

is its attention to the ways in which conceptions of the audience shape subsequent uses of technologies. In his famous essay, "Encoding/Decoding" (*Culture, Media, Language* [Hutchinson Press, 1980]), Stuart Hall argues that to understand the meaning of a given mass media product, it is necessary to analyze the imagined representation of the audience embedded within texts. Boczkowski makes a similar point in relation to technology, suggesting that views of the audience are critical to any understanding of innovative practices in online newsrooms. He demonstrates how news workers' radically different conceptions of audience members as technology users led to diverse applications of the Web's technical capabilities and helped determine the degree to which newspaper organizations retained or discarded their conventional editorial roles.

The book also features an interesting and counterintuitive background chapter on newspapers' experimentations with nonprint media in the 1980s. This chapter suggests that, contrary to popular belief, newspapers were not surprised, threatened, or befuddled by the Web. A recognition among dailies that readership was likely to fall precipitously with shifting U.S. demographics incited a period of experimentation with new technologies; the chapter finds that print-based news organizations had been testing new delivery vehicles years before the Web became commonplace. News services like Night Ridder and the Associated Press had explored the possibility of transmitting news over fax machines, videotex, and other technologies, although these early attempts to reproduce and broadcast news did not take hold. While conventional wisdom tells us that newspapers were uneasy about digital, it is equally possible they were looking for just such a technological break. Once dailies settled on the Web, their primary concerns included how the new medium would interact with established news conventions, organizational forms, and producer/reader relationships, all addressed by *Digitizing the News* in a smart and sophisticated manner.

Technology, Television, and Competition: The Politics of Digital TV. By Jeffrey A. Hart. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Pp. xiv+248. \$60.00.

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You might think that when it came to setting technical standards for digital television (DTV), engineers, scientists, broadcasters, and television manufacturers would have conferred, debated, and eventually agreed on what those standards should be on technical and scientific grounds. According to Jeffrey Hart, this assumption is wrong.

It turns out that things were far more complicated and highly politicized. This was because they involved intense competition among not

only the actors noted above but also the consumer electronics industry, software manufacturers, computer manufacturers, the film industry, government regulatory agencies, transnational political organizations (e.g., the European Commission), and international media conglomerates (e.g., Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, AOL Time-Warner, and the Disney Corporation). All of these had vested economic interests in what sort of standards emerged. The wide range of industries affected by the change stemmed from the fact that a "digital convergence" was afoot where the traditional boundaries separating television, radio, recording, film, publishing, and other media industries were breaking down in the face of the digital revolution in data transmission, particularly satellite transmission. And to complicate matters further, there was also a significant dose of economic nationalism driving the events in question.

Technology, Television and Competition explains all of this in great detail as the search for DTV standards unfolded between 1984 and 1997 in Japan, Western Europe, and the United States. In broad outline, the stories are likely to be somewhat familiar to students of comparative politics. In Japan, industrial policy guided standard setting, with the government, public television broadcasters, and consumer electronics firms playing the dominant roles in the struggle to find the best way to transition from analog to digital television. In the United States, standard setting was more akin to a political free for all, where intense lobbying of Congress, the White House, and the Federal Communications Commission by all the key actors resulted in the adoption of a different standard than that seen in Japan. And in Western Europe lobbying and interest group struggles determined the outcome but with the action occurring not just at the national level, but also to a significant degree at the level of the European Union, where a European standard for DTV was eventually pounded out.

The fact that different standards emerged in each region also reflected the fact that Japan, the United States, and the European Union were each concerned about protecting the international competitiveness of their domestic consumer electronics and other industries in an increasingly globalized economy. For instance, one of the rationales behind the unique European standards was to make it difficult for Japanese manufacturers to penetrate the European market that had been dominated traditionally by Thomson, Philips, and other European firms. Similar concerns were also at work in the United States. One of the book's most interesting dimensions is how the relationships between domestic and international politics and economics played out in each region of the world.

This is a thoroughly researched book based on documentary sources, field research, and elite interviews. Anyone interested in the very detailed history of the development of DTV standards—or technical standard setting in general—would find this an exceptionally valuable addition to their library.

Yet the excellent exposition of events is both the book's great strength

and weakness because it is difficult to find the theoretical forest for the very detailed descriptive trees. There is a nod in the introduction and conclusion to the importance of ideas, interests, and institutions as factors determining outcomes in each of the three cases. And there is an extensive and theoretically sophisticated literature in political science and sociology that explores the interplay among these factors in determining policy outcomes. In particular, there is much debate about the conditions under which each one is more or less important. But this literature is largely ignored in the book. For example, Hart explains that the concept of digital convergence was central to the empirical stories insofar as various actors used it to help defend and legitimize their positions in the standard-setting debates. But he does not develop connections between this story and the literature on how ideas affect policy making. Similarly, while he pays some attention to how institutional differences affected policy outcomes, the differences in question are how economic actors were organized and especially whether TV broadcasters were publicly or privately owned. Surprisingly, the institutional arrangement of politics is barely mentioned. Given that there are well-known differences in the political institutions of Japan, the United States, and the European Union, I would have expected that these differences would have figured into the discussion as well.

In sum, this book does a splendid job of documenting the pivotal struggles around standard setting in one of the digital age's most important technologies and is worth the effort for readers who are interested in this sort of thing. For the more general academic audience, however, it may be difficult to find the theoretical punch lines.

Speculative Management: Stock Market Power and Corporate Change. By Dan Krier. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005. Pp xi+315. \$89.50 (cloth); \$27.95 (paper).

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Dan Krier begins with a disturbing contrast between two large American industrial corporations. One, the pseudonymous American Steel, underwent painful but successful restructuring, including plant closures and layoffs, only after long, careful study of production needs and market trends. The other, Sunbeam, appointed "Chainsaw" Al Dunlap as CEO in 1996, where, to Wall Street fanfare and rising stock prices, he announced after a *two-day* review of operations the competitive necessity of workforce reductions, plant closures, and so on (acts that eventually led to the closure of even efficient factories and that rendered Sunbeam unprofitable for years). Sunbeam, despite a *production management* rhetoric akin to that of American Steel, was rather an almost pure case of