

on what he considers most appropriate for developing countries. For example, " . . . the telecommunications enterprise needs to be run as an independent high-technology business. In the present state of the technology it is also likely to be a practical monopoly across most of its operations" (p. 169).

The book succeeds in its aim to be a basic primer on managing telecommunications development and the tone and level of detail is pitched at this level. Readers unfamiliar with this territory looking for a gentle initiation into the complexities of telecommunications management will not be disappointed.

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Human Communication as a Field of Study Selected Contemporary Views *edited by Sarah Sanderson King*

(State University of New York Press, New York, 1989), pp. xiv + 282. ISBN 0-88706-986-X.

Any book which sets out to give an up-to-date, inclusive and definitive account of a field of study must soon run up against its limitations. This one admits to being less than contemporary before it starts: it was eight years in the making, and the 17 contributions range from recent state-of-the-art accounts of communication sub-fields back to an essay by the late Wilbur Schramm which circulated amongst his graduate students perhaps for decades before being revised for this book in 1980.

On the other hand, the views represented here are even more selected than might have been intended. The behaviourist paradigm of US social science is the taken-for-granted orthodoxy which unites the collection, shaped by the editor's conviction that communication is in essence the functional use of symbols to regulate consensus. There is scant recognition of the 'Ferment in the Field' which has ensued from the critical challenge mounted against the behaviourist/functionalist paradigm in the US over the last decade, nor of alien theoretical orientations from Europe or the Third World.¹

Thus, the theoretical section begins with the Schramm article, which traces the emergence of the behaviourist paradigm and the 'diversity of men' which it attracted. An essay then follows by Becker on the 'speech communication' tradition, the more linguistic and rhetorical approach to communication which has developed in the US, with acknowledged European influences, while a further contribution from Troidahl traces how communication developed as a field within departments of journalism and behavioural science in US universities over this century.

Only with Olson's essay on the 'bricolage' of paradigms in the major sub-field of mass communications is there any acknowledgement of the native North American critical tradition, such as is represented by Schiller or Smythe, or any consideration of communication paradigms which exist beyond the shores of the US. Latin American dependency theory is discussed in the context of the New World Information and Communication Order debate, and there is a telescoped account of European semiotics, structuralism, deconstructionism and reception theory.

The largest section of the book then follows, a compendium of status reports on key sub-fields interspersed with research summaries and examinations of specific topics. To begin, there is Cushman's study of 'mateship' (the heterosexual, not the Australian variety) which takes an action theory approach in its discussion of interpersonal communication factors involved in mate selection and the maintenance of relationships.

Dissanayake then reflects upon intercultural communication, the condition of which he sees as the universal recognition that each culture must have its own beliefs and rules to make its existence meaningful. Harrison provides an abstracted exposition of the concerns and development of nonverbal communication, showing how nonverbal codes are inherently distinct from verbal ones, yet complementary to them, while Cotten-Huston contributes a dense discussion of the range of empirical findings in gender communication, the order of difference between males and females in their communicative behaviour.

In organizational communication, Baughman gives an audit of the theoretical genesis and range of interests within this area, followed by a very concrete and contemporary study by Cushman and King (the editor) on communication in high-technology organizations. Utilizing the concept of 'high-speed management', this piece shows the considerable breadth and depth at which communication factors can be seen to permeate organizations. It is concerned to show how successful high-tech companies build corporate cultures which foster rapid product innovation and maintain constant market surveillance and adaptability. Putnam follows with an article on 'embeddedness', the complex ways in which groups within an organization tend to overlap at different levels.

Cushman and King return with a case study in political communication: an analysis of the rhetoric used by Nixon to justify the deployment of US troops in Cambodia in 1970. They take this as a generic kind of presidential discourse, an approach which casts an interesting light upon Bush's conduct of the Iraq crisis.

The bridge to the final section on future directions is created by Dordick's contribution on the role of the 'intelligent telephone' in the new information society. He argues that its unique qualities as a medium of communication have come into their own as a result of the telephone's convergence with other media. Williams follows with his reflections on how communication research must adapt for the future, transcending the parochial boundaries of national perspectives, and addressing itself more to policy: "We researchers do poorly in studying our own communications policy and worse in influencing it."

Sanders then provides an overview in which he expresses his reservations about the apparent diffuseness of communication research, but acknowledges that this is well adapted to the continued changes in the world which communication research seeks to understand. Cushman and King conclude with a philosophical coda in which they put the optimistic view that communication is a form of practical knowledge conducive to greater co-operation and interdependence.

Certainly there have been important steps in that direction: in Australia for example, the sub-field of cross-cultural communication has emerged with the transition to multiculturalism. However, communication also remains deeply implicated as a means by which economic advantage, political domination and cultural prestige are maintained and legitimized both within and between nations. Had this dimension been given more attention throughout the book, it would have had to come to a more hard-headed conclusion.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Special issue of the *Journal of Communication*, 33, 11, 1983.

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The MFP Debate: A Background Reader edited by Ross E. Mouer and Yoshio Sugimoto

(La Trobe University Press, Bundoora, Victoria, 1990), pp. vii + 166, pbk \$19.95, ISBN 1-86324-402-6.

Although the idea for a Multifunction Polis (MFP) was first raised at the beginning of 1987, to our knowledge, this is the first book to appear on the subject. To date, there has only been numerous reports, newspaper articles, the occasional journal article, and the collection of papers on the MFP in a special issue (June 1989) of the *Australian Planner*. Thus this book, with its objective to provide the basis for public debate on the MFP, is welcome and timely.

The book is based on a collection of papers presented to a conference held at La Trobe University in March 1990. The editors, both sociologists, correctly point out that the MFP debate is a catalyst for Australians to examine fundamental long term questions affecting their nation.

The book's 16 chapters are arranged into three parts. Part One sets the scene by placing the MFP idea firmly in the context of Australia's evolving economic relations with Asia. Joseph Camilleri's paper provides the needed historical perspective on post-war US Pacific strategy and the responses by the Whitlam, Fraser, and Hawke governments. He concludes by raising a pertinent question: Is the MFP merely a symbol of another phase of Australian history in which Japan replaces the US as the nation's colonial master?

Officially, the MFP is meant to help restructure the Australian economy onto a more high technology basis. Both the Camilleri paper and the next paper by John McKay accept this as a worthwhile aim for Australia. Thus both papers criticise the recent Garnaut Report's 'more-of-the-same' vision for Australia's future of sticking to primary products, tourism, and raw material-energy and pollution-intensive manufacturing industry.

Reviewing the Asian experience, McKay points out that the processes of development are not simple. Since Australia is unlikely to develop the selectively interventionist government policy that proved so successful in Japan and Korea, perhaps the MFP, if properly implemented, could be a 'quick fix'. But he doubts whether Australian industry is capable of making use of any ideas that might flow from the MFP. He concludes that Australia needs "to go back to basics, develop our human and other resources and develop a new set of attitudes" (p. 37).

Craig Littler compares R&D strategies in Japan and the US. After reviewing the experience of science cities and special economic zones as mechanisms of technology transfer, he concludes that the "MFP will be no panacea for Australia's technological and economic ills" (p.47). However, both Littler and