

ship and concentration rules. For newspapers and television in the 1980s the argument has merit, but we are no longer in the 1980s. The information superhighway is fundamentally changing the economic ground rules of the media industries. Today, using the Internet, anyone can publish to a potentially global audience of millions for the cost of a personal computer and a few dollars-a-month in online fees. The kind of ownership and regulatory regime required is fundamentally changing too. Stokes seems to be unaware of the significance of the technologies he is discussing. Now is not the time to focus on fixing the mistakes of the past. Now is the time to look to guarding the future.

There is much more to these Boyer Lectures than space allows me to cover, but I would like to make two general points about Stokes's analysis. First, the arguments are developed on the basis of a series of concepts - community, culture, national interest, citizenship and residency - which Stokes interprets in a rather old-fashioned and, I believe, inappropriate way. He approaches the emergent twenty-first century with a nineteenth century discourse, and his analysis suffers accordingly. Second, Stokes treats the information superhighway as an extension of the existing media industries. All his suggestions revolve around his knowledge of television and newspapers - their economics, their operation, ownership and regulation. He takes a rather narrow broadcast and print media centric perspective, and his analysis suffers from this too.

Minister Lee's recent referral of Internet content matters to the Australian Broadcasting Authority suggests that Stokes is not the only one captured by the power of what is perhaps a rather out-of-date and inappropriate media perspective. Analysts, commentators and policy makers would do well to bear in mind that Internet, which we can take to be the crude prototype of the information superhighway, developed out of the desire to link computers, to communicate and to work together. The Internet is not the child of broadcast or narrowcast television. It is not the child of newspapers and publishing. And it is not the child of telecommunications. Internet is the child of computing.

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Global Communication and International Relations by *Howard H. Frederick* (Wadsworth Publishing Company, Belmont, California, 1993), pp. xvi + 287. A\$35.95. ISBN 0-534-19344-7

In his preface Howard Frederick laments that until the arrival of this volume, proclaimed by him as 'the only integrated textbook in the burgeoning field of global communication' (p. v.), those teaching courses in the area had to resort to multiple textbooks or photocopied articles. This volume is heralded as an answer to their prayers - at last a 'comprehensive, research-oriented, academically rigorous treatment of communication that will not go quickly out of date' (p. v.), and which is structured for a one-semester course.

The goal, it should be said, is an entirely admirable one. We need textbooks which aim to provide students with a framework for understanding global communication. Furthermore, Frederick's is an appropriately broad framework for this understanding, with chapters on the history of communication technology, the development of 'information societies', global communication debates (international news flow, global inequity in communication resources, national sovereignty, media imperialism), international law and the role of communication systems in international relations in times of peace and war.

Such a framework augurs well. But unfortunately the text itself fails to live up to the promises of its 'hard-sell' preface and its enticing contents pages. It appears that the photocopyers may have to keep working after all. While the volume is a useful addition to student-oriented literature on global communication, it does not measure up as a stand-alone text. Furthermore, if it were set as a text, it would have to be treated critically, as a source of relevant assertions and arguments to be subjected to analysis and evaluation, rather than as presenting authoritative overviews of the topics at hand. As such it is more likely to be a useful 'stimulus book' for advanced subjects in which students are given the wherewithal to challenge its assertions rather than as a basic undergraduate text. Let me illustrate.

A central theme of the volume is that the media have become major players in the unfolding of international events rather than mere recorders of them. This is an important and persuasive thesis which the eminent scholar George Gerbner refers to in his foreword as 'instant history' - this 'happens when selected images and messages of a crisis are transmitted live, in real time, and evoke a reaction in time to influence the course of the very events they communicate' (p. iii). So far so good. But Frederick surely pushes the thesis too far when he presents the media not just as players but as prime movers in world events. Consider Frederick's description of Egyptian President Sadat's historic 1977 visit to Jerusalem which, in the international relations literature, is usually referred to as 'Sadat's peace initiative'. Frederick would have us believe that it was Walter Cronkite's peace initiative: 'We watched in astonishment in 1977 as the Egyptian leader descended from his aeroplane to greeted by Israeli leaders whom Egypt had fought in four wars. Television had not been the mere purveyor of history. In this case, television had *actually brought about the entire event*' (p. 219, my emphasis). Frederick's argument is that the meeting of the 19th November 1977 was a direct result of Cronkite's interviews with Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Begin in which both agreed to such a visit. The interviews, broadcast in the U.S. on November 14th, were recorded several hours apart. However, Frederick tells us that they were edited so that it appeared that Sadat and Begin were already conducting a dialogue. The television image, it is implied, then went on to bring forth the reality five days later. This version of events may well please the post-modernists, but unfortunately it does not stand up to critical scrutiny. Cronkite's interviews may well have been important but they were hardly responsible for bringing the event about. Sadat's initiative was first announced not in the Cronkite interview as a 'rhetorical flourish' (Frederick's words), but five days earlier in a speech to Egypt's People's Assembly. This was broadcast on Radio Cairo on the night of the 9th November. Begin's formal invitation to Sadat was issued via the American embassies in Cairo and Tel-Aviv on the 15th November¹. Furthermore peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt had been taking place at ministerial level in the months preceding the meeting. The idea that the two leaders were somehow pushed into a meeting merely by remarks they had made in the Cronkite interviews lacks credibility.

Frederick's overstatement of the role of the media in this quite pivotal example simplifies the processes of international relations in a way that does a disservice to students of global communication. It arguably encourages students to uncritically adopt the all too seductive view that the 'media run everything these days'.

This suggests a larger problem with this book. While it gives the reader a great deal of material *about* global communication, it lacks an overall theoretical framework. There is a chapter on 'Contending Theories of Global Communication' but this is more of a cook's tour of diverse theories thought by the author to be generally relevant rather than a considered conceptual framework. There are, amongst others, sections on learning theory, decision-making, game theory, theories of global information flow, geopolitical and environment theories and systems theory as well as mentions of structuralism, semiology, the Sapir Whorf hypothesis and even a diagram of that old stand-by 'The Shannon-Weaver Model of the Communication Process'. But all this adds up to little more than a series of disconnected pointers of limited use to the student. The brief section which attempts to link the theories is entitled 'Toward an integrative theory of global communication' and is more an expression of (arguably misguided) hope than of any coherent framework: 'An integrative theory of global communication would be one that consolidated many of the foregoing partial theories, accommodated their differences, harmonized their similarities, and thus explained and predicted global communication phenomena in a unified way' (p. 208). If only it were so easy!

One positive feature of the book is the attention that it gives to providing an historical perspective on the development of global communication. The hype of the 'new' and the 'revolutionary' in Communication Studies can easily blind students and teachers to the advantages of historical case studies as a means of illuminating contemporary developments. These advantages are very substantial. For example, a study of the effects of cable technology on world news services in the 19th century provides an excellent platform from which to address the effects of satellite technology on international news in our own time. Frederick provides an introductory sketch of the history of communication technology and brief discussions of the role of the media in various historical moments - eg. the battle of New Orleans, the Crimean War, the Franco-Prussian War and, more recently, the Iranian revolution and the attempted Moscow coup of 1991. These are interesting examples but their treatment, it must be said, is too cursory to fully exploit the advantages of an historical perspective. There are also historical inaccuracies. At one point it is asserted that 'telegraphic cables arrived on the scene in 1870' (p. 16) yet later we are told (correctly) that cable services were established in the U.S. in the 1840s (p. 34). The story of Baron Rothschild's London stock-market exploitation of his exclusive knowledge of Wellington's victory over Napoleon at Trafalgar is well-known. It is said he made a fortune, but is there convincing evidence, one wonders, for Frederick's assertion that Rothschild thereby had 'increased his fortune a thousand fold'? (p. 38). On another point, it is inaccurate to say that the German Wolff newsagency was closed by the Nazis in World War II (p. 38). The agency's overseas structure was dismembered following the Treaty of Versailles and it finally closed in 1933.

Finally, let me turn to Frederick's use of UNESCO statistics on such matters as national film and book production and penetration of communication technologies as a means of contrasting information rich and information poor regions of the world. The point is taken that UNESCO statistics provide broadly useful indices in this area. But there are always anomalies when, as in Frederick's case, a single year's statistics are used to make a general point. Furthermore, use of single year statistics ensures that the work will quickly be dated. Why not use aggregated statistics when a general point is being made or illustrate trends by showing selected years? The information is readily available from the standard source - the annual *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook*.

A comparison of Frederick's Table 3.8 'Ten Leading Producers of Feature Films, 1987' with the source tables indicates some of the pitfalls. Firstly, we come to realise that Frederick's table is, literally, a list of ten leading producers - not *the* ten leading producers. How else can we explain the inclusion of Mexico with 82 films and Turkey with 96 films but not China with 140 films or Korea with 89? Furthermore when we compare the 1987 figures with

those of other years we find that 1987 was not at all typical. While in 1987 the USA far out-performed Japan - 578 films and 286 films respectively - in 1989 Japan, on this measure, far out-performed the US - 345 films for the USA and 777 for Japan. In 1991 Mexico only scored 32, way out of any 'top ten'. Indeed it was beaten by Australia with 33. The presentation of aggregated and trend data would be much more valuable than just providing the latest available and possible misleading snapshot. This is yet another reason why I cannot recommend this volume as the major text for a subject in global communication.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel, *The Camp David Accords: A Testimony*, KPI, London, 1986, p.14

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Satellite Television in Western Europe by *Richard Collins*, revised edition, Academic Research Monograph:1, (John Libby & Company Ltd., London, England, 1992) pp.v+125, £ 18.00, ISBN 0-86196-388-1

For anyone who starts to read this book with the expectation that it will present a picture of future prosperity in satellite television markets, then the message of this book will be quite striking. This book concludes that the satellite television industry is in a delicate position with respect to its survival. This industry highly depends on national terrestrial broadcasting policies in order to survive (pp.10-11). This conclusion is supported by a number of European country experiences. For example, in those countries (eg. Germany) where potential TV sponsors are excluded from terrestrial television and control program contents, satellite television programs have become popular (pp.7, 45,79-81). In countries (eg. The Netherlands) where the number of viewers is not enough to sustain a variety of home made television programs, satellite programs are also in favour - viewers would rather watch the re-transmission of terrestrial broadcast programs of neighboring states (pp. 8,56). Satellite television viewers must bear higher costs than terrestrial viewers to watch programs, including the initial cost for antennas and decoders. There is more than one antenna/decoder if several programs from different satellites are viewed and, for most of the time, there is also a monthly subscription fee. But there is the contradiction that the production cost paid for a satellite program is much less than that of a terrestrial program: satellite television viewers have to pay more for less quality (pp.101-102). Some of the initial cost burden for viewers could be avoided if a country's cable system re-transmitted satellite programs, but most of the existing cables do not permit multi-channel access (pp.55-56). Overall, no single satellite television operator is free from deficit financing.

Putting aside his pessimistic conclusion for a moment, let me illustrate the contents of the book. Henry Mayer commenting on the previous edition of this book said that it attempts to organize rapidly changing public information, much of which is scattered in trade journals, and presents it clearly. This book successfully organizes this updated and detailed information. Although the majority of this book is devoted to reviewing the current situation in the European satellite television market, it starts with two chapters of general background on satellites; that is the history (Chapter 1: The History of Satellite Television) and technology (Chapter 2: The Shaping of Satellite Television). The contents of these chapters stand