularly generous discounts for anyone teaching, giving time to charities, or working with indigent audiences. The staff is extraordinarily friendly and supportive. Toll free 1-800-284-8784.

The Internet Sacred Text Archive, www.sacred-texts.com. A profound and diverse collection of folktales and spiritual stories from around the world, with sources, commentary, downloadable texts. All cultural traditions are represented. All stories are immediately downloadable, but the web site also offers a CD containing stories from every religious tradition around the world back thousands of years, with excellent historical notes.

National Storytelling Network, www.storynet.org. This is the national organization in the United States for storytelling; members include librarians, teachers, full-time storytellers, ministers, priests, nurses, counselors, lawyers, and enthusiastic story listeners. A listing of all storytelling guilds, festivals, workshops, conferences, and resources from the United States and many other countries appears on the web site. Web pages supply information on regional organizations, local storytelling circles, local storytelling events, and a directory of storytellers. The organization provides a monthly magazine/journal with vivid, informative, and diverse articles from storytelling practitioners, *Storytelling Magazine*, including resources, profiles, and upcoming events.

Network of Biblical Storytellers, www.nobs.org. Publishes a newsletter, *The Biblical Storyteller*, available online. This international organization has a mission to communicate the sacred stories of the biblical tradition, by developing resources for telling biblical stories through audio, video, and computer technologies, as well as telling stories face-to-face. It sponsors annual festival gatherings and includes clergy, scholars, laity, with affiliated local guilds in Australia, Canada, Singapore, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Editor's Afterword

William E. Biernatzki, S.J.

Professor Sunwolf has packed much food for thought into her discussion of Storytelling and Spirituality. As a Jesuit I could not help but relate what she says to the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius Loyola, with which every Jesuit is intimately familiar, having made retreats based on the Exercises year after year.

The oral character of the *Spiritual Exercises* became evident to me when I first picked up the book of the Exercises. They were, frankly, obscure to say the least. The book was only an outline sketch to help guide an essentially oral dialogue between a director and the person making the retreat, as became clear when I finally made an "Ignatian" retreat.

The director had to be one with experience in both making and giving the Exercises—experience acquired much more through an oral tradition than through books about the Exercises. That tradition consists chiefly of a long succession of oral dialogues between directors and retreatants, dating back to the time in the early 16th century when Ignatius gathered around him a group of fellow-students at the

University of Paris to tell them his ideas about living lives close to God. The book came much later. The beginnings were in oral storytelling. He used the methods of the storyteller to lead his hearers towards a deeper understanding of the Gospel.

Retreatants were encouraged to apply their senses, in their imaginations, as they visited the sites of gospel stories—the Annunciation, the birth of Jesus, the calling of the disciples, the crucifixion, the resurrection, etc.—seeing the persons and events, hearing the words, even smelling the smells—in effect, telling themselves the story in an intensely personalized way.

Ignatius recognized the quality in oral stories that Sunwolf has emphasized, above: that they are "a uniquely appropriate tool for feeding spirit because stories carry emotional punch." Too often religion and the spiritual life tend to be so over-intellectualized that they try to avoid emotion. But emotion has its role in the spiritual life as in other human activities. Stories, by their structured nature can help us balance the emotional and the intellectual for a more productive spirituality.

Book Reviews

Barker, Chris. *Television, Globalization and Cultural Identities*. Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1999 (reprinted 2002). Pp. xi, 195. ISBN 0-335-19954-2 (pb.) \$25.95.

Chris Barker tries to balance two traditions of communication research in his search for understanding television's role within the phenomenon of globalization. On the one hand he is well informed on the theories and issues of cultural studies as he explores television's influence in the construction of audience identities. But he wants to do more than this. He is on less sure ground as he employs some of the tools of political economy to understand the institutional changes in the global television industry. It is not just that he is less able to integrate the literature and theories of the latter, but his post-modern approach to media influence as more celebratory and positive belies many of his assertions about the representations of race and gender in two of his seven chapters. This sense of contradiction is never adequately dealt with. What otherwise is a very clear and concise presentation of theories contributing to cultural studies, including the two chapters on race and gender and an intriguing empirical chapter on his own audience study of young Asian women in England, the reader is left with questions about the role of audience and its power to deal with the stereotypes and distortions of television's representations.

The first chapter presents a series of theories that current cultural studies deal with: postmodernism, Marxism, psychoanalysis and subjectivity, feminism, language and discourse, and Foucault. Barker has an ability to put many complicated theories in a brief compass so that readers grasp the thrust of his essential argument: that personal identity is a social construction with many different centers so that there are many "selves" depending on different contexts. The second part of his thesis is that global television is an important source in that construction for an increasing numbers of people worldwide. The second chapter on global television and global culture introduces some of the changes taking place in the concentration of the television industry and the centralization of control. Nevertheless, Barker argues against accepting the notion of homogenization and cultural imperialism and suggests rather that a post-modern approach to understanding this phenomenon leads to heterogenization and localization by audiences. This sets up the tension that remains throughout the book that was suggested above: Does the power lie with audiences (Barker's position) or the media?

Chapters 3 and 4 review quite nicely a great deal of literature on the construction of race and nation as well as gender and relate these theories to the representation of race and gender on television. Although the book purports to deal with global television, the primary examples used by the author focus on the British and U.S. industries. On race (Chapter 3), the author argues that "Though television does still produce and circulate clearly racist discourses, there, nevertheless, have been changes . . . and I argue that representations of black people on television are frequently and fundamentally ambiguous and ambivalent" (p. 85). The thrust of this statement suggests that with ambiguity comes the ability of audiences to struggle over the meaning of race and provide their own more nuanced interpretations. On gender (Chapter 4), Barker places a stress on the representation of gender in media with the conclusion that women globally are represented as "the second-sex, as subordinated to men. That is, women have subject positions constructed for them which place them in the patriarchal work of domesticity and beautification or . . . [in] the west, of being a mother, having a career, being able to explore one's individuality and looking attractive" (p.107). But he quickly adds that when it comes to how women respond to these representations concretely, there is much negotiation and struggle by real women. This is a key proposition of the book (i.e., that audiences do not respond to dominant messages in predictable ways); it is also a transition to his own research on young British Asians.

In the discussion of his own empirical study, the author argues that the young Asian and Afro-Caribbean women reveal both an identification with traditional feminine identities as well as more modern assertive forms of womanhood. The problem with the chapter is that it is a selection from a larger study published elsewhere and therefore cannot be easily judged from what is summarized here. Nevertheless, the chapter leaves open the question of whether an interpretative study based on a very small sample can lead to the more far-reaching conclusions that the author makes. The literature that is cited and very ably summarized gives the impression of the power of the traditional representations of women, but the interpretation of the data gives the opposite impression that the audience is the more powerful part of the duality of text and audience. The final major chapter takes on the issue more directly.

In Chapter 6 on "Television and the Cultural Politics of Identity," Barker tackles the tension that has been evident from the first. It is a contradiction in a cer-

tain kind of cultural studies itself: What does a *critical* cultural studies contribute to cultural/social change within the postmodern scheme for the media? Or, put another way, How does this approach deal with questions of power? To his credit, the author tackles the questions head on, but unfortunately the answers do not fully satisfy. He argues for agency in individuals but has difficulty in justifying the philosophical underpinnings of a radical constructivism. He argues for the public sphere where a cultural politics can be debated and worked through, but the justifications for an outcome that promotes change seem vague and hardly promising. Finally, he tackles the politics of (global) television where his proposals for change seem weak at best. Although the author closes a brief final summary chapter with a quote from Stuart Hall that proposes a political agenda for cultural studies that reaches beyond the intellectual realms of academia, for both Hall and Barker the question of how to achieve change in the arena of culture remains unanswered.

I recommend this book to readers because it raises important questions even if it cannot answer all of them. It is a coherent argument for a postmodern approach to the study of global television even if there remain questions of how power and social change can be brought into the analysis.

—Emile McAnany
Santa Clara University

Eilers, Franz-Josef, svd. *Communicating in Ministry and Mission*. Manila: Logos (Divine Word) Publications, Inc., 2003. Pp. 229. ISBN 971-510-168-2 (pb.). No price listed. [Logos Publications, 1916 Oroquieta Street, Santa Cruz, Manila, Philippines.]

The sub-title of this compact but information-filled book by the Secretary for Communication to the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences says it all: "An Introduction to Pastoral and Evangelizing Communication." This book should serve as a primer on Church teachings and practices concerning communication issues for three audiences:

- Experts in communication who need to better understand Roman Catholic teachings about communication and its role in today's world.
- Experts in Roman Catholic teachings about communication with a need to better understand their practical application in the world.
- Priests and other church workers trying to better understand both the theological basis for their communication responsibilities and at least a few hints on how to carry them out.

The book consists of three sections: an introductory unit explaining Church communications structures at all levels along with Church decrees governing communication practices, a lengthy unit on pastoral communication, and a concluding unit on evangelizing communication. The entire work is extensively footnoted and there is a lengthy bibliography, both helpful to communication experts seeking to deepen their knowledge of Church teachings in the field.

The book opens with the concept that "communication is right from its beginnings a theological concept which does not need to be baptized in any way but rather is already in itself loaded with and in fact originates from Christian faith and Theology" (p. 18). Eilers views communication as a theological principle that "guides and directs the way we see, study, and live our Christian faith in a time when communication is central to human society" (p. 19). The book's next 50 pages are a rapid march through "communication spirituality," a comparison of the way the Church and media operate and a discussion of the way they relate to each other; ethical models of communication; the contributions of the Church to communication in society; and citation of numerous papal encyclicals and other Church pronouncements on communication.

This is probably as good and understandably written an introductory guide to such information as the non-theologian is likely to find. Eilers is obviously an expert on a wide range of communications fields, including organizational communication; he integrates this background with his impressive literature review of Church pronouncements on communication. The number of documents cited with just a sentence or two of information is a little overwhelming but the alternatives would be to sacrifice either conciseness or comprehensiveness. If you're looking for a snippet about what the Church has said about anything from movies to public relations to the Internet, it's in these 50 pages.

The book's longest section is its discussion of Pastoral Communication. Once again, Eilers grounds his discussion of the need for the Church to communicate with its flock and the world in theology and Church documents. These documents, many from Vatican II, emphasize the importance of pastoral communication and the use of modern media. The Vatican II document *Inter Mirifica* states that training in communication is an integral part of pastoral formation for priests and church workers (p. 81). Having established this as a central principle, the rest of the section describes the many methods of pastoral communica-

tion—everything from preaching and interpersonal communication to films, email, and multi-media.

Once again, the book's greatest strength and weakness are inseparable. In less than 100 pages, the author gives a brief synopsis of just about every type of communication activity and offers advice on communication planning. The summaries and advice are in line with what any experienced communication professional would say, including the tips on crisis communication. However the problem with the advice is that it is bare bones basic. Experts in church communication who already are running web-sites, doing radio, TV and films, as well as writing books won't learn much from this quick run through of church use of modern media. At the same time, the number of media possibilities and their complexity might overwhelm church workers who are not experts in communication. One of the more useful sections deals with communicating through the parish bulletin. It would be nice if there were more such grassroots advice for non-specialists.

The final unit deals with evangelizing communication with an emphasis on the importance of understanding its inter-cultural aspects, especially in non-Western cultures. The author reminds readers that "evangelizing communication has always been at the heart of the Christian community" and that such work is today's equivalent of The Acts of the Apostles (p. 170). He defines evangelizing communication as "any activity that aims at sharing and spreading God's love and redemption to people beyond the confines . . . of the established Christian community" (p. 171). Once again, Eilers offers suggestions for ways of carrying out such communication including inter-religious dialogue, interpersonal communication, traditional means of communications such as drama, song, pilgrimages, etc. He notes that Asian bishops particularly recommend use of storytelling to communicate the Gospel message to their nations because this is compatible with their cultures (p. 203).

Overall this is a valuable book that serves as what its author proclaims in the subtitle: an introduction to the interface of Church and the professional world of communication. It is a sort of primer on both the theology of communication and the real world of communication. As noted, this approach has both strengths and weaknesses. At a minimum, this is a book that opens the world of Church communication documents to communicators who are not theologians and reminds Church leaders and workers that communication is central to what they do. It offers them excellent guid-

ance on directions to follow. It is hard to criticize a book that draws two such useful road maps for lack of yet more detailed information. For the non-theologians seeking more in-depth instruction on particular issues, the bibliography and footnotes are worth the price of the book, while pastors and church workers at least gain a sense of how important communication is in their work. It would probably be unreasonable to ask more from a book of less than 250 pages.

—Eileen Wirth
Creighton University

Fuenzalida, Valerio. *Televisión abierta y audiencia en America Latina* [Broadcast television and audience in Latin America]. Buenos Aires: Grupo Editorial Norma. 2002. Pp. 131. ISBN 987-545-066-9 (pb.) No price listed.

This small book by one of Latin America's long-time media scholars is a tightly packed overview of the complex relationship of broadcast television and its Latin American audiences. The theme of the book is spelled out in the final chapter with more clarity than elsewhere: Fuenzalida argues that any theory of television that excludes the audience and its variety of processes of reception and interpretation in interaction with television programs and their schedules cannot explain the richness and importance of this modern phenomenon of the last half century. What this means is that the book puts an emphasis on the audience as it interacts with the variety of television genres within the context of the household; as well, the emphasis is on the complex processes of reception and incorporation of content into audience's daily lives.

The book is divided into an introduction and six chapters: 1. The evolution of theory toward the study of audiences; 2. The household as the context of television reception; 3. The ludic-affective and dramatic language of television; 4. The niches of television; 5. The corporate image; 6. Synthesis. The first three chapters take up the bulk of the brief book with Chapters 4 and 5 very brief and a somewhat longer final summary at the end.

In the Introduction, the author argues that television producers must negotiate between real interests of audience, demands for society's larger needs and survival of the broadcast institution. He briefly outlines the ideal approach of television's high calling in this balancing act, but provides no simple answers for the real world broadcaster. In Chapter 1 he undertakes a brief history of communication theory in Latin America (or at least in Chile) that begins with a failed

Marxist theory that was deterministic and gave no place for audience involvement, then moves to Hall's idea of the encoding and decoding and to Mattelart's revisionism about the subject's ability to interpret messages according to personal experience. In addition, Fuenzalida brings in a series of more complex perceptual research on how the brain operates with the television image. In the end, the author wants a theory that brings into play both the findings of the "hard" sciences and yet takes an interpretivist position on audience interaction with television texts.

Chapter 2 tackles a central theme in this book. Fuenzalida argues that the household is central to understanding the audience and their relation with television because it is there that viewing takes place within the daily rhythms of different family members. Two other assertions are important in his argument: that private life is making a comeback in the lives of most people (a questionable assumption that needs evidence); second, that the best way to look at how to make programs acceptable to audiences is not through the usual marketing strategies of segmentation, lifestyle analysis, interpretive communities, and so on, but by taking a closer look at segmentation of interests. This latter assertion is followed up with an analysis of differences among households on a variety of factors from life cycles, seasonal variations in viewing, and even psychic states. All this sounds good, but the problem is translating such concepts into some useful information to help television production centers respond to audience interests. The author goes into detail on a number of aspects of audience reception, but the bottom line seems to be that when real viewing audiences are researched, the results give much greater emphasis to the choices of an active audience than to the power of the content to persuade or control. This thesis is one that Fuenzalida pursues throughout the book. Television reception is a complex process that is hard to predict and cannot be reduced to a simplistic determinism. The other side of this conclusion is that the television producer has a hard time finding a predictable formula for success with audiences.

In Chapter 3 Fuenzalida analyses the television image as a symbolic form rich in its potential to attract and keep an audience. His thesis is that the language of television should not be equated with written language but comprises a wholly different experience. Television, he argues, brings a more affective, playful (ludic), polysemic, musical, and associative experience than the written word. He ties in the notion that television is a

way to reintroduce popular culture to the masses and, at the same time, to bring a kind of cultural hybridization between the global and local. Here and elsewhere throughout the book, Fuenzalida argues that cultural imperialism has been displaced by a more complex understanding of both the audience receiving the television message and the complexity of the message itself.

In the final chapters, the author makes a somewhat unconvincing argument of the distinction between cable and open broadcast television and its reception. He also runs through some simple marketing ideas about branding television channels. Finally, he gives a brief summary of the book.

This book provides some solid theoretical arguments for the complexity of the television reception process by audiences. It also marshals some evidence from a variety of sources for the complexity of the television image. Fuenzalida wants to make the case that some of our previous theories about television's influence were too simplistic and were deterministic as well. He makes his case in a relatively brief book, and in doing so shows the reader the depth of scholarship of this author that decades of studying this medium has provided. It is a worthy culmination of a notable Latin American scholar's career.

—EGM

Garon, Lise. *Dangerous alliances: Civil Society, the Media & Democratic Transition in North Africa.* London and New York: Zed Books, 2003. Pp. xii, 212. ISBN 1-8427-7160-4 (hb.) \$69.95; 1-8427-7161-2 (pb.) \$27.50 (Distributed by Palgrave Macmillan.)

Garon's book, originally published in France, is an in-depth and detailed account of recent political processes in three Magreb countries: Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. The book exposes how authoritarian governments were successful in neutralizing the civil society either by outlawing it or by co-opting it. The governments were able to bolster their international legitimation by painting the opposition in radical Islamist colors. This willingness by Western powers to tolerate anti-democratic regimes is reminiscent of the support for authoritarian and often brutal regimes during the Cold War in the name of fighting the Communism.

Chapter 10, "Islam—Dismantling a Cliché," will be of particular interest to readers who want to understand more general issues surrounding the interplay between Islam, culture, and politics. "Islam is often portrayed by the orientalist literature as the basic struc-

ture of thought and discourse in the Arab Muslim world,” affirms Garon.

The necessary linkage, as seen by current prejudice, between religion and politics in the Muslim world stems from orientalist sociology which sees culture (religion) as an invariable factor, a dominant system of values, serving to explain the nature of all existing objects and give meaning to all aspects of social life. When applied to the contemporary Arab world . . . this theory has resulted in an essentialist perception of Islam in which, supposedly, the Sharia (God’s way), as it was revealed by Allah to the Prophet Muhammad, is the central principle organizing political life and regulating inter-individual and public relationships as much as man’s relation to God. (p. 170)

Content analysis of a large number of newspaper articles dealing with human rights from the Algerian, Tunisian, and Moroccan press challenged that perception. The author found that Islam was a marginal theme in the press, far from explaining and giving meaning to all aspects of social life. The discourse about Islam was instrumentalized in different ways in each of the three countries so as to serve the agenda and interests of their respective ruling elites.

The book concludes with a theoretical chapter, “Towards a Sociology of Citizenship in a Globalizing World.” Garon challenges Philip O’Donnell and others’ “covenant” view of alliances between the civil society and authoritarian governments which regards such alliances as “efficient pathway[s] for democratic transition because they serve to protect the right of all the political actors to survive in political deadlocks and crises” (p. 187). “On the contrary,” she argues,

democratic transition may evolve into the dangerous alliances scenario whenever the weaker political actors feel incapable of negotiating the terms of their political survival. The latter then find no other solution than unconditional renunciation of freedom of speech in exchange for sheltering behind the shield of an almighty political saviour . . . (p. 187)

Given the lack of international support, which originates to a significant degree in the media’s unwillingness or inaptitude to challenge the official story line, the author finds hope for the future of democracy in the power exercised, in the long run, by the “unarmed prophets” of change on the international public opinion, which in turn has an effect on political elites at

home. Drawing on Dahl’s model of polyarchy, Garon proposes a dynamic conflictual model of democracy as the most realistic and helpful in understanding the process of democratization. The final success of such process will depend on the existence of a civil society that is differentiated, enjoys organizational autonomy, has external links of solidarity, and whose actors enjoy the freedom of speech.

—Peter Lah, S. J.
Saint Louis University

Grindstaff, Laura. *The Money Shot: Trash, Class, and the Making of TV Talk Shows.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002. Pp. v, 318. ISBN: 0-226-30909-6 (hb.) \$55.00; 0-226-30911-8 (pb.) \$20.00.

Talk shows such as *Jerry Springer*, *Jenny Jones*, and *Mauvy* are commonly referred to as “trash TV.” So why do people continue to watch them? Why do people appear on them, especially in order to air very personal problems? And what do the professionals involved have to do in order to make it all happen? In other words, what is the appeal of trash TV talk shows to all concerned? Additionally, what ethical issues might be involved? After interning at two such TV talk shows and observing numerous others, Sociologist Laura Grindstaff answers these questions by integrating her observations with concepts borrowed from pornography and notions of celebrity.

In Chapter 1, Grindstaff acknowledges the current tendency of television to focus on “real people” and grapples with the distinctions among “ordinary,” “expert,” and “celebrity.” She identifies the main distinctions as, first, claim to stardom; second, source of authority; third, the coaching needed to appear in public; and, fourth, the type of performance expected. She argues that while “ordinary people” are the focus of many talk shows, there is nothing ordinary about their presentation since they are expected to discuss very personal matters with extreme abandon, something they presumably would not “ordinarily do” in front of strangers. The “trashier” the talk show, the more intense are these aspects.

Grindstaff introduces terms originating in pornography as a way to understand the trash talk show phenomenon. Both are disparaged as low culture; both depend on irrational, “uncivilized,” out of control, deviant behavior; both depend on voyeurism. In this sense, trash TV talk shows are part of the struggle between high and low culture, between dominant and subordinate groups.

Chapter 2 puts contemporary talk shows into the context of U.S. pop culture. Grindstaff notes that the 19th century saw “yellow journalism’s” emphasis on colorful populism, the tabloid press’s sensationalist promotion of “true-confession” and scandalous romance, as well as the circus sideshow exploitation of “freaks.” Radio shows of the 1930s, such as *The People’s Forum*, included opportunities for the average citizen to speak. In the 1950s, TV shows such as *Queen For a Day* were based on maudlin self-disclosure of average women. Talk shows in the ’60s and ’70s started as expert and celebrity based but, beginning with *Donohue*, paid more and more attention to average voices. By the ’80s, talk shows such as *Sally* and *Geraldo* became almost wholly based on ordinary people’s exceptional problems and by the ’90s, there were over two dozen shows that aired increasingly sensationalist topics. Although hosts sometimes played the role of empathic counselor, others seemed less interested in sympathy or solutions and more interested in confrontation and humiliation. The show most often cited as typical of this category is *The Jerry Springer Show*, which promotes itself as “the worst television show in history.”

The defense of such programs is much the same as the defense of earlier tabloids and freak shows: first, that even the most outlandish give voice to disenfranchised social classes who rarely see themselves on TV; second, that some of the shows are instructional because they raise taboo topics and sometimes offer forms of expert advice; and third, that “everyone knows” the most outrageous shows are fake, so it’s all just entertainment.

Chapter 3 examines the *work* aspect of talk show production: finding guests and persuading them to appear. Chapter 4 examines the *show* aspect: getting guests to act in particular ways. Together, both chapters address the oft-asked question: How do they get people to go on national television and reveal such embarrassing things? Grindstaff explains that guests are carefully selected not only for their relevance to the particular topic but also for their ability and willingness to tell a good story. Once again, she turns to a pornographic framework of analysis. Just as hard-core porn films depend upon explicit sexual acts that result in orgasm, so too, many talk shows center around guests who break down completely. The equivalent of the orgasm is display of extreme emotion, usually sadness or anger. And, just as porn stars often need “warming up” in order to perform, so, too, talk show guests are coached and built to an emotional bursting point before being put in front of the cameras. Such coaching raises

the ironic issue of how authentically these supposedly ordinary people are behaving. Equally unreal are the producers’ proffers of friendship and empathy that largely evaporate once the show is over.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus on the guests and audiences. Grindstaff acknowledges the stigma attached to appearing on and watching “trash TV” talk shows. However, she found that the vast majority of “ordinary people” who bring their troubles on air believe they will gain something, be it a form a celebrity, a free vacation, and/or actual help. Most are from lower socio-economic classes and believe that talk shows provide their only access to any of these rewards. Viewers sometimes say that they watch in order to learn, but more often admit that their motive is entertainment. Interestingly enough, neither viewers nor guests say that they are like “those other people” who appear on trash TV talk shows.

The final chapters examine the ethical issues that have been raised throughout the book. Grindstaff does not focus on the morality of the most common topics, deviant sexuality and relational betrayal. Instead, she concentrates on the commodification of emotion, manipulation of guests, exploitation of lower classes for middle-class amusement, and the false promises of friendship and problem resolution. She also explores the racial aspects of trash TV talk shows, including the controversial concept of “white trash.”

The Money Shot, which includes references and an index, is a thoughtful and well-researched examination of an entertainment phenomenon that has spread beyond the U.S. and beyond talk shows. Although it raises concerns about the phenomenon, it also explains its appeal. Both aspects should help readers make more informed decisions regarding how they engage with such programming.

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Haiman, Franklyn S. *Religious Expression and the American Constitution*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2003. Pp. x, 254. ISBN 0-87013-691-7 (pb) \$24.95.

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...”

To most media people the words “First Amendment” are synonymous with freedom of speech and press. This fascinating book reminds us that courts have struggled at least equally with how to apply the

Amendment's freedom of religion clause to a bewildering variety of situations. By the end of the book, non-lawyers, especially, may be more confused about the legal meaning of freedom of religion than they were at the beginning—through no fault of the author.

As the opening chapter on historical background makes clear, the nation has struggled from the outset about maintaining a legal balance that respects the religious heritage of its people and culture and their desire that government remain religiously impartial. What exactly constitutes “an establishment” of religion?

“A debate rages within the Supreme Court and among legal scholars as to whether an establishment of religion means an explicit endorsement of a particular religion, an endorsement of all religion against irreligion, or more passive and implicit forms of support to one or more religions” (p. 14).

Heavily debated issues have included whether the language of the First Amendment applies to the executive branch as well as Congress and the states as well as the Federal Government (p. 20). In fact, the provisions did not apply to states until 1925 (p. 21). In the 1940s, the crucial *Everson* decision applied the “no law” strictures to all local governments and school boards, etc. (p. 22).

The issues involving freedom of religion and the entanglement are almost endless and familiar to any reader of a daily newspaper:

- Can a city have a crèche in a public park?
- Can state legislatures pay chaplains?
- How should government deal with allegations of religious fraud such as miraculous cures? Does it matter if the authors believe what they are saying?
- Is the “one nation under God” language of the Pledge of Allegiance constitutional?

A reader hoping to gain a sense of pattern in the decisions may be disappointed. It is apparent that most of these decisions are based on technicalities and particular sets of facts. The author notes how “difficult it is to maintain strict adherence to separation of church and state in a society as devoted to religion, at least symbolically, as ours” (p. 38).

Public schools have always been particular battlegrounds for such cases with courts being asked to decide everything from the legality of prayers at graduations ceremonies to the teaching of creationism and textbook and library censorship. A notable feature of such cases is the frequency with which one court reverses another—an indication of the difficulty of drawing lines between separation of church and state

and allowing citizens to freely exercise their religion (p. 64). Cases involving public assistance to private schools have been equally vexing, often decided 5-4 or 6-3 “with the Court so divided that there were many plurality, concurring, and dissenting opinions” (p. 73). Higher education cases have been less troublesome because of the ages and choices of students.

The book offers interesting discussions of such hot button topics as the constitutionality of school vouchers (acceptable under certain conditions) and equal access of religious groups to public university facilities (meeting areas are acceptable, paying for publications is not). As in seemingly all First Amendment freedom of religion issues, everything is gray. The decisions rest on the details of each case.

At times, freedom of religious expression seems to conflict with social interests such as the historic battles over conscientious objection and the draft or the use of peyote, a controlled substance, in Native American worship and whether Mormons might practice polygamy.

The author notes that the outcome of such cases sometimes hinges on the size and political influence of the religious body under public attack. He feels, for example, that Native American rights were abused in the peyote case. Eventually a wide range of groups persuaded Congress to pass the American Indian Religious Freedom Act protecting such religious expression. This act came under court attack in an unrelated case over a conflict of expanding a church building in a historic preservation area. As the author says, the central issue in many freedom of religion cases is:

To what extent should federal courts defer to the democratically elected legislative branch of government, thus leaving to the political process decisions that may affect constitutional rights? And to what extent should they allow states to engage in practices that may be insensitive to the interests of the country as a whole or to the rights of those who are not in a political majority within their own jurisdiction? (p. 107)

Some freedom of religion cases can seem almost humorous to those not involved, such as the right or lack thereof for Amish to have unlicensed privies on their property (p. 115). Other questions cut to common practices. State and local governments routinely use public funds for social services provided by organization such as Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army, for example, but can they simultaneously promote their religious values? Should the government be open to funding pro-

grams operated by non-mainstream groups such as the Church of Scientology? Does accepting government money open religious groups to unacceptable government interference in their practices (p. 124)?

The author's personal concern is the continuation of freedom of religion in the U.S. He sees some "troubling tendencies" in the post 9-11 era for "religious expression to exceed the boundaries that a healthy separation between church and state requires" (p. 134). These include renewed efforts to promote prayer in the schools, post the Ten Commandments in public spaces, and "otherwise enhance the role of religious expression in public life" (p. 135).

Clearly September 11 generally aroused a turning to religion for sustenance and awakened new pressures for religious expression in our political life. It remains to be seen whether the form that it takes as time passes erodes to the detriment of our free society the separation of church and state that has served us so well for over 200 years. (p. 137)

The book concludes with 15 appendices consisting of major documents and freedom of religion court decisions, a valuable primer for any student of the topic. The documents include John Locke's "Letter Concerning Toleration," the Virginia Act for Establishing Freedom of Religion in 1786, and several statements by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. The book is extensively footnoted by chapter but includes no comprehensive bibliography.

Overall Haiman does an excellent job of outlining major issues and battle lines. His problem is the subject matter itself and the complexity of the court decisions in this field. Readers should emerge with an understanding of how complicated it is to balance "free expression" of religion with no establishment of it.

The book has an index of cases and a general index.
—EW

Hill, Charles A. and Helmers, Marguerite (Eds.). *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Pp. xi, 342. ISBN 0-8058-4402-3 (hb.) \$79.95; 0-8058-4403-1 (pb.) \$36.00.

The traditional domain of rhetorical criticism excludes nearly all forms of discourse save the public address of famous speakers. Throughout the 20th century the field stubbornly ignored the challenge presented by new media as outside its purview; while the rules governing neo-Aristotelian criticism were so narrowly drawn that the approach typically yielded staid and

predicable results. After World War I rhetorical studies became something of an anachronism and fell from its eminent position in the liberal arts curriculum. Wartime propagandists had discovered the power of images and changed the nature of persuasion: A world of irrational Freudian dreamscapes gained ascendancy over the word and reason.

Today the lingering question of the rhetorical tradition's relevance to image-based communication is as open and contentious as ever: Is a conceptual framework designed to gauge the spoken word adaptable to visual persuasion?

Defining Visual Rhetorics may be read as a ramshackle attempt to answer this question. While this collection of 14 essays contains several useful lines of inquiry (and a handful of interesting historical facts about rhetoric, art, and the mass media), finding these bits exacts a toll. The level of analysis and the writing quality is uneven; the least compelling pieces read like half-baked graduate school assignments. The major demerit, however, is that the book doesn't deliver what the title, *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, seems to promise: some sort of methodological engagement with the rhetorical tradition and the psychology (or physiology) of perception. (Notable exceptions are the opening and closing chapters: "The Psychology of Rhetorical Images" by Charles A. Hill, and "Framing the Study of Visual Rhetoric: Toward a Transformation of Rhetorical Theory" by Sonja K. Foss.) Only three or four of the essays have anything to do with rhetoric. The use of the term rhetoric in many of the pieces is akin to sprinkling curry over cafeteria food and calling it Indian cuisine.

Defining Visual Rhetorics thus raises a fundamental question: What is gained by wedding the term "rhetoric" (or some variation) to "visual" to label an artifact or describe a critical stance—particularly if these terms are so fluid? The editors provide this explanation:

[When] we thought about the definitional problems surrounding the study of visual rhetoric, it became immediately clear that the appropriate response was *not* to try to 'nail down' the term. . . . Rather, we thought that it would be more interesting and productive to have scholars working with visuals discuss the definitional assumptions behind their own work, and to exemplify these assumptions by sharing their own rhetorical analyses of visual phenomena. (p. x)

“Interesting”? “Productive”? How so?—instead of methodological rigor and coherence the reader finds a pastiche of definitions, from the turgid to the facile. These definitions essentially serve to include or exclude a particular critical activity from one camp or another. For example, in “Framing the Fine Arts Through Rhetoric,” Marguerite Helmers writes that

the images rhetoricians study are not limited to the Western canon of the fine arts as are the images offered through the Sister Arts tradition, but range through some of the more popular arts such as advertisements, printmaking, and photography . . . visual rhetoricians consider the temporal and spatial implications of context: the ways in which the meaning of a single image can alter dramatically due to placement, context, cropping, and captioning. (p. 64)

But what exactly is the point of such territorial decrees? Does writing a critical essay on printmaking make a person a rhetorician, visual or otherwise? Is noting the “temporal and spatial implications of context” [doesn’t “context” imply space *and* time?] part of a recipe that all “visual rhetoricians” must follow? Does understanding how the placement, cropping, and captioning of photos twists their meaning make newspaper editors visual rhetoricians by default? Thus the question of rules and territory teeters towards meaninglessness in a broadened conception of rhetorical criticism because the potential field of objects includes every imaginable artifact, from perfume bottles to presidential addresses. So what sets the essays in *Defining Visual Rhetorics* apart from any of the thousands of writings flying under different flags?

The book’s implied claim is that the use of a particular conceptual frame—“rhetorics”—permits, if not a deeper analysis, then at least observation of the artifact from a fresh perspective. Fine and well. This is precisely the test of a concept’s utility: Does it enable us to “see” something we would have missed without its aid? (This has always been the crux for the entire field of rhetorical criticism: Are critical insights the result of the conceptual framework used or the sensitivity, intelligence, and writing skill of the critic?) And herein lies the primary shortcoming of *Defining Visual Rhetorics*: The analyses it presents—artifacts include needlework, Hitchcock’s *Vertigo*, statistical atlases, an 18th century oil painting by Joseph Wright of Derby, Farm Security Administration photographs of rural poverty—don’t reveal anything not visible to the naked eye. What passes for analysis in most chapters are lengthy descriptions of artifacts, as if each were being catalogued. (Certainly

description is a vital part of rhetorical criticism; but if it doesn’t lead to analytical penetration, it becomes an exercise in minutiae.) Whatever illumination the reader might receive does not come from peering through some skillfully-fashioned conceptual lens—or “definition” as the editors would have it.

Ultimately, however, definitions lie outside the subject matter. The chief problem new or hybrid disciplines face is demonstrating their worth through an exemplary piece of work. The closest thing *Defining Visual Rhetorics* contains to such an exemplar is the chapter by Sonja Foss, “Framing the Study of Visual Rhetoric: Toward a Transformation of Rhetorical Theory.” The most interesting and useful passages summarize the methodological framework for visual rhetoric Foss put forth in a journal article 10 years ago (“A Rhetorical Schema for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery” in *Communication Studies* 45 (1994): 213-224). Rooted in the rhetorical tradition, Foss’s framework combines both methodological strength and suppleness. It provides ample play for individual creativity and the incorporation of interdisciplinary elements.

Foss’s schema is built upon three pillars, *nature*, *function*, and *evaluation*. “Nature” is the analytical base and “deals with the components, qualities, and characteristics of visual artifacts” (p. 307). In describing these, the critic attends to two primary components, “presented elements” and “suggested elements”:

Identification of the presented elements of an artifact involves naming its major physical features, such as space, medium, and color. Identification of the suggested elements is a process of discovering the concepts, ideas, themes, and allusions that a viewer is likely to infer from the presented elements; for example, the ornate gold leafing found on Baroque buildings might suggest wealth, privilege, and power (Kanengieter 12-13). Analysis of the presented and suggested elements engenders an understanding of the primary communicative elements of an image and, consequently, of the meanings an image is likely to have for audiences. (p. 307)

This descriptive groundwork is significant because it provides a means for harnessing the power—while revitalizing—2,500 years of rhetorical tradition. Detailing an artifact’s manifest and latent elements permits the critic to achieve analytical profundity by translating traditional rhetorical concepts into forms applicable to visual rhetoric, thereby expanding the reach of rhetorical criticism. Adapting

elements such as metaphor, argument, enthymeme, *ethos*, evidence, narrative, and stasis . . . push rhetorical theory to deal with an entirely new set of visual constructs, such as color, space, texture, and vectoriality. A rhetorical theory once restricted to linear linguistic symbols thus explodes into one characterized by multidimensionality, dynamism, and complexity as visual units of meaning are taken into account in rhetorical theory. (p. 308)

The two remaining pillars in Foss' critical framework, *function* and *evaluation*, are derived from traditional perspectives yet also lend themselves to expanding the rhetorical tradition: "*function* concerns the communicative effects of visual rhetoric on audiences; and *evaluation* is the process of assessing visual artifacts" (p. 307). But it is unclear, says Foss, as to how traditional criteria of message effectiveness might be "applied to visual rhetoric that is non-representational and perhaps baffling for audience members" (p. 310).

However, it seems clear that whatever visual rhetoric might be, above all it is interdisciplinary. (Perhaps the most interesting implications for the investigation of visual communication derive from Gestalt psychology and neurophysiology.) Hence, the importance of pushing boundaries to incorporate scientific discoveries in the methodological framework in order to test the efficacy of rhetorical concepts in the visual dimension. The opening chapter of *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, "The Psychology of Rhetorical Images" by Charles A. Hill, offers an example of how this might be done by suggesting that the concept of *presence* (as discussed by Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca) is adaptable to visual imagery. Readers who care about widening the horizon of rhetorical criticism to include visual artifacts may find *Defining Visual Rhetorics* mildly useful.

The book features both an author index and a subject index. There is no bibliography; however, each contribution has its own reference list.

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Jonassen, David H. (Ed.). *Handbook of Research on Educational Communications Technology*. Second edition. Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Pp. xiv, 1210. ISBN 0-8058-4145-8 (hb.) \$225.00.

This massive handbook provides a comprehensive review of research on just about all areas of educational communication technology. As an added

value, the handbook's sponsor, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (www.aect.org), has made available electronically to its members what does not appear in the book (for example, some of the essays from the first edition that did not need updating). This new edition has updated all its chapters and added new material in nine areas ranging from conversation analysis to hypertext and microworlds. Each of the 41 chapters gives an overview of its area for those new to the various aspects of this growing field and provides reviews of recent research for those keeping up with the field.

Jonassen has arranged the volume in seven parts: the theoretical foundations for educational communications and technology, hard technologies, soft technologies, instructional design approaches, instructional strategies, instructional message design, and research methodologies.

The first and longest section (occupying about 20% of the handbook) treats the theoretical foundations. It includes review essays on behaviorism and behavioral psychology, systems theory, the communication effects of non-interactive technologies, cognitive psychology, the sociology of educational technology, everyday cognition, "an ecological psychology" or perceiving-acting systems approach, conversation theory, activity theory, the media as lived environments, and postmodernism in educational technology. Together, these essays introduce those areas of learning theory that ground different approaches to technologically-mediated teaching and learning. Their variety also indicates, even to the casual reader, the complexity of human learning.

Part 2 examines hard technologies—the various equipment employed in educational communication. These include television, which, given its importance in educational theory and practice, receives extensive treatment; distance education in all its forms; computer-mediated communication; the Internet; virtual reality systems; library media centers; the language laboratory; and emerging technologies. The organization of this section allows the reader to follow the research dealing with specific methods of teaching and learning. The chapters provide historical introductions, description of the technologies and their uses, introductions to relevant debates about the technological approach, and the current state of the research.

Part 3 does the same for soft technologies. Depending less on specific hardware, these technologies describe approaches to learning that designers usu-

ally encode in software or enable on various presentation platforms. Some, like games and simulations or programmed instruction, have long histories in education; others—microworlds and hypertext—have emerged relatively recently.

The fourth part of the volume gives a set of overviews to instructional design approaches. These approaches, based on various learning theories, provide a foundation for developing hardware or software for education. Here, research results take on great value as they give evidence of what works in which situations. The handbook introduces four such approaches: conditions theory, adaptive instruction, automating design, and user-design.

Part 5 presents approaches to instructional strategies. These include research on generative learning, feedback, cooperation, cognitive apprenticeship (scaffolding, modeling, mentoring, and coaching), and case-based learning aids. Though some of these chapters present their material in terms of educational or communication technology, these strategies also find roles in traditional or face-to-face education.

Part 6 addresses specific questions of instructional message design: graphics, text, sound, and multimedia approaches. How do static and animated visual representations compare for learning outcomes? How should one lay out or design text displays in instructional work? Does the auditory channel matter? What theory supports multimedia? Each area has developed its own body of research studies, summarized and presented in the relevant chapters.

Finally, the last part of the handbook addresses research methodologies. In many ways, this section holds particular worth, since evaluation research lies at the heart of distinguishing good pedagogy from poor pedagogy. An introductory chapter sets out the rationale for such study (“Philosophy, Research, and Education”). Subsequent chapters present different research methods: experimental research; qualitative research and methods appropriate to educational work; conversation analysis, applied to on-line talk; and developmental research.

Though many chapters provide some historical material, the handbook lacks specifically historical surveys of the various attempts to integrate communication technology in education—studies of film, radio schools, television, and computer-assisted instruction. Again, except in passing, it provides no case studies of some uses of technology. This is a quibble: some of that material did appear in the first edition and, in no

need of updating, does not reappear in this one. However, for someone new to this volume, a list of those non-reprinted chapter topics would be helpful. (In addition to the historical material, those non-reprinted chapters cover soft technologies such as intelligent tutoring and rich environments—both overlap with existing chapters—and strategies such as attitude change, cooperation, and control of mathemagenic activities.)

The handbook as a whole provides a breathtaking and wonderfully thorough “state-of-the-art” look at this growing area of study. As more and more schools incorporate technology in learning (both in the classroom and in distance education programs), the research presented here will become even more valuable and something with which all teachers and administrators should become familiar. A brief review cannot do justice to a book like this. The handbook gives an extraordinary introduction to the field and is a reference book to which one can return frequently and profitably.

Each chapter has its own bibliography—some running up to 20 pages. The volume as a whole has both author and subject indices.

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Katz, Helen. *The Media Handbook: A Complete Guide to Advertising Media Selection, Planning, Research, and Buying* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003. Pp. xix, 185. ISBN 0-8058-4267-5 (hb.) \$45.00; 0-8058-4268-3 (pb.) \$24.50.

The purpose of Helen Katz’s second edition of *The Media Handbook* is to update the first version published 10 years ago. Updating such a text is essential given that the scope of media used in advertising today far exceeds that used by advertisers a decade ago. Today’s advertising venues include “everything from the Internet to sports stadiums, to elevator or airport TV screens, to event sponsorships and promotions” (p. xv). Katz addresses all of these relatively new venues in her comprehensive guide to advertising media selection. As with the first edition, the book maintains its purpose as a basic guide to the complete process of media buying—from planning and research to actual media purchases. As a focused, basic guide to this process—especially as a basic text for students new to the advertising process—it does an excellent job.

Katz is a Senior Vice President and Director of Strategic Research at GM Planworks, the media planning agency for General Motors. She has taught adver-

tising and media planning at several universities in the Midwest. This handbook shows that she has put her depth of industry experience to good use.

The book is best approached as a handbook—a guide that provides a relatively global overview of a number of topics rather than great depth and detail about those topics. Of course, given the breadth of the coverage, it would be impossible to provide significant depth on each topic. Katz focuses on media industry practices, an approach that is useful, especially for introductory students. She covers the range of those practices with enough detail to be thorough, although students or instructors who want the advertising war stories on campaigns, charts, growth trends, and other similar information will have to look elsewhere. Students who do rely on this book would be capable of developing a media plan and undertaking a basic broadcast or print ad purchase.

The 10-chapter handbook starts with a chapter that answers the question “What is Media?” by providing a traditional historical view of modern media. The role and relationship of media to business, communication, and consumers is explored in the first two chapters. These chapters are concise but provide enough context to grasp the intersection of business, media, and potential consumers through advertising. The marketing mix and role of promotion are explained and illustrated and the role of research is introduced with respect to studying the marketplace and the competition.

Chapter 3, “Developing Optimal Media Objectives,” introduces the consumer-buying process into the mix. Katz does a good job of summarizing accepted beliefs about why people buy, consumer decision-making models, and buyers’ needs and desires. The consumer behavior literature is then tied back into the marketing objective and to the process of developing a target audience and establishing communication campaign objectives.

Chapter 4, “Exploring the Media,” the longest chapter, is an especially strong chapter. Katz explores a wide variety of media categories from traditional television, radio, newspaper, and magazine to newer and more alternative forms of communication. For each medium, she discusses the benefits to advertisers, drawbacks to advertising using that medium, and a general summary of the research on the medium as an advertising environment. This chapter demonstrates Katz’s ability to concisely summarize a vast amount of information and present it in a coherent, organized, and understandable manner.

After providing an overview of ratings and measurement practices in Chapter 5, Chapter 6, “Creating the [media] Plan,” is another strong chapter. Designing the media plan is the end result of the research stage of media buying, and Katz offers a step-by-step approach to developing such a plan. She includes helpful suggestions for effective client presentations and a detailed example of a media plan.

“Making the Media Buys,” the topic of Chapter 8, is a straightforward and useful synopsis of the buying process. Again Katz sticks to the traditional media—offering details on the use of television, radio, newspaper, magazines, outdoor, and the Internet.

Chapter 7 provides alternative suggestions for media plans, including budget reduction, shifts in target audience, and alternative media. Chapter 9 introduces the evaluation process, including preplan and post-buy analyses. These two areas—alternative suggestions and evaluation—are often neglected, if not forgotten, by most students and Katz emphasizes their importance to the overall process of media buying.

Each chapter concludes with a checklist that reflects the important aspects of the portion of the media process that has been examined. Additional useful aspects to the book include two appendices, one on key resources that include research institutions and trade journals and one that lists relevant media organizations, as well as a useful index of topics and terms.

The Media Handbook is well organized, thoroughly documented, and carefully indexed. It is an effective basic guide to advertising media and will be an indispensable resource for students who pursue careers in media planning, research, and buying, as well as a reference book that students will utilize early in their careers.

—Janellen Hill
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Knapp, Mark, L. and Daly, John A. *A Guide to Publishing in Scholarly Communication Journals*. 3rd Edition. Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Pp. 67. ISBN 0-8058-4952-1 (pb.) \$14.95.

This nifty little guide achieves its goal of demystifying the procedures and “apparent biases associated with the publishing process” (p. 5). *A Guide to Publishing in Scholarly Communication Journals* is highly recommended as a desktop reference for all communication scholars. Knapp and Daly provide clear, well-organized guidance on facilitating commu-

nication with editors and reviewers. Their experience as journal editors during the 1980s ensures their credence. (Daly edited *Communication Education*, and *Written Communication*; Knapp, *Human Communication Research*.) Especially impressive is their lucid non-nonsense perspective. Here's an example:

There are two primary motives for scholarly publishing: (1) sharing research findings and (2) advancing a career. Sharing research findings addresses the responsibility of scholars to advance knowledge. . . . Sometimes understanding is slowed as peers provide checks and balances; sometimes knowledge is advanced quickly because many minds are at work on a single problem. (p. 7)

As to the second motivation:

In today's academic world, publishing is the primary route to promotion, tenure, and salary increases. More and more, the committees who make such decisions examine the quality, reputation, and circulation of the journals in which your work is published. (p. 7)

With refreshing candor Knapp and Daly meet the three goals set for *A Guide to Publishing in Scholarly Communication Journals*:

(1) examine rules and expectations encountered during the publishing process that are often assumed to be known but are not; (2) lead to greater consistency in publishing practices; and (3) contribute to increasing the quality of journal submissions as well the quality of editor and reviewer interaction. (p. 6)

The advice Knapp and Daly offer is the distillation of "the collected experiences, opinions" and "pet peeves" of 25 journal editors. (For this, the guide's third edition, the authors have augmented their original first edition list of 10 journal editors, which included such luminaries as George Gerbner and Steven Chaffee.) The nature of the advice ranges from routine, common sense tips—thorough proofreading, correctly citing references, providing adequate postage—to the sophisticated and subtle, such as submission timing, writing the introduction and the abstract. The passage on overwriting is an example of the good use Knapp and Daly make of their editor-consultants, one of whom sagely notes,

I find too many overwritten manuscripts. One source of the problem, as I see it, is a humanities

orientation some authors have. But it is also caused by the inability of an author to make an argument clearly and concisely—presenting premises, evidence, and then drawing plausible conclusions. Another source of this problem is padding references—providing a source for every statement, no matter how generally acceptable it may be. When authors don't test their hypotheses directly, they end up having to provide more justification and hedging in the discussion section than is normally warranted. (p. 16)

In demystifying the publishing process Knapp and Daly address the politics and the psychology of the enterprise. These elements coalesce in the "blind" review, which, of course, isn't so blind because

the author's programmatic research tends to cite his or her own previous research a great deal; because the reviewer knows and has discussed the research with the author or coauthor; because the area of research is limited to a few individuals; or because the author inadvertently mentions his or her university or leaves a blank space in the references where his or her name would fall. . . . Some reviewers wish anonymity for fear that a critical review will affect their chances of publication if the tables are ever reversed; others believe it is important for authors to know who is reviewing so they can be fully aware of the perspective the reviewer holds. (p. 21)

A Guide to Publishing in Scholarly Communication Journals has many strengths. Chief among these is the book's organization, which follows an article's path from submission to publication. The three stages in this journey correspond to the book's three sections: (1) the submission process; (2) the review process; and (3) the revision and resubmission process. Each stage is broken down into small, discrete steps replete with advice that treats just about every eventuality. For example, among the topics covered in the first section are pre-submission reviews, cover letters, simultaneous submissions, and reworking conference papers for journal publication. A text box concludes each section with a summary of the expectations of both author and editor. Also useful are the eight appendixes that illustrate the book's main points with examples. These include author cover letters, manuscript review forms, a constructive critique, letters of acceptance, rejection, and revision and resubmission.

Even the most seasoned communication scholar will profit from the book's sound advice, logical organ-

ization, and unshrouding of what many experience as a largely invisible and anxious process.

—TO

LaMay, Craig L. (Ed.). *Journalism and the Debate over Privacy*. Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003. Pp. xiii, 162. ISBN 0-8058-4626-3 (hb.) \$39.95 (Special prepaid price: \$22.50).

In his preface, the editor quotes George Bernard Shaw as saying, in 1933, that “An American has no sense of privacy. . . . There is no such thing in the country.” LaMay goes on to cite examples from mass media that tend to support Shaw’s view and to suggest that privacy is even less respected in America today than it was 70 years ago. While much current discussion of privacy centers on the Internet, LaMay focuses on conceptions of and attitudes toward privacy in and concerning professional journalism (p. vii). The importance of privacy is strikingly brought home to us by the realization that, while it “is inherently a social concept, [it is] important mostly because without it there is no conception of personhood.” Deprivation of individual privacy is intrinsic to the evils of slavery and serfdom and to life under totalitarian regimes (p. viii).

The book is divided into two parts, the first of which consists of two papers examining “privacy in theoretical terms, intended to get the reader thinking broadly about conceptual problems in discussions concerning journalism and privacy” (p. x). The five chapters of Part 2 look at “privacy problems as they are experienced by working journalists” (p. xi).

In Chapter 1, Frederick Schauer discusses the “social construction of privacy,” as an aspect of the larger debate about the “social construction of reality” (p. 3). While the author acknowledges that privacy is socially constructed—by factors such as technology and by “changes in our conception of public physical space and changes in the actual practice of journalism” (p. 11)—the claim of social construction “cannot be pressed too far,” and privacy remains subject to normative critique and evaluation” as well as “legal and political influence.” He concludes that fears about privacy “may be real, but insofar as those fears are expressed in terms of social understandings that are themselves changing, they may turn out to be as short-lived as the technologies that are thought to threaten them” (p. 13).

Randall P. Bezanson, in Chapter 2, deals with “private ownership, public orientation, and editorial independence” as “structural attributes of press free-

dom” (p. 13). He concludes that “the press must be independent, at least in structural terms,” and therefore it must be structurally able to make its judgments free of control, coercion, or dependence on other corrosive influences—including the power of capital markets, the dominant culture . . . and the governmental and business interests it must check” (p. 46). The freedom to make “independent editorial judgments for a public audience” is central to press freedom (p. 47).

However, government controlled media and any and “all private persons and organizations involved in publishing current information . . . should not, by that fact alone, be deemed publishers for First Amendment purposes” (p. 48). Instead, “only private organizations and publishers whose publication processes and decisions are structured in ways that preserve the capacity for independent and public-oriented decisions should qualify for the First Amendment protection.” Thus, he specifically rules out such protection for commercial advertisements. “The distinction between press publications and non-press publications rests . . . basically on the purposes that animate the judgments that result in the speech’s selection and publication . . . against an aspiration for truth seeking, and with a firm view to the audience’s need” (pp. 48-49).

In Chapter 3, the first chapter in Part 2, Anthony Lewis cites the view of Justice Louis D. Brandeis, arguing that “the right to be alone” supercedes many claims the government and journalists may make for access to private information.

However, in Chapter 4, Anita L. Allen insists that “quite apart from lofty principles, there are matters of practicality that count against journalistic regard for privacy,” especially since “notions of privacy vary from cultural group to cultural group and from individual to individual” (p. 69). In short, many privacy intrusions are justified by public need, but “professional journalists should understand that their power ought to be wielded with a keen sense of moral responsibility” (p. 85).

In Chapter 5, Rodney Smolla considers “law breaking and truth telling: formal legal doctrine and the imbalance between intrusion and revelation claims.”

In Chapter 6, Jane E. Kintley asks, “What’s in a name? Privacy, property rights, and free expression in the new communications media,” noting complications due to provisions of the European Union Data Directive on privacy that conflict with standard American practices.

LaMay’s closing chapter (Chapter 7) on “the First Amendment and the right of publicity,” deals with var-

ious legal interpretations of private vs. commercial rights and “news.”

Subject and author indexes are provided, as is a list of contributors.

— William E. Biernatzki, S.J.
Editor, *Communication Research Trends*

Leeds-Hurwitz, Wendy. *Wedding As Text: Communicating Cultural Identities Through Ritual.* Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 2002. Pp. vii, 308. ISBN: 0-8058-1141-9 (hb.) \$69.95; 0-8058-1142-7 (pb.) \$29.95.

Leeds-Hurwitz considers the situation of couples from different cultural backgrounds who wish to marry and therefore must decide how to negotiate the wedding ceremony. Though she acknowledges that the ceremony itself is a relatively minor aspect of a couple’s life together in terms of both time and substance, she makes a compelling case for examining weddings as well as “stopping at the edges of weddings” in this particular study.

Why weddings? First, Leeds-Hurwitz observes, wedding ceremonies are public rites of passages that are “widely practiced across the United States and around the globe.” This has two implications in terms of intercultural negotiation. One is that weddings are usually more public than other rites of passage such as birth or death. In other words, weddings involve other people, most often family members who will be a continuing part of the couples’ lives. Moreover, these other people have expectations and hopes regarding the ceremony itself because they have experienced and/or witnessed such events. Thus, to the extent that weddings differ across cultures, so too do the expectations and dreams. Leeds-Hurwitz’s second observation is that weddings are comprised of multiple elements evoking innumerable cultural codes. Each aspect (e.g., shower, liturgy, clothing, food, music) may be seen as its own rite laden with different beliefs regarding form and significance. Third, despite their relatively brief duration, most weddings take months or even years to plan. Thus, every detail can be seen as intentional communication. Finally, most weddings are costly. Not only does this add to their perceived social significance but it also often requires the monetary support of parents, thus heightening both the literal and figurative investment of others. Because this investment often merges with cultural values and the traditions that signify those values, many couples feel a particular obligation to honor the traditions; a task that can become quite difficult when the traditions seem disparate (e.g., is white or red the “proper” color for a wedding dress?).

Given the overall complexity of intercultural marriages, why look at just weddings? Leeds-Hurwitz offers four rationales in terms of ethnographic research. A wedding “provides a *tightly-bounded* event,” which occurs “naturally,” is “publicly-celebrated” and “widely-documented.” In other words, each wedding is a finite segment that is already both public and documented, thus allowing the ethnographic researcher to consider a set “text” and gather significant material without interfering with what is studied.

Leeds-Hurwitz defines “intercultural” as having one or more of the following elements of difference: international, interracial, interethnic, interfaith, and/or interclass. She expands on the nature of each of these, briefly explaining the impact that each division could have on the dynamics of the wedding ceremony. Finally, by way of establishing the parameters of her study, she identifies “four major topics that cut across and underlie many of the major issues in this study: community, ritual, identity, and meaning.” The remainder of the book consists primarily of four chapters, each devoted to the explication of a major theme.

In the “Community,” chapter, the author observes that, in the United States, there are three distinct communities to be considered in any intercultural wedding: the bride’s, the groom’s, and “the dominant, mainstream culture.” Generally speaking, there are four ways to resolve any conflicts among these. One is to comply with the requirements of one culture to the exclusion of the others; another is to have two or more distinct ceremonies; a third option is to have a ceremony that presents “no one’s culture,” except, perhaps, the generic American wedding. The final alternative is to devise a way to honor two (or more) cultures in a single ceremony. This book concentrates on this last approach.

The “Ritual” chapter explores the complex nature of wedding ritual as well as the difficulties in altering and merging them. Cultures vary not only in terms of what is expected in terms of language, clothing, ceremonial objects, food, drink, and music but also the number of events to which importance is ascribed. For example, some cultures include engagement parties and/or the honeymoon in their norms.

The “Identity” chapter discusses weddings as vehicles which participants use to affirm various aspects of identity: individual, familial, geographic, gender, racial, ethnic, international, class, and religious. Difficulties may arise not only because of this multi-dimensionality in terms of the couple but also because each may feel obligations to family and

friends. Moreover, because identity is, by its very nature, personal, it is easy for a ceremonial decision to result in hurt feelings or even anger. However, as the author illustrates, it is also possible to find graceful solutions.

Leeds-Hurwitz opens the fifth chapter by contending that “the combination of community, identity, and ritual determines meaning,” the chapter’s focus. She argues that although the complex symbolic nature of weddings makes them problematic, it is the very imprecision of symbols that allows solutions. The related concepts of polysemy, intertextuality, *bricolage*, redundancy, and ambiguity are used to create ceremonies that convey mutually acceptable meanings.

Each of the major chapters amply supplements discussion of theoretical concepts with examples. In addition, chapters are separated by even more extensive examples called “Interludes” each of which profiles a different couple, the challenges of their particular situation, and their means of resolution. In sum, this book presents a number of pertinent analytic frameworks as well as engaging illustrations that should serve both intellectual and pragmatic purposes.

Finally, in addition to extensive references, the book concludes with a theoretical appendix, a methodological appendix, as well as both an author and a subject index.

—BAOM

Millar, Dan P. and Heath, Robert L. *Responding to Crisis: A Rhetorical Approach to Crisis Communication*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Pp. vii, 379. ISBN 0-8058-4059-1 (hb.) \$79.95; 0-8058-4060-5 (pb.) \$39.95.

The first sentence on page 11 of this book is “Crisis happens.” The implications of this thematic statement are that crisis is inevitable, and organizations can prepare for and respond to it effectively. Millar and Heath set the tone for this collection with two overview chapters. The editors provide a definition of crisis as “an untimely but predictable event that has actual or potential consequences for the stakeholders’ interests as well as the reputation of the organization suffering the crisis” (p. 2). Yet, a rhetorical definition of crisis includes the use of language comprising pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis discourse. Thus, organizations must consider interpretation, framing, message production, and other issues that comprise the totality of crisis communication. The first chapter also addresses basic

rhetorical premises of crisis communication as a context for framing the essays.

The basic theme of the book is that organizational communication is essentially narrative wherein stakeholders come together to create a shared understanding of reality. Sometimes that narrative is interrupted by crisis, and then the rhetorical challenge becomes paramount. The authors suggest that the essays “apply theory, review case studies, and offer best practices” for anticipating, understanding, and responding to crises” (p. 35).

Section 1, “Crisis Preparation: Planning for the Inevitable,” provides the premises for the argument that strategic preparation for crisis management is a critical part of organizational viability. The essays here, in the main, establish the exigency of crisis planning. For example, Stacks (p. 37) presents a model for crisis management that takes into account the sum of organizational structure, communication strategy, and other variables. An effective crisis management model includes a public relations component with a PR practitioner in the crisis management process. Holder draws from Weick (1969) to argue that communication among organization members in the form of ongoing issues management, including talk about a crisis, is as important as a specific crisis plan: “The implications for planning is that it can best be understood as thinking in the future perfect tense” (p. 52). Borda and Mackey-Kallis (p. 117) provide a model for crisis management based on a literature review of public relations and communication. They apply their “gather, package, and deliver” model to two case studies (Alcan Smelters and Chemicals and Dow Corning) (p. 131).

The essays in Section 2, “Crisis Response: The Time to Speak,” address crises as interrupted narratives. Heath identifies narrative in chapter 11 as “the basis for how organizations are enacted, interpreted, and responded to (Heath, 1994). A crisis shifts the narrative being enacted by an organization from one of routine events to one that is not routine” (p. 175). Millar and Beck discuss metaphors as a way to characterize crises. They provide an overview of crisis as war (rebellions, destruction, devastation, etc.), and containers (e.g., what was contained is no longer so). The authors give suggestions for how these concepts can be enacted in training by asking organization members to generate and discuss outcomes of using such metaphors (pp. 164-165).

Section 3 is titled “After the Dance is Over: Post-crisis Response.” Essays in the section deal with crisis as an ongoing rhetorical phenomenon. Benoit presents

an overview of image restoration discourse. The chapter draws on a typology of rhetorical strategies to repair image that draws from his previous work and from the work of Ware and Linkugel (1973), Burke (1970), and Scott and Lyman (1968). Susan Schultz Huxman turns to classical rhetorical roots to re-examine apologia as a dynamic genre that is comprised of many elements (e.g., visual dimension, who controls the cause of a crisis, precedence, etc.) (p. 287). She draws from numerous case examples to illustrate the rich interplay of variables and motives that shape the crisis response genre. Other essays in this section address downsizing as it creates a need for strong internal communication (Leeper, p. 299), and the sudden departure of the chief executive of American University (Theus, p. 327).

In their opening chapter, Millar and Heath suggest that this book can be “viewed as a series of experts participating in a panel discussion” (p. 17). Indeed, the volume has great breadth in its perspectives on managing all phases of crisis, including periods when a crisis is neither overwhelming nor imminent. The chapters in this volume draw on numerous examples from many different industries (Ford-Firestone, Eastern Airlines, American University, Union Carbide, and many others), some as support material, others as extended case study. This breadth should appeal to public relations and communications practitioners, managers, and academics. There are 21 chapters. This book has separate subject and author indexes.

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Mishra, Vijay. *Bollywood Cinema: Temples of Desire*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002. Pp. xxxiii, 296. ISBN 0-4159-3014-6(hb.) \$99.95; 0-4159-3015-4 (pb.) \$28.95.

For those of us who grew up steeped in Bollywood films and culture, reading a book on them

is almost like having our parents psychoanalyzed in our presence. Mishra’s book is just such a psychoanalysis (in fact, he refers to himself as the spectator-analyst). It is at once revealing, embarrassing, and destructive (of our romantic myths, our fascination or revulsion with the Bollywood genre). In that sense, here, finally, is a book on Bollywood that is written for those who have experienced Bollywood as well as those who are strangers to that phenomenon.

The term popular “Bollywood” is a tacky pun equating India’s ‘B’ombay-based film industry with Hollywood. It refers to the commercial film culture that makes largely formulaic but hugely popular cinema, more than “800 films a year shown in more than 13,000 predominantly urban cinemas, viewed by an average of 11 million people each day, and exported to about a hundred countries” (p. 1).

Because of this cinema’s mass appeal and its peculiar tradition of paralleling in art what transpires in the life and politics of India, Mishra’s analysis is necessarily on not merely the aesthetics and texts of Bollywood but also its “history of reception” (p. xix). He also claims—and demonstrates—that Bollywood cinema is a “*grande syntagmatique*” (p. xviii), a collection of films that link and mirror themselves over years and decades.

The book has a total of eight chapters in which Mishra traces Bollywood cinema from its origins in the 1930s up to the present day, using different techniques for each era. In the first chapter, titled “Inventing Bombay Cinema,” through his analysis of the texts, contexts, and style of the films of the 1930s, Mishra explicates what he calls the “key paradigmatic features of the genre of Bombay Cinema, such as the ongoing conflict between tradition and modernity within the nationalist project” (p. 15).

In Chapter 2, “Melodramatic Staging,” the author focuses on some landmark films that borrow the literary form of melodrama. Mishra brings a fresh lens of analysis to the melodramatic influences in Bombay cinema, from the foundational cultural text of the Indian epic, *The Mahabharata*, to the tradition of gothic discourse set by early Indian cinema.

In Chapter 3 (“The Texts of ‘Mother India’”) and Chapter 4 (“Auteurship and the Lure of Romance”), Mishra continues to explore the theme that Bombay cinema defines the mass cultural imaginary of most of India even as it reflects political and economic realities and confusions. The trendsetting films of the 1950s and 1960s propagated notions of vengeful yet conforming

motherhood as well as ushered in the “auteurs,” filmmakers whose work brought in “the significance of the song text, a consciousness of the cinematic eye, the mapping over of the personal onto the artistic, a social agenda” (p. 122).

Chapter 5 is titled “The Actor as Parallel Text: Amitabh Bachchan” and it is here that Mishra provides a detailed analysis of the unique phenomenon that is the Bollywood superstar. This is an important aspect because “popular cinema in India, perhaps more so than in Hollywood, became the cinema of the star rather than the cinema of the director or the studio” (p. 126). Chapter 6 (“Segmenting/Analyzing Two Foundational Texts”) is, as the title suggests, a textual analysis of two films, the first to describe the significance of the “song text” (p. 157) in Bombay cinema and the second to “explore the principle of symmetrical narratives that have something of the rhythm of classical Hollywood cinema” (p. 157).

Indian films have always reflected, dramatized, even romanticized the pain and triumphs of building this new nation state, and recent years have seen a deconstruction of the older hopefulness, replaced by a jingoistic assertion of hypernationalism. In Chapter 7 (“After Ayodhya: The Sublime Object of Fundamentalism”), Mishra examines contemporary Indian politics and the rise of Hindu fundamentalism, re-shaped and probably reinforced by Bombay cinema, India’s primary mass cultural form. The final chapter (“Bombay Cinema and Diasporic Desire”) explores Bollywood’s (mis)representation of Indian diaspora, working toward a “theory of diasporic desire because this cinema is now global in a specifically diasporic sense” (p. 269).

Mishra’s analysis of Bollywood cinema is a considerable one within a handful of such analyses emerging today from within academe. It has in it something for the film historian, the curious newcomer, the fan, and the critic. Providing subjective as well as academic analyses of the genre, and illustrated (sparsely) with relevant shots, the book goes into much detail. Yet, it provides merely a glimpse into the subject quite in the manner in which the audience partakes of a Bollywood film, where “the viewer is complicit with the object of contemplation” (p. 32).

The book contains a filmography of the films the author cites in the book, apart from a bibliography. There is an index as well.

— Sonora Jha-Nambiar
Seattle University

Nicotera, Anne Maydan, and Marcia J. Clinkscales, with Felicia R. Walker. *Understanding Organizations through Culture and Structure: Relational and Other Lessons from the African-American Organization.* Mahwah NJ/London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003. Pp. xv, 326. ISBN 1-8058-3728-0 (hb.) \$69.95. (Special prepaid price: \$34.50).

The two authors and the third contributor brought to their research educational and professional backgrounds overlapping the ethnic and cultural boundaries between Black and White Americans. Nicotera is Euro-American, Clinkscales and Walker are African-American. All three have taught at “Historically Black” institutions (p. xiv), and all are now identified with Howard University on the title page.

The idea for their research grew out of “recognition of a consistent patterning of communication for “African-American organizational systems. “A set of professional projects led by the second author had generated a data set that strikingly exemplified the communication patterns we had recognized as often experienced in predominantly African-American organizational systems. It was then that we decided we must write this book” (p. xiii).

Chapters 1 through 5 present research that yielded models pertinent to organizational systems. Chapters 6 and 7 “apply our findings in a broader analysis of contemporary practices in organizational restructuring” and develop models to “lay bare the hidden cultural processes that suffuse organizational life and manifest communicatively” (p. xiii).

“Two basic and complementary assumptions undergird this work. The first is that organizations are constituted by communication. The second is that culture, which is accomplished communicatively, suffuses organizations” (p. 1). The authors say that the book’s central argument is that theory, design and practice in American organizational life have “been culturally embedded in a Eurocentric understanding of social reality” that obscures the influence exerted on cultural diversity by “culture at its deepest level—the very structures and systems that drive human interaction.” The “research focuses on organizations whose membership is predominantly African-American” in order to avoid the “erroneous assumption that basic organizational processes are devoid of fundamental cultural underpinnings”—an error that can easily arise if the only organizations studied are predominantly European-American in membership, with European cultural foundations (p. 3).

A baseline model is developed in Chapter 1 that shows how rules and resources from European-American organizational structure have been appropriated into social practice. One manifestation of this phenomenon is the assumption that diversity is “a potentially damaging force that must be neutralized” (p. 19). This leads to a managerial bias in both research and practice that “essentializes” culture as race or ethnicity, thereby stripping the “individual of his or her unique and valuable voice”—in short, stereotyping and obstructing “meaningful person-to-person relationships” (p. 26).

Chapter 2 analyzes communication in two predominantly African-American organizations “to develop a set of emergent theoretic models” of the ways African-American communication, culture, and speech styles influence the models. “Five core symbols for African-American culture” developed by M. L. Hecht, *et al.* (in *African-American Communication*, 1993), are seen as offering insight into the problematics and cognitive mechanism of these organizations. Those symbols are “Sharing, Uniqueness, Positivity/Emotional Vitality, Realism, and Assertiveness” (p. 52).

Chapter 3 discusses “African-American Rules and Resources,” as a divergent cultural pattern in comparison with the Euro-American baseline model, showing how it results in “a difficult blend,” with many contradictions (p. 68). The authors say their data suggest that “the social practices of African-American organizational membership create cultural divergences with its European-based organizational structure” (p. 115). Chapter 4 discusses specific divergences between “the interpenetrating contradictory structures,” avoiding the essentialism common in comparisons of cultures (p. 115).

Chapters 4 and 5 document divergences in both the authors’ data and theoretic and historical literatures that include “treatments of slavery, African-American organizations, and African-American experiences in White organizations” (p. 115).

Chapter 6 considers “the primary—and stickiest—question . . . one of intervention.” How to apply the findings “to remedy the difficulties experienced in the divergent organizations,” and how to apply the findings to other organizations and cultures” (p. 202).

Chapter 7 notes that the “divergent organization,” as described in the preceding chapters, “is plagued with intractably difficult processes that pull organizational members into relentless downward communicative spirals, eroding the organization increasingly over time” (p. 241). The task of Chapter 7 is to point towards developing “a body of theory that would represent the convergent organization—an organization for whom the inter-

penetration of multiple culture structures that would otherwise diverge in contradictory ways is made harmoniously symbiotic . . . similar to the notion of dyadic third-culture-building found in the intercultural communication literature . . . , but far more expansive” (p. 242).

The Epilogue, by Clinkscales, closes with the hope that while “conflict is unavoidable in organizational life, . . . methods of resolution that give specific attention to humanistic interpersonal communication can create an organizational culture that is sustained by valuing humanity and human relationships” (p. 284).

The book is illustrated by a number of tables that clarify the interactions, relationships, and divergences described in the text. An appendix lists genders of interviewees by interview number. An extensive list of references and both author and subject indexes are supplied.

It is the opinion of this reviewer that this book especially merits attentive reading and close study by anyone concerned with the successful development of African-American organizations of all kinds. Although theoretical and “only” a beginning, it promises the possibility of development towards real breakthroughs in areas of American life where new beginnings and real breakthroughs are desperately needed.

— WEB

Parsons, Patricia J. *A Manager's Guide to PR Projects: A Practical Approach.* Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003. Pp. viii, 55. ISBN 0-8058-4547-X (pb.) \$17.95.

Patricia J. Parsons’ *A Manager's Guide to PR Projects: A Practical Approach* is just what it says it is: “practical.” Parsons recognized the void for an upper-division public relations strategic planning text. As a result, she wrote a workbook that can be used by students and public relations professionals. The workbook systematically outlines the steps in the PR planning process and includes a series of helpful worksheets that serve as guides.

The workbook consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 familiarizes the reader with pertinent vocabulary, revisits basic public relations and management definitions, and introduces the reader to the basic layout of the book. The remaining chapters follow a R.O.P.E. [Research, Objectives, Programming, Evaluation] format with each chapter focusing on one particular aspect of the R.O.P.E. process. Chapter 3, “The Planning Phase,” is particularly helpful. It includes a worksheet that breaks down the overall PR message into targeted messages for each public and matches them with specific PR objectives, strategies and tools.

While Parsons' text assumes that the reader possesses a working knowledge of the public relations process, areas such as research and budgeting are explained in such detail that a novice could easily follow and understand the contents. The Public Relations Plan at the end of the workbook serves as an excellent guide for students and professionals who will write and submit formal plans to clients.

Parsons not only used "oldies" but "goodies" as reference materials, she has also conveniently organized the readings and web sources for each chapter in a separate section entitled "Resources." These "Resources" consist of general textbooks in public relations, articles from trade publications, and academic journals. Many of the "Resources" are public relations classics such as Cutlip and Broom's *Effective Public Relations* (2000) and Kendall's *Public Relations Campaign Strategies* (1996).

Parsons' goal was to produce a practical, yet academic text for upper-division public relations students and professionals. With *A Manager's Guide* she has succeeded in bridging the gap between the two.

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Shrum, L. J. (Ed.). *The Psychology of Entertainment Media: Blurring the Lines Between Entertainment and Persuasion*. Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Pp. xvi, 360. ISBN 0-8058-4641-7 (hb.) \$79.95. Special prepaid price \$39.95.

Recent episodes of NBC Television's *Law and Order*, in each of its incarnations, have fictionalized various events that, as the show's disclaimer suggests "are inspired by actual events." The episodes, which are often advertised as "ripped from the headlines," exemplify the type of fictionalizing that is one way media and consumer psychology are bound together. Editor L. J. Shrum summarizes *The Psychology of Entertainment Media: Blurring the Lines Between Entertainment and Persuasion* as an inquiry into "how the lines between entertainment and persuasion have become increasingly blurred and how these blurred lines might either facilitate or inhibit changes in attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions" (p. xv). Shrum's book is an outgrowth of the 21st Annual Advertising and Consumer Psychology Conference in 2002, and it includes other essays from authors in a variety of disciplines.

This volume is organized into three sections that present a logic of examining these blurred lines. The first section, "Embedding Promotions Within Programs:

Subliminal Embeds and Product Placements," lays the foundation of the blurred lines between media and persuasion. The section addresses techniques and processing of sexual embeds and product placement. Examples of the essays in this section include psychological processing versus gizmo subliminal methods (Erdelyi and Zizak), placement of products as a marketing tool (McCarty), and the efficacy of brand placement (Bhatnagar, Aksoy, and Malkoc,) wherein the authors describe product placement as the "most established form of blurred communications" (p 102). This section serves a two-fold purpose. It provides evidence of how the lines between media and consumers are blurred by complex psychological processes and individual differences, technology, and marketing practices. In order to make that case, however, the articles naturally review a large amount of literature. As a result, the essays provide detailed multidisciplinary coverage of research in subliminal advertising, product embeds, product placement, and media effects.

The second section, "The Programs Between the Ads: The Persuasive Power of Entertainment Fiction and Narrative," presents research into the blurred lines between the nature of entertainment programs and viewers' perceptions of reality. The essays in this section, which draws heavily from cultivation theory, examine storytelling and other frameworks that influence consumers. For example, Green, Garst, and Brock conclude that individuals experience attitude change caused by responses to narratives (fiction) as much as they do through more traditional forms of communication (such as advertisements). Consumers of fictional programs may immerse themselves more in narration, a different form of processing. Shrum, Burroughs, and Rindfleisch re-examine cultivation theory and identify a cultivation effect that occurs because of second-order judgments stemming from receiver attitudes and values.

The final section is titled "Individual Differences in Media Usage and Their Role as Mediators and Moderators of Media Effects." This section examines individual phenomena, such as parasocial relationships, connectedness, and attachment style, which influence the intensity of media effects. Greenwood and Pietromonaco examine the integration of media, attachment style, and female body image. Their study indicates that women with a preoccupied attachment style may be more susceptible to media influence on body type. The blurred lines, they propose, "between the self and other, fiction and reality, and entertainment and fashion" may facilitate

this preoccupation (p. 299). Brock and Livingston present research that supports the notion that people process entertainment programming quite differently depending on their need to be entertained. Individuals who have a high need for entertainment, may be “more susceptible to the addictive enslavement of passive forms of entertainment, such as TV” (p. 256). Two articles on sports entertainment are included in this section; one (Jones, Bee, Burton, & Kahle) deals with identification of fans, and another (McDaniel) focuses on sensation seeking as an individual characteristic that affects the way viewers view sports.

This comprehensive volume examines a number of subjects including subliminal advertisements, advertisements embedded in fictional programs, the effects of entertainment consumption, and the unique nature of sports, the original reality TV. A variety of disciplines and methodologies are represented.

The multidisciplinary approach of this volume produces a rich review of literature that seems to surround the subject. In a sense, the paradigmatic lines that separate psychology, media, persuasion, and marketing research are also blurred, and favorably so. The text is organized in APA style and has separate author and subject indexes.

—PB

Singhal, Arvind, Michael J. Cody, Everett M. Rogers, and Miguel Sabido (Eds.). *Entertainment-Education and Social Change: History, Research, and Practice*. Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Pp. xvii, 458. ISBN 0-8058-4552-6 (hb.) \$99.95; 0-8058-4553-4 (pb.) \$49.95.

This book represents the maturity of a strategy in applied communication for social change that goes back more than a quarter of a century. It was in the 1970s that one of the editors, Miguel Sabido, proposed to make a commercial telenovela (soap opera) series with a deliberate educational message. The person to whom he made his proposal, Emilio Azcaraga, the head of Televisa, Mexico’s largest and most successful broadcaster, was an astute businessman, not a philanthropist. What was important about the success of this and several other prosocial telenovela series by Sabido that followed was that it brought together two previously contradictory broadcasting formats: the commercial and the educational. It also opened up the possibility of thinking about using the potential of the most successful types of commercial media, that is, film, tel-

evision, radio, and popular music, for purposes other than simply making money.

This edited volume brings together a number of useful chapters (22 in all) by pioneers in the field of Entertainment-Education (EE) under three general rubrics: History and Theory, Research and Implementation, and EE Interventions and their Outcomes. In the first section, two of the strategy’s main contributors, Everett Rogers and Arvind Singhal, give an overview opening chapter that sets the stage for later contributions. Their main point here is to argue that the strategy has a wide theoretical and methodological base that makes it applicable in multiple forms and by many different agencies. The conclusion sets the tone for the rest of the book, one that argues persuasively and positively for the effectiveness of the strategy in creating positive social and behavioral changes in many Third World settings.

Chapters by David Poindexter and Sabido give a historical overview of the development and diffusion of the strategy, beginning in both the United States in the 1960s and 1970s and in Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s, but it is Sabido who is recognized with defining a precise social change strategy to a commercial medium. The chapter by another pioneer in the field, Phyllis Piotrow, and her colleague Esta de Fossard gives a more measured and critical assessment of both the strengths and weaknesses of the EE records to date. A chapter by Suruchi Sood and colleagues purports to sort out the theory behind the strategy, but it seems to provide an ever expanding theoretical and methodological horizon for applications, making it less a synthesizing chapter than a list of possibilities from which practitioners might choose.

In Section 2, Research and Implementation, the eight chapters cover a wide spectrum of implementation experiences and a few with research. The most important chapter is by Shereen Usdin and colleagues concerning an EE program in South Africa called *Soul City*. This program is by far the most successful and well organized of EE efforts in any country. The chapter is a description of the fourth general campaign that took place in 1999-2000. What is important to note is the successful link between the television series’ educational messages with its commercial success. *Soul City* has been able to do serious teaching with successful entertaining. But the success of the program goes beyond this. It also has done in depth research on results. This particular series reached an impressive 79% of its target audience with a combination of tele-

vision, radio, and print. The description shows how the campaign was able to build important coalitions with a variety of government agencies as well as grass-roots community organizations. It is a model of others who aspire to use EE effectively.

Another useful chapter is one by Bradley S. Greenberg and colleagues where the evolution of the EE research agenda is discussed. What the chapter concludes is that EE has been widespread but by no means a coordinated effort. A number of problems still face EE evaluations including having some clear theory driving the project designs, better understanding of the information environment, target audiences, implementation organization, and the cultural industry itself. The challenges of doing EE effectively are illustrated by cases where the projects (mainly television dramas) were wholly controlled by the implementation agency or were simply influencing how a commercial production team inserted messages into a regular entertainment series. An example of the former is the Dutch experience as described by Martine Bouman in her chapter or that of Brazil's use of social merchandising in its popular telenovelas in prime time (chapter by Antonio C. La Pastina, *et al.*).

The final section on EE Interventions and their Outcomes contains some useful chapters. The most provocative in terms of outcomes is one about an oral rehydration campaign 20 years ago in Egypt, a campaign one medical journal called "what may be the world's most successful health education program" (Chapter 16 by Rasha A. Abdulla). The problem is that neither this author nor previous attempts have made it clear exactly why it was such a success. The EE approach at the time was far from the Sabido-inspired model followed elsewhere. Abdulla does little to explain the reasons for the dramatic drop in childhood diarrhea-caused deaths by referring to the research data although he does point out that the campaign was long term (eight years) and well financed. The other chapter that both brings out theory and helps explain evaluation outcomes is that by J. Douglas Storey and Thomas L. Jacobson where the application of Habermas in a Nepalese EE campaign helps illuminate the importance of interpersonal communication in EE campaigns.

In brief, the book is a valuable contribution to a strategy of growing importance to the field of development communication.

The book contains both an author and a subject index. Each chapter has its own reference list.

—EGM

Thussu, Daya Kishan. *International Communication: Continuity and Change.* London: Hodder & Stoughton [Arnold], 2000. Pp. 342. ISBN 0-340-74131-7 (pb.) \$26.00.

This book is a good introductory overview of international communication in the respected tradition of the political economy of communication. It is critical without being doctrinaire, carefully researched and documented without being pedantic, and concise without being superficial. Still, it suffers from two problems. First, the book was finished before the world changed on 9/11 and, second, it was written at the height of the technology bubble in 1999-2000. Neither problem, however, is life-threatening as the overall argument and data in the book give it a validity that entirely justifies the subtitle of "continuity and change."

We find in the book the theme of the subtitle set forth repeatedly: the more things change (as in the digital revolution that has affected all forms of international communication), the more they remain the same (this revolution and its consequences are still in most of the same hands, i.e., the U.S. and other western economies).

The advantage for students using this book is that it provides a comprehensive overview of most of the main elements for understanding contemporary international communication: historical context (Chapter 1), theories (Chapter 2), communication infrastructures (Chapter 3), commercialization (Chapter 4), culture and globalization (Chapter 5), contraflows from the South (Chapter 6) and the Internet (Chapter 7). For those inclined to do follow-up research on any of these topics, it has a series of well constructed appendices including websites, references, and meticulous author and subject indices. One additional heuristic advantage is a series of 16 case studies that are inserted into the chapters to provide detailed illustrations for more abstract points made in the main body of the text. In short, it would be a useful book for university students and others getting acquainted with the phenomenon of international communication.

The treatment of the historical context in Chapter 1 suggests that connection between communication and empire that Harold Innis first theorized 50 years ago. It follows the developments of the telegraph, news agencies, film, and radio while making relevant connections with the functioning of 19th century European empires. It continues into the 20th century with the development of radio and television and into the context of the Cold War era that ended only in 1990, when two modern empires faced off over the world's hearts and minds.

There is a nod given to communication and development and the New World Information and Communication Order debates, but treatment is necessarily brief. This chapter though concise is, nevertheless, a key to understanding the theme of the book: "Though the technologies employed for transmission of messages across international borders have changed . . . the main actors . . . have remained the same" (p. 6).

The chapter on theory is less satisfactory because it simply lines up and quickly describes a number of theories without relating them to the book's argument. And, indeed, with the exception of what the author calls "a critical political-economy for the 21st century," they do not play a role in understanding other parts of the book. Chapter 3 makes a good contribution to our understanding of the material base for global communication by providing a brief but compelling history of the deployment of underwater cables for the expansion of 19th century telegraphy with continuity into the critical development and expansion of communication satellites and the other end-of-the-century telecommunication technologies that made the Internet a force in contemporary international communication. This infrastructure was the sine qua non for both government and business in their roles in expanding the global communication system.

Chapter 4 continues the thrust of the previous chapter by showing how the deregulation and liberalization of this infrastructure has led to the concentration of a variety of media industries in the hands of a few global companies, most based in the U.S. and a few other western powers. The problem with the chapter is that it has to deal with a number of important media industries in very brief compass. Ample references, tables and case studies do provide leads to other sources for those who would become better informed.

The final three chapters of the book seem a little less satisfactory, not because of any lapse in argument or scholarship but because the themes of each could well be a book in themselves. The chapter on cultural globalization (Chapter 5) reviews some of the latest figures on flows of cultural products from the North to South, continuing a trend that is at least three decades old. The new aspect to the flow, however, is in the latter part of the chapter where Thussu gives some figures on regionalization that is perhaps of more recent origin. Chapter 7 on contraflow from South to North primarily reflects on the older versions of Spanish and Portuguese programming (mainly telenovelas) reaching Latino/a audiences in the U.S. but also on the newer possibilities introduced by Direct to Home satel-

lite technology that makes diaspora audiences around the world able to keep in touch with home through programming direct from national territories. The added interest is also from satellite programs, like Al-Jazeera, that challenge both Middle-Eastern national news slants as well as those from the West concerning events and their meanings from Muslim countries. The final chapter is perhaps the least satisfactory because it deals with the Internet and mobile technology that in 1999 was far from what it is today. That is not the fault of the author, but it makes for less interesting reading.

Overall, the book is not only solidly researched and carefully written, but it provides a useful and important overview of the new global reality of communication study. It should be a stimulus to university students today to understand their world better and motivate them to become full members of a new generation of global actors—and activists!

—EGM

Trujillo, Nick. *In Search of Naunny's Grave: Age, Class, Gender, and Ethnicity in an American Family.* Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 2004, Pp. ix, 214. ISBN 0-7591-0499-9 (hb.) \$72.00; 0-7591-0500-6 (pb.) \$24.95.

In the introduction to *In Search of Naunny's Grave*, Nick Trujillo tells how he first heard of his paternal grandmother's death and the range of emotions he felt on hearing the news. He describes how two years following her death, he found himself in Los Angeles with his uncle and a cousin and they decided to go in search of his grandmother—Naunny's—grave. Trujillo recounts his first memory of Naunny and what spending time with her as a young child meant to him. Interspersed with his recollections of Naunny are the basic details of his life—family structure, where he grew up, his relationship with his parents, where he went to college, where he worked, and so forth. Hence, right from the very beginning of this text, we get a sense of not only who Naunny is but also who Nick Trujillo is. As the book develops, we learn a great deal about both of them.

This ethnographic account that Trujillo writes about in his search for the meaning of his grandmother in his and his family members' lives is deeply personal, revealing, and highly involving. Trujillo uses a variety of writing forms to tell this story; each is selected to explain a different aspect of his study. For instance, he mixes traditional social-scientific writing and argument to discuss the impact of gender, ethnicity, and

class issues on his grandmother's life. He provides personal stories and emotional memories in an autoethnographic writing style that reminds the reader that Trujillo is personally involved in the project and what it means to him. He includes letters written by Naunny and selections from a personal diary he asked her to keep, as well as excerpts from a number of interviews with family members to illustrate Naunny's life. Perhaps the most interesting writing choice he makes is to create fictionalized accounts of Naunny's life—employing flashbacks and dialogue to capture what “might” have happened in her life—“impressionistic fragments” as Trujillo describes them. This diverse and eclectic writing approach makes this an engaging text. Like a good novel where the reader knows the “ending” from the very beginning, we know right at the start of this text that Naunny has died, but we become so caught up in her life and Trujillo's search for its meaning that by the end of the book, when he chronologically gets to her death, we are saddened and moved, almost as if it were unexpected.

The book, however, is more than a personal account of Naunny's life; it is an exploration of the role and place of grandmothers in U.S. culture. This cultural exploration takes Trujillo through analyses of age, class, gender, and ethnicity in his search for the meaning of grandmothers in their family members' lives.

The book is organized in a chronological format, tracing Naunny's roots in New Mexico and Southern Colorado, her first marriage, and her decision to move to Los Angeles where she became a widow at only 27 years of age. We learn about her life as a single mother of two young boys during WWII, often working two jobs to earn enough money to keep them in new clothes and music lessons. Trujillo shares poignant stories about Naunny's years of dating, before she remarried in the 1950s. Interspersed in this description of her life are family members' views of Naunny, including her life as a single, sexual woman; her interpretation and eventual reluctant acceptance of her ethnic background as a Mexican American; her capacity to give unselfishly to her family; and her life close to the edge of poverty.

The book is comprised of eight chapters. Chapter 1, “The Family Historian,” recounts the stories that Naunny told about herself and her family ancestors to other family members. Trujillo—the true family historian—tells of his own journey to Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado to interview

family members about the stories Naunny told them, as well as to collect stories about her. The next six chapters deal with a particular aspect of Naunny's identity—a lifetime of menial labor and economic struggle, sexual identity, the capacity to give unselfishly to her family, her ethnic heritage as a Mexican, life as a woman and eventually an “old” woman, and her death. For each of these elements of Naunny's life, Trujillo provides a cultural interpretation of the relevant context. For example, he explores the role of gender and race in the economic limitations of Naunny's life. When he recounts Naunny's identity shift from “Spanish” to Mexican, he offers background about the role of ethnicity and ethnic labels in families and self-identities, as well as their role in the larger social realm. In the final chapter, “The Search Continues,” Trujillo reexamines the meaning Naunny held for him in his life and how their relationship developed.

In addition to being a fine scholarly text, the book is potentially very valuable for a variety of students and courses or course units that focus on gender, family communication, and qualitative research approaches. It serves as an excellent example of autoethnography that incorporates a variety of other research methods and writing styles. The appendix, titled “Studying Naunny,” is especially useful to those interested in understanding ethnographic research methods, as Trujillo describes how the project evolved, how he collected and analyzed a variety of data, and how he eventually approached the writing of this book. He also has a useful section on ethical dilemmas he faced (e.g., choosing whether to include information about Naunny to which his family members might object) that is valuable to both budding and seasoned ethnographers and autoethnographers.

As Trujillo explains in his introduction, this book is about his search for the multiple meanings of his grandmother's life to the members of her family, as well as the larger concept of “grandmother” in U.S. culture. Trujillo is an engaging writer and the success of this book, part of Alta Mira Press's Ethnographic Alternatives Book Series, is largely due to the unique way in which it is written. The reader is immersed deeply into Naunny's life and is provoked to search for the meaning of his or her own grandmother and how gender, age, and class influence who she is or was. The book, thus, ultimately encourages readers to reflect critically on their own lives and family relationships.

—JH

