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The Troubles of Journalism: a critical look at what's right and wrong with the press, 2nd edn

WILLIAM A. HACHTEN

Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2001

205 pp., US\$26 (pbk), 0-8058-3817-1

The Troubles of Journalism is a small book with big goals. It purports to diagnose "the causes of the malaise that seems to grip the news business today," as well as to catalog the major economic, social, cultural and technological changes in American journalism; to evaluate the impact of the changes and the criticism they have triggered; and to suggest what the changes have meant for America and the world.

From the anecdotal opening of the preface through 14 chapters on an assortment of issues facing modern journalism, William Hachten brings the observations and insights of a lengthy career to bear in this book. In essence, it takes the tone of a valedictory address, rich with both concern and celebration. While the intended audience is never made explicit, the book's material and tone suggest it will be most effective with students and lay readers. If that is the case, then the book succeeds at its goals.

Upper-level undergraduate students and entry-level graduate students who find their way to *The Troubles of Journalism* generally consider it both enlightening and highly readable. They find it exciting and eye-opening. Whether journalism scholars or researchers have the same reaction depends on how current they are with the issues of shifting news values, the impact of media concentration on public affairs coverage, trends in American coverage of international news, and the history of journalism education.

The book's presentation is uneven. *The Troubles of Journalism* is at its best where it shows and at its weakest where it tells. Students who are new to a particular topic need concrete examples to follow the point. Those who are familiar with the topic often need the concrete examples to grasp Hachten's point or at least suspend judgment while he completes his thought.

The book is particularly weak when it strings a quote from one famous media scholar to a quote from another media scholar. Turn the page, however, and authoritative, well-rea-

soned examples make the author's case. On the other hand, Hachten does a good job of highlighting important conclusions about media performance and consumption from some of the big-name scholars in the field. For instance, he calls attention to Stephen Hess's observation that the United States has really become one nation with a two-tiered media consumption system: those with resources want and have access to more news about the world than they can consume, while the vast majority of Americans get little news and consume less.

One of the more troubling aspects of the book is the inconsistency in underlying assumptions. For example, while one chapter suggests that American journalism was more focused and more serious when Hachten and his peers were young, the next carefully prefaces criticism by saying that in many ways, the press is better today.

Additionally, the book's emphasis is sometimes more Ameri-centric than some readers will be comfortable with. For instance, this author might quibble with the assertion that the global media are essentially American, when the BBC and other British and international interests have played important parts in global communication for longer than the United States and, in many places, are still considered more reliable than US news products.

A reader with much familiarity with media history also is likely to quibble with some of Hachten's assertions about past practice and the context in which events or media changes took place.

As a valedictory, *The Troubles of Journalism* would be Hachten's to define, but one might suggest that there are issues of race, ethnicity and gender facing the America press that are not reflected in the book's pages. In the wake of September 11, it is also tempting to be troubled by the underlying complacency about the blind spots of the American model of world news coverage that insulate US policy makers and citizens from a grasp of harsh, uncomfortable realities about the vast chasms between American thought and culture and the cultures of the rest of the world.

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Women and Journalism

DEBORAH CHAMBERS, LINDA STEINER AND CAROLE FLEMING

London and New York: Routledge, 2004
278 pp., £16.99 (pbk), 0-415-27445-1

Women and Journalism is an impressively-researched book bursting at the seams with intriguing snippets and one which will sit comfortably on many shelves—but it also made me question what I want in a textbook.

Deborah Chambers, Linda Steiner and Carole Fleming have provided us with a comprehensive and accessible look at women's roles in journalism. But for me, it is also an opportunity lost, as it fails to provide any original first-hand input from either UK or US practitioners. It's a classic cuttings job—collecting lots of sources together with very little gloss on. In fact, it's heavy on tell but light on show.

The authors pursue a largely chronological and historical path for the first few chapters, looking at women journalists between 1850 and 1945 and then during the post-war period. From there they examine: education and training; the glass ceiling which has stopped many women from progressing into the higher echelons of the media; newsroom culture; and challenges to sexism and discrimination. There are also chapters focusing on alternative media, women war correspondents, and "post-modern" journalism and its implications for women.

On the plus side, the book is a treasure trove of facts and the authors are to be commended on the prodigious amount of research they clearly have undertaken. I was particularly fascinated by early cases of investigative journalism by 19th-century women, such as Annie Besant who exposed the appalling conditions of match girls working in sweatshops in London in 1888. And never mind the old school tie; C. P. Scott advanced the careers of UK women journalists from the 1920s—but only if they were his wife's university friends, or women he met socially! The authors comment: "However, the proportion of women who resorted to personal contacts to get a job created the impression that only 'well-connected' women were suitable to be journalists, and this created

another barrier for women from working-class backgrounds" (p. 27). I was also unaware of the fact that the BBC didn't employ married or divorced women until the 1960s.

However, the book's rather rigid structure (UK situation ... US situation...), plus the decision to shoehorn print, broadcast and online media into what is a fairly compact book, causes some problems with both flow and repetition. Marjorie Proops, one of the best-known English journalists of the 1950s and 1960s, first appears in a section sub-headed "women at British newspapers," where her feature writing is mentioned. For many readers, though, she was far better known as an agony aunt—but this angle doesn't appear until a later section. And the same goes for *The Guardian's* Mary Stott, one of the most renowned of women's pages editors—but one who had a distinctly subversive approach to them! Stott pops up in several places when she could quite usefully have been profiled in one section.

This begs the question as to why the authors chose not to examine certain writers or publications in more depth. They have culled together colossal amounts of information from myriad sources, but actually do very little with it. As far as I can see, the only first-hand research they conducted was phoning a small sample of UK educators to gauge the proportion of men to women in university journalism departments. The book screams out for case studies of key journalists and magazines. For instance, the discussion of UK feminist publication *Spare Rib* would have been greatly enhanced by asking those involved with it—including influential figures such as Rosie Boycott—to look back with the benefit of hindsight.

There are also some problematic throwaway lines that both need and deserve more analysis. The controversy over whether we need women's pages is glossed over in about half a page, whilst there is a particularly crass comment about women sports reporters' doing the job because they presumably like sports. I can confirm from personal experience that sports reporting is one of the most difficult areas for women to break into, and those of us who have done it had to prove an encyclopaedic knowledge of sports to break through the old boys'

network! And in the "post-modern journalism" section, the authors mention porn publisher Richard Desmond's takeover of the *Daily Express*, commenting that: "...Desmond was intent on reporting only 'positive news' in the *Daily Express*. This story demonstrates the moral and professional dilemmas that women journalists, and indeed their male colleagues, now face more or less routinely in the news media industry" (p. 216). This is a worrisome blanket statement which, whilst acknowledging Desmond's undesirable influence on the newspaper industry, tars every other newspaper with the same brush.

And in other cases the authors display a lack of understanding of the print industry. The authors are right to say that print publications can be cheap and easy to produce, but the reason many failed was simply because standards were woefully low, or because it was—and still is—virtually impossible to get the non-mainstream magazines or papers distributed widely.

I felt the book was a missed opportunity to showcase both women journalists and publications. It provides a great starting point in an area well worth study, but lacks the depth to contribute further. I read the book with the feeling that the authors were standing at a distance and never quite engaging with some fascinating and challenging material.

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Meget Støerre End Du Tror: avislaeserne og det internationale

JENS HENRIK HAAHR AND HANS HENRIK HOLM
Århus, Denmark: Forlaget Ajour, 2003
208 pp., Dkr 248 (pbk), ISBN 87-89235-84-3

In recent years, scholars in media, journalism and cultural studies have turned to the concept of globalisation as a way of describing a sweeping set of changes to our experience. To put it glibly, globalisation has become one of the grand narratives of the postmodern age. Although we have moved away from overexcited metaphors like McLuhan's much-recycled

“global village”, scholarly discourse still reflects a useful curiosity about how the global flow of capital, technologies, images and people affect our cultural landscapes.

A new Danish book, *Meget Støerre End Du Tror: avislaeserne og det internationale*, cautions us to examine our enthusiastic embrace of globalisation as an explanatory framework, and suggests that we need a more complicated model for conceiving of the ways in which the global intersects with the local. The authors work from the premise that we *are* living in a globalised world, and set out to investigate whether this means that we have become globalised newspaper readers. Written by Jens Henrik Haahr and Hans Henrik Holm, it looks at how Danish newspaper readers approach international news. The title of the book translates to *Much Larger Than You Think: newspaper readers and the international*. Although the book is published in Danish and about Danish newspaper audiences, it contains a great deal of material that is of interest to international scholars and practitioners.

Chapter 1 introduces the book, which is based on a series of empirical studies, including a country-wide survey, a series of focus groups and a content analysis of international coverage in *Jyllandsposten*, the largest circulation broadsheet newspaper. Chapters 2 and 3 set up the central theoretical framework: that of the opposition between the global and the local reader, as ideal types of newspaper audiences imagined by journalists and scholars alike. To the global reader, or “Homo Globus”, geographical and cultural distance are no longer central, and their experience is instead shaped by the realities of globalisation. They see themselves as part of a world that extends beyond the boundaries of their nation state. Their consumption of news is based on their individual interests. In the eyes of the global reader, stories about what happens in Japan and Africa may be as relevant and interesting as ones that report on local or national events.

The local reader, or “Homo Loculus”, on the other hand, reacts to globalisation by developing a growing consciousness of their local, national and ethnic identities and communities. Consequently, the local reader is most inter-

ested in news that is relevant to their everyday lives and deals with the near and the local. To the local reader, international news gains significance insofar as it impacts on their everyday lives.

Haahr and Holm set out to investigate whether these ideal types correspond to the practices of Danish newspaper readers, and Chapters 4, 5 and 6 report on the findings of their studies. Their studies show that readers are both local and global. On one level, this is perhaps not surprising. Ideal types are just that; they reflect theoretical heuristics that simplify messier realities. However, the specific details of the studies are both fascinating and make a real contribution to our knowledge of newspaper readership. Danish readers, Haahr and Holm suggest, find international news interesting, stimulating and relevant, and spend on average 30 per cent of their reading time on this material. However, the readers also indicate that local news is both the highest priority and the category of news on which they spend most of their time. Readers agree that they have a responsibility to stay informed about international events. The international material that they find most important is news about natural disasters, the environment and everyday life in other countries. This is surprising because, as Haahr and Holm argue, such news stories are unlikely to impact their own lives. By contrast, readers are not particularly interested in reports on international politics, economics and business—the news about elites that dominates the agenda. Haahr and Holm suggest that while the readers live their lives locally, they have global awareness (p. 184). Their priorities challenge the judgements of newspaper editors, and show that readers are selective and resistant.

In explaining readers’ engagement with international and local news, the authors suggest that they are driven by a “hierarchy of needs” (p. 98). This appears to me a limited theoretical approach which ultimately risks advancing a simplistic and individualist understanding of audiences in a book that otherwise calls our attention to the complicated nature of newspaper readership. In fact, the authors critique cultural studies approaches to audiences for

their lack of a solid empirical basis (pp. 103–4). I believe the book could have benefited from engaging with such insights, which suggest that we are not merely utilitarian and rationalistic in our consumption of mass media, but also gain pleasures from it.

Chapter 7 features a historical content analysis of *Jyllandsposten*, tracing changes in the paper's reporting of international news over the past 40 years. It would have been interesting to see a content analysis of all the Danish national broadsheets during the same period, to be able to generalise about changes in international news coverage. After all, *Jyllandsposten* prides itself on being Denmark's international newspaper, and so it is perhaps not surprising that the authors find its coverage has shifted in that direction over the past few decades. Because of its narrow focus this was the least compelling chapter.

By focusing on readers of the broadsheet press, which coexists with vibrant tabloid and local press traditions, the book necessarily glossed over some of the complexities of Danish newspaper readership. Indeed, it is possible that readers of the national broadsheet press may be a self-selected sample of more self-consciously "global readers".

This book ultimately makes an important contribution by reminding journalists and academics alike that we should be critical of any sweeping claims about audiences and their needs, interests and interpretations, as well as about globalisation and its consequences. Only solid empirical research, like that which forms the basis for this book, can tell us convincing stories about real audiences' complicated engagement with media texts.

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Mass Communication Ethics: decision making in postmodern culture, 2nd edn

LARRY Z. LESLIE

Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004

326 pp., US\$59.96 (pbk), 0395904900

At long last, a single book on ethics that allows students to understand how our concepts of

ethics have developed throughout history. Larry Z. Leslie, an associate professor at the University of South Florida, also provides an understanding of the frameworks for ethical decision-making that can be used when teaching classes with students drawn from all of the communications areas and with many different backgrounds.

Because I have had a personal research interest in ethics—and in particular, in examining the ethical requirements for building and maintaining relationships—I have wrestled for a number of years with the problem of identifying the constants that can be taught students. Honesty and fairness have been the ethical values upon which philosophers seem to share agreement the most. Yet, both of these values are shaped by self-interest, which creates a new dilemma for ethical performance in a global society where social concepts vary.

Leslie handles that problem by first placing the identification of ethical values in a historical context. Philosophers from Plato to Jean-Paul Sartre are identified with brief histories of the lives of each, followed by an explanation of their philosophies. Are some philosophers and scholars missed? Of course! The body of literature on ethics is immense. I would like to have seen Confucius in the list because of his identification of "reciprocity" as the single most important rule by which humans should live. The list also would benefit from including Erik Fromm, who identified the concept of fairness: the concept that I give you goods and services equal in value to what you give me as the capitalistic system's "greatest gift to the world." But I found Leslie had the principles I was seeking covered in his citation of other philosophers, which will make it easy to expand on the topic in classes.

Although great depth is not involved, Leslie also provides some understanding of the influence of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. There's enough to initiate student interest in perhaps writing research papers on the ethical differences among religions, especially in view of current Middle Eastern and far-Eastern religious conflicts as to what is true and what is fair and how differing concepts result in ethical conflicts. Certainly, enhancing

our understanding of these ethical differences has new relevance today.

Case studies are provided to facilitate class discussion in virtually all the communication areas. While Leslie missed the opportunity to point out to students the importance of ethics in maintaining and harmonizing personal relationships—an exercise that can bring home the relationship of public relations and ethics—his case studies are relevant and can easily be supplemented with current issues. I also like the summary provided of ethical decision-making tools provided in the philosophies he cites.

This much-needed, readable, understandable and student-friendly book should easily earn a thumbs-up from most teachers.

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From Bevan to Blair: fifty years' reporting from the political frontline

GEOFFREY GOODMAN

London: Pluto Press, 2003

287 pp., £18.99 (hbk), 074532178X

This book is about another time and place, pre-dating Margaret Thatcher and her political coup of 1975, when she snatched British Conservative Party leadership from the One Nation Tories whom she derided as “wets”. From 1979 to 1990, as Britain’s first woman Prime Minister, she changed Britain forever by burying the post-war political consensus and socialism in the Labour Party along with it.

This is a personal memoir by a man who thoroughly disapproved of Mrs Thatcher and all her works. Geoffrey Goodman, the British *Daily Mirror*'s long-serving industrial editor, looks back at nearly 50 years in and around London's Fleet Street and its national media. A former Communist, and still describing himself as a Marxist Socialist at the grand old age of 83, he spent his whole Fleet Street career covering the trade unions and the Labour Party for three largely sympathetic newspapers: the *News Chronicle*, the *Daily Herald* and lastly the *Mirror*, when it was still Britain's biggest selling daily.

As a man of the Left, and a friend of leading Left-wing rebels like the creator of the National Health Service, Nye Bevan, and former Labour Party leader Michael Foot, Goodman does not hide where his sympathies lay in the debates that kept Labour out of power in the 1950s and caused it to lose power after the disillusionment surrounding Harold Wilson's governments in the 1960s and 1970s. By backing his heroes, he was on the “wrong” side on the two big issues that fatally divided Labour, unilateral disarmament and trade union reform.

Nye Bevan broke with the Left by refusing to go down the unilateral road. Goodman does not reproach his hero for his realpolitik but instead blames Hugh Gaitskell and his supporters for blocking the Welshman's “rightful” rise to the leadership of the Labour Party. His venom is directed not at Gaitskell himself but at his most charismatic supporter, the sophisticated Roy Jenkins, later Labour Chancellor and then founder of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), when Labour looked on the verge of committing electoral suicide in the early 1980s.

Goodman blames Jenkins for undermining Harold Wilson after devaluation in 1967 and then, somewhat oddly, for lacking the real killer instinct to finish Wilson off and losing out to the older and more wily James Callaghan when Wilson surprised everyone, including Goodman, by voluntarily retiring from the premiership at the age of 60 in 1976.

What Goodman seems to find unforgivable, from an old Marxist viewpoint, is that Jenkins, the son of a Welsh miner who became a Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Private Secretary to Prime Minister Clement Atlee, dropped his Welsh accent when he went up to Oxford and came down a man of letters who found Goodman's trade union chums far too rough and ready. What Goodman does not mention is that it was Jenkins who missed Labour's best chance of reforming the trade unions before Mrs Thatcher chose “the nuclear option” in the 1980s. Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Cabinet Minister Barbara Castle only dropped their plans for legislation in 1969 after Jenkins, then the powerful Chancellor, left them in the lurch and switched sides. Other accounts also identify Jim Callaghan as the

most disloyal Cabinet member, portraying him as working from within to scupper the reforms. But because Goodman himself was against legal curbs, Callaghan escapes the kind of criticism reserved for the “class traitor” Jenkins. Jenkins, of course, had the last laugh. His SDP paved the way for Tony Blair’s post-socialist New Labour party, a pragmatic post-Thatcher group which promised to keep Middle England sweet by not betraying its Thatcherite inheritance.

For me, the most painful part of the book is Goodman’s apology for working, during his final two years as industrial editor at the *Mirror*, alongside that larger-than-life crooked newspaper proprietor Robert Maxwell. Goodman, who began working life a poor, self-educated Jewish boy from the back streets of Manchester, stresses that the Maxwell “monster” came out of the Holocaust in which most of Maxwell’s Jewish family perished in Central Europe. For this, he forgave him much. Like many *Mirror* executives at the time, he forgave far too much. They bowed to an Emperor with no clothes.

It meant a sad end to a lengthy and worthy career in newspapers. Maxwell almost destroyed the *Mirror* while Rupert Murdoch’s *Sun* became Britain’s biggest-selling daily whilst worshipping at the feet of Mrs Thatcher and celebrating the “loadsamoney” society of the 1980s, a far cry indeed from Clem Atlee’s Socialist New Jerusalem of 1945 with which Goodman’s account begins.

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Technology, Television, and Competition: the politics of digital TV

JEFFREY A. HART

New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004
248 pp., US\$60 (hbk), 0-521-82624-1

Authored by Jeffrey Hart, a political science professor at Indiana University, *Technology, Television, and Competition* is the latest book to chronicle the development of high-definition

television (HDTV) and digital television (DTV) in the United States, Europe and Japan between 1984 and 1997. Although this work covers similar territory to Dupagne and Seel’s (1998) *High-definition Television: a global perspective*, it focuses specifically on HDTV and DTV technology policy.

Those readers who have followed the evolution of advanced television will reminisce fondly about such classic episodes as Robert Mosbacher’s “Uncle Sugar” remark (p. 111), which heralded the end of HDTV industrial policy initiatives in the United States, and Akimasa Egawa’s “digital TV” comment (p. 199), which marked the beginning of the shift toward an all-digital HDTV system in Japan. Those readers who are new to the subject will learn about the major events that have dominated the formative years of these technologies. Hart relies on a combination of personal interviews and secondary sources to retrace this history.

Technology, Television, and Competition is divided into 10 chapters. Chapter 1 sets the stage for the entire book. Among other things, Hart argues that “digital convergence” was a primary motivating force in HDTV and DTV policy debates. At the end of the book, he even coins the term “digitalism” as “an ideological belief in the superiority of digital technology over analog technology” (p. 227).

Hart also briefly mentions several useful economic and regulatory theories, such as the concept of “creative destruction,” to explain DTV developments. Schumpeter (1950) defines creative construction as the capitalistic process of industrial mutation “that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure *from within*, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one” (p. 83). This displacement of old interests by new interests can be initially resisted before the industry bows down to competitive pressures and accepts institutional changes. DTV applications of such constructs could include the misgivings of US broadcasters about the cost of HDTV implementation in the late 1990s and the Japanese broadcasting industry’s reluctance to embrace digital television in the mid-1990s.

Chapter 2 offers background information about the history and regulation of broad-

casting in the United States, Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Japan. For readers familiar with broadcast systems outside the United States, this chapter is optional.

Chapter 3 prefaces the industrial policy component of Chapter 5 and highlights the trends of the consumer electronics industry in the three regions. Chapter 4 reviews the history of the Japanese Hi-Vision production standard and its associated MUSE transmission system, as well as the role of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications in promoting HDTV technology. An interesting figure in that chapter is Japan's estimated spending on HDTV R&D: a staggering \$708 million between 1970 and 1989.

Chapter 5 discusses the US standardization process of HDTV in the United States and US attempts to adopt industrial policies promoting HDTV. These efforts came to a halt when Robert Mosbacher, the Bush Administration's Secretary of Commerce, rejected a proposal from the American Electronics Association for substantial direct subsidies and when Craig Fields, the head of the Defense Advanced Research Agency (DARPA) and a stalwart supporter of government involvement in HDTV technologies development, was demoted in May 1990.

Chapter 6 retraces the EC policymaking process of the multiplexed analog components (MAC) standards from the 1986 directive to the 1992 directive. Hart concludes that the HD-MAC approach in Europe failed to gain political and industry traction because of the EC "Commission's manifest inability to overcome the resistance of private broadcasters and skeptical governments" (p. 146).

Chapter 7 extends the content of Chapter 5 by recounting the inter-industry squabbles surrounding the adoption of the Grand Alliance DTV system in the United States. Readers interested in these matters should also consult Brinkley (1997) who detailed the testing process of terrestrial advanced television systems and the subsequent formation of the Grand Alliance. As early as 1993, Apple's Mike Liebhold argued before Congress that the endorsement of both interlaced and progressive scanning

would sound the death knell for the computer-compatible progressive format in DTV sets. His prediction did not materialize, though. Today, while NBC and CBS air their HDTV programs in 1080 lines interlaced, ABC and Fox use the 720 lines progressive format.

Chapter 8 explains the DTV initiatives in Europe and Japan, including the emergence of the European Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB) group as a prominent industry-led regional standardization body and Japan's reluctant decision to turn away from analog HDTV and embrace all-digital HDTV. In that chapter, Table 8.1 provides useful historical figures about the number of Hi-Vision receivers, the number of receivers with MUSE-NTSC decoders and the number of wide-screen NTSC receivers between 1996 and 2000.

Chapter 9 examines how such computer standards as TCP/IP and HTML differ in acceptance from DTV standards. The author concludes that, in the case of these computer standards, there was an obvious attempt on the part of the computer programming community to rise above national politics and involve as many people from different backgrounds and countries as possible in the design cycle.

The last chapter summarizes the findings of the previous chapters and draws conclusions about the outcomes of the HDTV and DTV debates in the triad of regions. One of Hart's central points is that "The difficulties of negotiating DTV standards in all three regions were at least partially the result of institutional inertia and errors in the re-regulation of the digitally converging media industries" (p. 231). Unfortunately, the author does not revisit at the end of the book how the theoretical frameworks cited in the Introduction could contribute to explaining the DTV industry and policy end results.

Technology, Television, and Competition is well written and has clear historical value, but it is disappointing that Hart chose to stop his coverage of the issues in 1997. Because the book was published in 2004, it is reasonable to expect that an additional five years (1998–2002) be explored. Chronicling DTV developments and policies is a challenging and merciless task because the technology continues to progress

constantly. Therefore, it is normal that some information be out of date even before such a book is released. However, leaving out a span of five years seems an eternity in the DTV environment.

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The Fall of Advertising & the Rise of PR

AL RIES AND LAURA RIES

New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002

295 pp., \$24.95 (hbk), 0-06-008198-8

Let's start with a hard truth: This is an incredibly self-serving book. The authors, Al Ries and his daughter Laura, own a rather high-end Atlanta consulting firm that makes a great deal of money telling companies how best to market their products. If these companies continue to do things the way they always have, Ries & Ries doesn't get called in and the authors don't make as much money.

That said, this book still should be required reading in both advertising and public relations classes, and by those teaching such classes. The main premise of the book is that public relations, not advertising, builds brands. Advertising has lost its credibility in the minds of consumers, say the Rieses, whereas public relations has managed to keep its worth to companies by using the tactics of obtaining third-party endorsements and positive media coverage, both of which still serve to attract consumers' attention.

They claim that advertising has outlived its functionality, and, like all things that outlive their function, advertising has become art. As my students told me after reading this book: "No one believes advertising. They don't watch and read advertisements to make educated decisions about products or services.

They watch or read advertisements because they're creative, and to be entertained."

Advertising executives want to win awards, and the way to do that, they have learned, is to be creative. However, at some point in time, a shift occurred and advertising agencies started to measure their ads' *effectiveness* by how many awards they won and not by how much product the ads sold. This started the fall of the ad industry, according to the authors.

The Rieses go on to present a seemingly endless number of case studies that strengthen their argument by showing how successful an advertising campaign can be in comparison to the product's success (or lack thereof). The case I'll describe to make this point is the Nissan commercial in which a look-alike G.I. Joe drives off with a look-alike Barbie while a look-alike Ken is left behind as Van Halen sings "You Really Got Me." I liked that commercial, although until I read the case, I couldn't have told you it was a Nissan commercial. That year, the ad agency won a slew of awards, and *Adweek* magazine called the spot "the most talked-about ad campaign of 1996." That year, Nissan's sales dropped 3 percent while Toyota was up 7 percent and Honda up 6 percent. Do any of us remember *their* advertisements?

What public relations lacks in this type of creativity, it makes up for, say the authors, in credibility. A typical public relations program may start out slowly, but it builds momentum as it goes along—the exact opposite of advertising, which usually starts with a big splash. Public relations also uses third parties (read: the media) to get its message across to consumers. Whereas consumers don't believe advertising because they know it is self-serving, they will believe what they read or see in the media. If a piece on the 6 o'clock news reports that an automobile model is unsafe, all the advertising in the world isn't going to convince a potential buyer that it is safe.

Again, the authors use cases to make their point. Volvo doesn't hold the safety "position" in auto owners' minds because of advertising (it was originally advertised as being "durable") but because that's the position the

media gave it. The auto company has been smart enough to adopt that “position” in its advertising.

For those in advertising who are concerned, the book does not totally negate the worth of advertising. In fact, the authors write that “advertising has a brilliant future if it accepts its true role in the life cycle of a brand”—that of maintaining brand position once public relations has built the brand identity. The Rieses are advocating that advertising should adopt a different role, because its current role isn’t working.

I realize that some people in public relations will reject this book out of hand because it deals solely with public relations in a marketing setting. But as a public relations academic, I know where my students get jobs and what they do. No matter where they go to work—from non-profit to agency to corporate—they end up, in one way or another, “pitching” to the media. And that pitching involves a brand. The Girl Scouts (organization for girls) is a brand in the same way BlueCross BlueShield (health insurance) is a brand or Nestea (powdered tea) is a brand; it’s only the product that changes.

The Fall of Advertising & the Rise of PR might be self-serving, but it also serves the fields of advertising and public relations in raising some serious questions about the roles each plays for an organization.

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Critical Approaches to Television, 2nd edn

LEAH R. VANDE BERG, LAWRENCE A. WENNER
AND BRUCE E. GRONBECK

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The medium of television is not without its critics, and rightly so. Those of us who grew up in the United States have a hard time imagining a world where television is purely the voice of the people, not the advertisers. As a result of our commercial system, the study of the effects

of television on its audience is a constant concern for our society.

The Internet is now edging in on the type of mass reach that television has enjoyed for years, yet television still draws a critical eye. *Critical Approaches to Television* goes beyond what most people consider television criticism and takes a more scientific approach, beginning with the basics. Authors Vande Berg, Wenner and Gronbeck dive into the critical analysis of television with all of their homework done.

The book is divided into five parts, with each part getting progressively more complicated: the first gives the reader some background on television criticism; the second discusses some types of criticism dealing with television text, meaning the sensory signs the audience responds to. The third deals with a critical look at the production context of television studies, the fourth deals with how the audience actually responds to television, and the fifth discusses the ethical considerations of this type of criticism.

This book takes baby steps in explaining the critical analysis of television. This is necessary considering all the material covered. This may discourage some readers, and can also be discouraging to those with a genuine interest in the material. It seems to take some patience to get to the substance of each chapter, and the theoretical discussions can be overwhelming. While it is understood that any valid theoretical discussion must be based in sound research, it may take some a second reading to digest all the information contained in this book.

The activities at the end of each chapter are a welcome break from the reading and help keep the reader engaged in the material. Also, the examples of critical writing complement the discussion.

As the title implies, this book does not in itself criticize television; rather it serves to explain different types of critical analysis of the medium. While certain programs are used for illustration, the book does not single out any one program. In fact, the variation of programs discussed works like a history lesson. Readers can catch most of the programs discussed with no more than a basic cable subscription and an accurate television listing. This helps bring the

subject matter into perspective for the reader. The chapter discussing the television coverage of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, is a great example of this.

Overall, this is a very comprehensive book on television criticism. There is very little, if anything, left out of the text that would leave the reader searching for answers. As a textbook, there is a lot of information for a class to consume in a semester. Some instructors may find it necessary to work with certain segments of the book and leave the rest as reference material. The book is designed to accommodate this.

I am a fan of television. I have been all my life. Anyone who reads this book will find it hard to watch television in the same way again. Although I do not think their enjoyment of this medium will be affected, their perspective will definitely change.

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Media Organisation and Production

SIMON COTTLE (Ed.)

London: Sage, 2003

203 pp., £18.99 (pbk), 0761974946, £60 (hbk),
0761974938

As any journalist knows, the organisation one works for is a major determinant of what is reported and what is written. Given this, detailed analysis of how media organisations are organised and how media products are made has been somewhat neglected in recent scholarly work and education. Simon Cottle's edited collection is therefore a welcome reminder of the importance of this area, and a useful book for those of us who teach.

The book is part of a larger series, also edited by Cottle, and includes some clear, focused and contemporary studies from Sage publications. It is also one of a slew of books on organisational studies and media political economy that have recently added considerably to the resources in this area. This is an important development because so many of the existing studies are now over 20 years old. Equally, it is important be-

cause so many of these classic studies used the processes of journalism as their focus, and an updating of our insights is overdue.

Of the nine case studies in *Media Organisation and Production* four will be of direct interest for journalism studies and a further two examine the wider context of contemporary media. Two of these studies, Timothy Majorbanks' analysis of News Corporation and Lucy Kung-Shankleman's comparison of the BBC and CNN, are likely to become useful reference points for future work, and excellent case studies for journalism education. There are also two studies of neglected areas of journalism: Eamonn Forde's discussion of music journalism and Julian Matthew's exploration of children's news are informed overviews of these important niche formats. Both are clear and straightforward accounts that make sound summaries of their topics and strong links to the human processes of production.

While the studies of TV and film co-production in Canada and of natural history TV will perhaps be of less interest to readers of *Journalism Studies*, Paddy Scannell's speculations on the nature of live-ness in radio has implications for contemporary radio and TV news, particularly in an age of 24-hour rolling news. Scannell's short chapter on the BBC's Brain Trust from the middle of the last century may seem rather historically specific, but what it tells us about the levels of organisation and how innovations in programming are managed is invaluable for other historical moments including our own.

The introductory chapter from the editor, and the following two chapters—one on global mainstream media from Robert McChesney and one on alternative media production from Chris Atton—provide an excellent context to the more specific studies that follow. The global-local relationship is one that is in need of fuller exploration, and has obvious implications for new journalism in an age of globalising technologies like the Internet and the financial fragility of the independent local press.

Helpful notes support each chapter, and a number of articles include fairly up-to-date statistics or other data. The chapter summaries made each case study very useful for under-

graduate students, and I found the single bibliography at the end of the book an effective way to organise such material, one that allowed for varied avenues for further reading and for more advanced study.

With my background in political economy and culture of production studies, I would have liked to have seen the editor commissioning more detailed analyses, and some theorising on the nature of production and media organisation. The articles share a tendency to the descriptive, rather than analytical. I am sure more developed studies could have been included without any loss of accessibility.

It is certainly encouraging to see such a diversity in cases and a healthy avoidance of

over-generalisations about the current state of media organisations. The studies do, however, over-privilege television, and leave contemporary radio and converging communication technologies of consumption somewhat neglected. It is, though, over-burdening one book to expect it to hold sole responsibility for a wide and important area of scholarship. Overall, this is an accessible contribution to the field and the combination of some primary research and student-friendly writing and features will make it popular with both students and lecturers.

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