Cultural Studies and the New South Africa

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The Centre for Cultural and Media Studies (CCMS) at the University of Natal in Durban (UND), South Africa, was founded in 1986 as the Contemporary Cultural Studies Unit. As the original name suggested, our teaching and research were originally based on work which had been going on for some 20 years at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham in England.

This sort of 'paradigm' was developed from Marxist reworking of literary criticism, to develop a broader and less economically dogmatic social and political criticism. This was done by examining different kinds of expression as if they were texts having a similar status to that of intellectual literature. Things like women's radio shows, television soap operas, youth fashion and pop music, for example, were studied in relation to wider trends in education, the economy, and English class values. This provided new ways of dealing with trends in the United Kingdom, and later in America and Australia.

However, research in South Africa showed that the conditions we had to deal with were rooted in a much more violent history of dispossession and exploitation than existing cultural studies approaches were able to explain. In England and America, for example, people of colour are minorities who are not formally excluded from the generally accepted system of civil rights. They have recourse to the law and the courts when they find themselves subjected to discrimination at work, in their studies, or when they are looking for a place to stay.

We had to deal with a situation where a minority had almost complete power, and where this power was exercised in all spheres of life. We had the advantage, however, of being able to draw on a long tradition of resistance. The Centre for Cultural and Media Studies (CCMS) therefore drew its students from among activists in the labour, education and development fields, and their work used the critical approach to expand existing lines of resistance in trade unions, schools and community organizations.

The Centre was largely ignored by state-supported research bodies in the Old South Africa. As is the case with these kinds of resistance activities, critical theoretical operations like CCMS had to operate in a reactionary kind of way. On the one hand, we were, by nature of our 'resistance' stance against apartheid, always drawing on available avant-garde critiques of the state. In many cases, South African scholars and activists developed innovative critiques of their own because of the uniqueness of the South African situation. On the other hand, however, our work tended to have to wait on action by the State before we could actually do anything about it.

From Resistance to Reconstruction

After 1994, though, CCMS suddenly finds its credentials receiving very serious notice from state research bodies under the Government of National Unity. Among issues raised by the state and dealt with by Centre faculty and students since 1994 are telecommunications, arts and culture policy, broadcasting, and many similar things about which we were once labelled as 'dangerous communists.' Recently the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC)

UDC Preliminary Program
Conference section begins page 7

Have you registered yet?

Editor's Note

This will be my final issue as editor, bringing to a close nearly six years at the helm of the *Communiqué*. Lee Artz will be taking charge after this issue, and I am sure he would welcome the opportunity to hear from all of you with your ideas for the newsletter (as well as your offers of articles, art work and other assistance). As I look forward to my "retirement" (I will now be editing only three publications), I would like to thank my faithful associates in this project, especially Sheila Smith-Hobson (our book reviewer) and translators Jean-Pierre Boyer, Max Dueñas-Guzman and Alfonso Moises. Over the years I have received a steady flow of material from several UDC members – notably Colleen Roach, Keyan Tomaselli and Peter Waterman – without which my task as editor would have been very much more difficult.

This issue appears without French and Spanish translations. In the press of getting various publications out to press, attending two conferences and preparing for the coming semester, I neglected to send out the copy for translation. My apologies.

— Jon Bekken
Suffolk University, Boston

Conference Site Needed

Interested in hosting the next UDC conference? We are looking for a volunteer(s) to organize our 1997 or 1998 conference. Proposals received in time for consideration at the Chicago conference will receive preference.

Cultural Workers Oppose Time Warner-Turner Merger

The American Society of Media Photographers (ASMP), the Graphic Artists Guild (GAG) and the National Writers Union (NWU) urged the Federal Trade Commission to reject the merger of Time-Warner and Turner, urging the Commission to consider how the merger would "adversely affect commerce, competition and creativity in the production of intellectual property." Time-Warner and Turner both use freelance artists, photographers and writers to produce much of the content they sell.

"Media giants have flooded the industry with unilaterally imposed contracts demanding work-for-hire (where the creator-in-fact relinquishes authorship to a work) or overly broad transfer of rights. A horizontally and vertically-integrated Time Warner/Turner entity would dominate the marketplace, impose unfair terms on creators and seize every portion of the individuals' copyrights (in other words, their claim to future control and economic exploitation of their work). In our view, this is contrary to the intent of antitrust law. It also violates the spirit, if not the letter, of copyright law and its constitutional underpinnings," the joint letter states. If the FTC does permit the merger, the organizations add, there should be restrictions on the new entity's imposition of "work for hire" contracts and other tactics that restrict the power of independent creators of copyrightable material.

The National Entertainment State

The June 3 issue of *The Nation* features Mark Crispin Miller's "Free the Media" and André Schiffrin's "The Corporatization of Publishing," accompanied by a program for media democracy (which calls for action on ownership, access, affordability and content), comments by several media critics, and a 31-inch wall chart detailing the holdings and inter-locking ownerships of General Electric, Time Warner, Disney/Cap Cities, and Westinghouse.

Print Media in the Philippines

The June 15 issue of *IBON Facts & Figures* (PO Box SM-447, Manila) is devoted to a report by Amerina Padilla, "Seeing Print in Black & White" (pp. 1-7). The report offers statistics on newspaper and magazine publication, circulation figures, penetration rates, and information on the holdings and other interlocking interests of the leading media owners. Padilla suggests that as the output and profitability of the print media grows, there is less and less news that provides analysis of issues – or even reliable and balanced coverage.

Community Memory — Discussion List on the History of Cyberspace

Computer Professionals For Social Responsibility (CPSR) announces the creation of "Community Memory – Discussion List on the History of Cyberspace," a moderated discussion list whose purpose is to explore the origins, history and development of computer networks, computer hardware, software, and computer science, and the environment collectively known as "cyberspace." This list is dedicated to the belief that awareness of history is an essential ingredient which can help us make reasoned decisions in the present and future. By exploring the history of cyberspace, topical issues we face today – such as privacy concerns, equality of access to computing, hacking, computer literacy, intellectual property rights, funding long-term R&D – are placed in a broader, historical context.

This list is named Community Memory for two reasons. It wishes to record the memories of how this world of interconnected computers and people came to be. The name also makes reference to the Community Memory Project in San Francisco, created in the early 1970s, which may be the world's first grass-roots electronic bulletin board.

Given the breadth of this subject, Community Memory is moderated to ensure topicality and focus. To subscribe please send a message to: listserv@cpsr.org The body of the message should read: subscribe cpsr-history <your first name> <your last name>

Connections

UDCer Wins Book Award

UDC member Ron Sakolsky and Fred Wei-han Ho have won the Before Columbus Foundation American Book Award for their anthology, *Sounding Off! Music as Subversion/Resistance/Revolution*. The award celebrates books which help "redefine our notion of mainstream American literature to reflect this country's multicultural, multiethnic and multiracial diversity."

An almost-American in Cuba

The Nashwaak Review (Winter 1996, pp. 94-103) has published Gerald Noonan's "Almost an American in Cuba," a reflection on his participation in the UDC's 1994 convention in Cuba.. Noonan's impressionistic account explores the political tensions and possibilities raised by the Conference and the difficulties (in general, and particularly for cultural workers) of the ongoing "special period."

UDC Seeks Tenure Referees

For our academic members, UDC seeks tenured full professors willing to serve as referees for tenure and promotion decisions. We are looking for faculty familiar with academic literature relevant to UDC concerns. If you are willing to be listed as a possible referee, contact the editor.

"Community Press in Today's World: Alternative Grass Roots Proposals"

Oct. 21-25, 1996, Havana, Cuba, Jose Marti International Institute of Journalism, Callé G #503 e/ 21 y 23 Plaza La Habana, Cuba 10400, Tel 537/ 32 29 65, Fax 537/33 30 79 email: <yankro@instjm.sld.cu>

The Jose Marti International Institute of Journalism has reopened its doors after an obligatory recess brought on by the current economic difficulties in Cuba. Activists and alternative/community media workers are invited to participate in this conference, which will discuss strategy, show videos, and discuss topics including communication democracy, fighting neoliberal ism, and the current situation and its perspectives for community radio, television and newspapers. Other activities will include a neighborhood fiesta and visits to radio and television stations and to local newspapers.

Registration (including full room and board for 6 nights and 7 days and ground transportation, but not airfare or airport taxes) is US$274. Travel arrangements through Canada: Magna Tours (Toronto) 416/665-7330 U.S. passports are not stamped by Cuban Customs upon passenger's request.

Labor Party on Telecommunications

The founding convention of the Labor Party in Cleveland on June 6-9, adopted the following Resolution on Telecommunications and the Media:

WHEREAS the control & ownership of television, radio, Internet, magazines, newspapers, and all new telecommunication technologies are critical issues for defending democratic and labor rights, therefore BE IT RESOLVED that the Labor Party stands:

1) against the privatization of the public broadcasting system;

2) against the corporate media monopoly that restricts access to information essential to labor and to all the people of the U.S.A.;

3) for the defense of cable community access as an inexpensive & uncensored means of non-corporate communication and culture;

4) for the defense of open & uncensored communication on the Internet, and for the transformation of the Internet into a public utility accessible to all;

5) for the establishment of national labor cable television & radio channels broadcast by satellite...

Computer Resources in Communication Economics

A new web site includes course syllabi, bibliographies, texts of relevant articles and monographs, and a quarterly report on newspaper stocks. www5.fullerton.edu/titan/nsr/homepage.html

Video Resources

The Media Education Foundation (26 Center St., Northampton MA 01060) offers several videos including critiques of the sexual politics of MTV and advertising; George Gerbner on the culture of violence; information superhighway robbery; tobacco advertising; sexual harassment; race, politics and the media; etc. A detailed catalog is available.

Calls for Papers

New Media, Old Values: Confronting Change – March 13-15, Boulder, Colorado. Among the suggested topics are intellectual property rights on the internet; the convergence of text, animation, music and video; concentration of media ownership; and the meaning of authorship in a world of hyperlinked data. Proposals (4 copies postmarked no later than Jan. 16) should be sent to: Paul Voakes, School of Journalism, Indiana University, Bloomington IN 47405.

Democratization and the Media in Africa – *African Rural and Urban Studies* is accepting papers through Dec. 1 on this topic. The journal is particularly interested in recent work on the role of the media in Africa's emergent pluralist democracies. Manuscripts (max. 25 pages, including notes) and queries should be addressed to the journal at: African Studies Center, 100 International Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI 48824 africa@msu.edu

The Impact of the Internet on the Form, Practice and Social Role of Journalism – is the topic of a special issue of the *Electronic Journal of Communication/La Revue Electronique de Communicacion*. For information contact Elliot King, Media Studies Program, Loyola College, 4501 N Charles St., Baltimore MD 21210. King@Loyola.edu

Communication from Individualistic and Collectivistic Perspectives – Four copies of extended abstracts of papers or panel proposals for this March 21-22 conference at California State University at Fullerton should be submitted by Nov. 15 to Bill Gudykunst, Dept. of Speech Communication (EX 199), CSU Fullerton, Fullerton CA 92634. Theoretical, research and applied papers on interpersonal, mediated, linguistic, organizational or rhetorical aspects of communication are welcomed.

AEJMC Southeast Colloquium – March 14-15, Knoxville, Tennessee. Four copies (with 250-word abstract) must be received by Dec. 5. History Division (Herbert Howard, #426), Law Division (Dorothy Bowles #330), Newspaper Division (Michael Singletary #426), Open Division (Mark Miller #330), Communications Bldg., University of Tennessee, Knoxville TN 37996.

International Communication Association – "Communication in the Global Community" is the theme of ICA's May 22-26 meeting in Montréal, Quebec. The deadline for submissions is Nov. 1. A brochure with complete guidelines is available from: Robert Cox, ICA, POB 9589, Austin TX 78766 icahdq@uts.cc.utexas.edu or at http:\\www.io.com/~icahdq/ica/ica.html>

National Boycott Campaign Targets Borders Books

Borders Inc., the U.S.'s second-largest book retailer (operating more than 1,000 stores under the Borders, Brentano's and Waldenbooks names, and part-owner of the Canadian Chapters bookstores), is target of national protests following a campaign of intimidation and harrassment of union activists. Although financial analysts point to Borders' well-trained, customer-oriented staff as the chain's chief asset, Borders workers earn as little as $5.50 an hour and have no say in the conditions of their work.

Tired of earning less than $13,000 a year while top executives are paid $790,000 each (plus millions in stock options), Borders workers in Philadelphia and other cities approached the Industrial Workers of the World to unionize. Borders responded by hiring a notorious union-busting law firm, interrogating workers about their union sympathies, and disciplining and firing union supporters.

Although Borders subsequently apologized to and reinstated a worker at its Chestnut Hill store, IWW organizing committee member Miriam Fried was fired June 15, ostensibly for questioning the Philadelphia store's check-approval policy. IWW branches and other organizations are picketing Borders outlets across the country demanding her reinstatement and an end to Borders' illegal union-busting measures. (You can reach Borders at 1-800-644-7733, President Richard Flanagan, 311 Maynard St., Ann Arbor MI 48104, email: pblacksh@borders.com) Before her firing, Philadelphia Borders managers gave Fried glowing evaluations, the lead clerk says she was "one of the [store's] very finest booksellers."

The Borders boycott has been endorsed by Pride At Work (a national gay labor caucus), the Philadelphia chapter of the National Writers Union and other labor and cultural organizations. An information packet is available from the *Industrial Worker*, 101 Western Ave. #15, Cambridge MA 02139.

Cultural Studies in the New South Africa...

paper on Cultural Reconstruction and Development (CURED) landed on our desks. The HSRC was the world's largest para-statal research body, and very closely aligned to the apartheid government. Since 1990, like all state institutions, it too has undergone a radical process of restructuring. Our experience with this new direction indicated in CURED

is emblematic not only of the shift in the way parastatals operate. It is also characteristic of the ways in which CCMS has had to shift its focus.
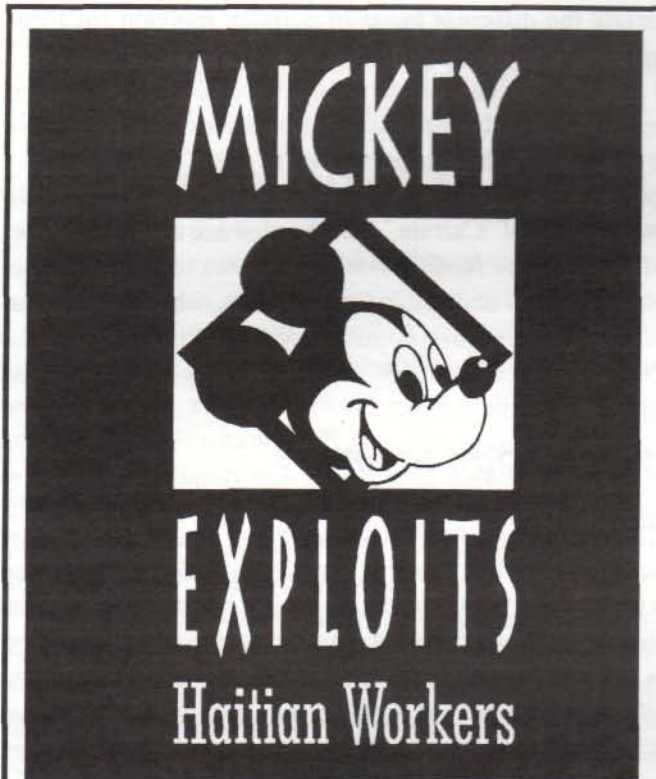
Since the inauguration of the new government, we have found ourselves having to make positive contributions to the business of government, where previously our focus was on resistance against the State. This rather novel situation has meant that we have had to reassess our stance towards the state. In the remainder of this article, I will talk about this in relation to the HSRC's CURED project.

Most cultural debate in South Africa has followed one of two lines. On one side, 'culture' has been the target of Left intellectuals because of its anthropological meanings. In other words, we were very aware of the way the state used Culture as a means to bolster arguments for racial separation. Indeed, the anthropologist Emile Boonzaaier (South African Keywords, David Philip Publishers, 1988) noted that the apartheid state had actually 'created greater scope for ideological manoeuvre' by replacing the idea of 'race' with that of 'culture.' The other line of the debate followed the 'High-Low-Popular' Culture polemic, where culture is associated with some definition of Taste.

CCMS usually approached these discussions from the point of view of the political economy of symbolic production (see Tomaselli K (ed): Rethinking Culture, Anthropos, 1986). In less intellectual terms, this means that we looked at the anthropological approach in terms of how big business and other large economic stake holders benefitted from policies based on this kind of theory. We dealt with the latter approach first by seeing just who owned or subsidised what in the field of media and artistic activities (see the Lake View Press (Chicago) book series edited by Keyan Tomaselli, Studies on the Southern African Media). Secondly, we would see how to encourage those excluded by existing ownership or subsidy systems to go about producing 'culture' for themselves. Generally, the reputation of CCMS is most commonly associated with our work in media and performance based on critical interventions using this second line of thought.

Culture in the New South Africa: The same old story?

To the extent that the CURED proposals coincide with our previous work, they exhibit an ironic shift in the way state-employed intellectuals are thinking. Where previously such approaches would have followed the anthropological paradigm, the new proposals are in line with the second line of critical cultural thought. However, while this approach was a pretty useful one from the point of view of

anti-apartheid activism in the fields of media and popular performance, CCMS very quickly found that it was not so easy to draw upon for positive action about policy. If we are to create policies which dictate Taste, then no matter how close to The People these may be at first they become impositions for another generation. We simply could not square this with the idea of a democratic society.

We decided to narrow down the overall approach so that certain basic requirements could be met. The first requirement was the issue of economy. What kind of policy, we asked, would get the most bang for the buck? Secondly, we had to look at the effectiveness of cultural policy in the democratic environment. What, we asked, would be the approach which would uplift the least-privileged people here and now over the longest possible term? Finally, we had to ask ourselves Who are these people in cultural terms?

Besides being plain undemocratic, the Taste approach was just too clumsy: what kind of Art would do the trick? Would performance art or fine art or visual production be the way to go? None of these questions actually confront the scale and scope of the conditions of cultural deprivation which exist in South Africa. Most important from our point of view was the question of benefit: who would get the most from basing cultural policy on this kind of theory? In the present environment of media globalization, we concluded that the entertainment industry would be the only long-term beneficiary.

Reversing the roles

What did make sense, however, was a different approach to the anthropological conception of culture. In the end, the CCMS policy framing paper developed the idea of Culture around exactly the meaning of the Latin word from which 'culture' originated: to nurture, tend, look after, and live in a place. We reread the work of cultural studies scholars. It was clear that this aspect of culture had received attention largely in terms of English experience: issues of class pervaded the material, and gender questions focused mainly on media and economic representation of women. But in anthropological terms, the people under consideration remained citizens of settled industrial societies.

For South Africa, we took as our starting point one of the most significant constituencies: women who singly and collectively head households in urban and peri-urban areas. Here we had concrete agents of nurture and looking-after. They presented a good demographic 'hook' upon which we could confront the questions of 'how much?' and 'how many?' We then asked: what is the object of the activities of nurture, tending, and so on? From radical philosophy (Agnes Heller: Beyond Justice, Basil Blackwell, 1987) we took the answer: taking people born into the world and raising their endowments into talents.

This unlocked the whole debate. We could look at cultural needs, a primary focus of CURED, in concrete terms. Women raising their children have specific needs, and they can articulate them. The talents which can be seen as undesirable can be readily identified against the simple radical criterion: does a talent require people to be held in subordination? This way of approaching policy enabled us to set up guidelines not only for the target communities of cultural reconstruction. We were also able to use it to separate the different kinds of activity relevant for local, regional and national policy formation.

Under this definition, issues to be addressed include: library services, transport for schoolchildren, facilities for pre-school activity, primary health care, school feeding schemes, and so on. These appear far removed from traditional notions of 'Culture.' Yet the absence of such services and facilities are fundamental hindrances to the activity of raising people's endowments into talents suited to an industrial society. We have simply recognised the fact that the most deprived community in these terms needs the first major development input.

Getting down to basics

In conclusion, our whole way of seeing culture and cultural studies has had to adapt to a very basic new situation. To a large extent, there was little time to spend reviewing the many works in which culture and cultural policy have been discussed, chewed over and disputed. Yet the work we had time to study, and this was none the less quite a large body of writing, seemed to focus almost exclusively on culture as the expressive activity of mature people in settled and well-developed nations. We had to accept that many people in South Africa had been living in the midst of a low-key but very vicious civil war. Many still do, in the KwaZulu-Natal province. For such people, the promises of 'culture' in the form of art, dance, and poetry must simply seem to be luxuries.

Most importantly, from the point of view of democracy, the things we can look at from this way of using cultural theory are precisely matters which are the business of local government. Lines of communication extend as far as one's local municipal offices. In terms of the present interim constitutional arrangements (and of the permanent ones presently being negotiated), cultural factors such as those we identified are the responsibility of communities' elected local representatives, and therefore the problem of accountability is not made worse by distance. Finally, we believe that by adding the cultural dimension to the need for social service equity restores an element of concreteness. It starts with a constituency which is doing actual nurturing and looking after, who are the primary agents of culture in any culture.

What's Left? Critical Communications in the Belly of the Corporate Beast

Union for Democratic Communications

October 10 - 13 · Loyola University · Chicago, Illinois

Chicago is a crossroads of the literal and metaphorical contradictions we are evoking in this year's conference theme. It's a Midwestern hotbed of transnational capital, a rich patchwork of new immigrants and traditional ethnic neighborhoods, a long political history of Haymarket riots, Democratic conventions ('68 and '96), anarchists, etc. Chicago is also culturally rich and diverse in music (blues, folk), political theater and alternative publications. Commercial media production and independent media activists flourish. Join us in preserving this dis/order.

The current political climate may look bleak, but it challenges us to seek our strategies and approaches to critical, democratic communications. This year's conference theme looks at the strengths and limits of our work in effecting social change. Bring your ideas and your vision as we explore new perspectives and reflect on the lessons of history.

Plenary sessions will address questions such as the interaction of scholarship and activism as we respond to the increasing monopolization of media channels and offer an opportunity to hear from local alternative media workers. Papers, panels, workshops and video presentations will address a wide range of topics relating to the conference theme.

The conference will meet in the Crown Center, which is on Lake Michigan at Loyola University's Lakeshore Campus. It is readily accessible by public transportation from Evanston and Chicago. The conference center has computer facilities with internet capabilities.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Would $100 travel money make it possible for you to attend the conference? This year the steering committee has set aside a few scholarships for folks who need help getting to Chicago. Available first-come, first-served. Contact Kate Kane to apply.
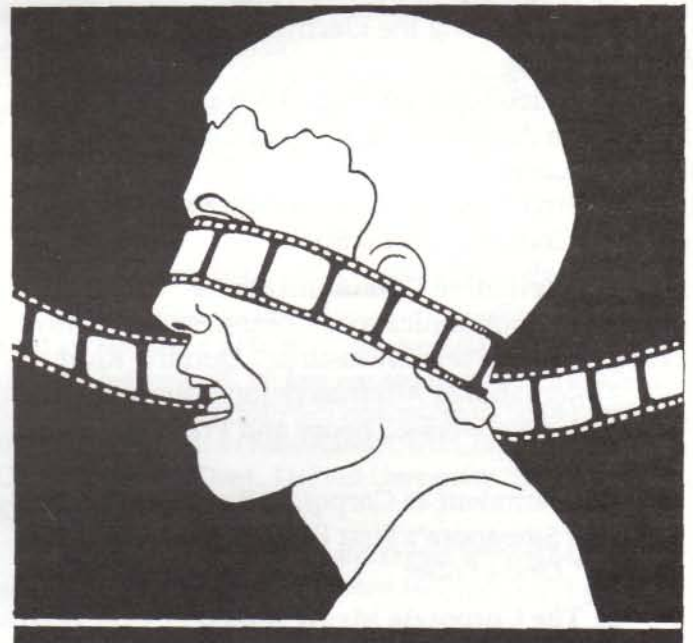
GCN/cpf

Thursday, October 10

12-5 *Registration*

2-5 *Tour of Radical Sites*

5-7 *Reception and Plenary*
   "Taking on the Beast: Movements for Cultural and Media Change and the Role of UDC"
   Jim Wittebols, Clay Steinman, Robert McChesney

Friday, October 11

9:30-11:15 *Plenary:* **New Directions in Media & Social Change Studies**
   "Beyond Incorporation/Marginalization: A Dialogic Model for Media and Social Movements,"

UDC Conference Preliminary Program Schedule

Bernadette Barker-Plummer

"Shedding Useless Conceptualizations of Alternative Media," Clemencia Rodriguez

"Placing diversity at the center of communication for social change," Robert Huesca

"Internationalizing Media Communication Theory," John Downing

"What Are Journalists For? Teaching New Roles for Journalists," Robert Jensen

11:45-1:15 *Lunch and discussion with special guest Cuban filmmaker*

1:30-3 *Concurrent Panels*

A. Information Technologies
"Copyrighting the Electronic Commons," Ronald Bettig

"Multiculturalism, High Tech and Curriculum Reform in Academia: A Study of Contradictions," Eveline Lang

"Wired for Capitalism: Selling Cyberspace, Buying Consent," David Sholle

B. Alternative Communications
"The Communications Commons: Alternative Video and the New Enclosures," Dorothy Kidd

"International Alternative Journalism on Global Computer Networks: Theory and Practice," Brian Murphy

"Government as Corporate Beast: The Case Study of Singapore's First Foray into Grassroots Media," Linda Fuller

C. The Corporate Media Threat
"Ideology at Work: Exploring (and Countering) the Symbolic Universe of the Religious Right," Laura Saponara

"Disney and Democracy," Lee Artz

"The Threat of Corporate Media Authoritarianism – Real, Imagined or Modernization?" Mercedes Lynn de Uriarte

3:15-4:45 *Concurrent Workshops*

A. "What Can You See Through Your Ears? An Invitation to Make Scenes," Steve Schraeder and Peggy Riehl

B. "Assembled Agency in a Transnational Context: Linking With the New Left in Latin America," Stephen Crofts Wiley

C. "Counting our Victories: Popular Education and Organizing," Dorothy Kidd

5-7 *Snacks and discussion* with Zeinabu Davis, who will screen her work-in-progress

Saturday, October 11

10-11:30 *Concurrent Panels*

A. Critical Issues in International Communication
"Press Coverage of the War in Bosnia," Jeff Harter

"Communication Issues in the Commonwealth Caribbean: News Media and Cultural Identity," Ashley J. Bennington

"The Global Media Market and the Assault on Democracy," Robert McChesney

B. Radio Communities
"Low-Tech Convergence: technology, organization, and media access in Canadian community radio," Charles Fairchild

"Fire in the heart of the heartland: The practice of progressive talk radio in Indiana," Jonathan David Tankel

"Frequencies of Resistance: The Microwatt Radio Movement Goes Global," Ron Sakolsky
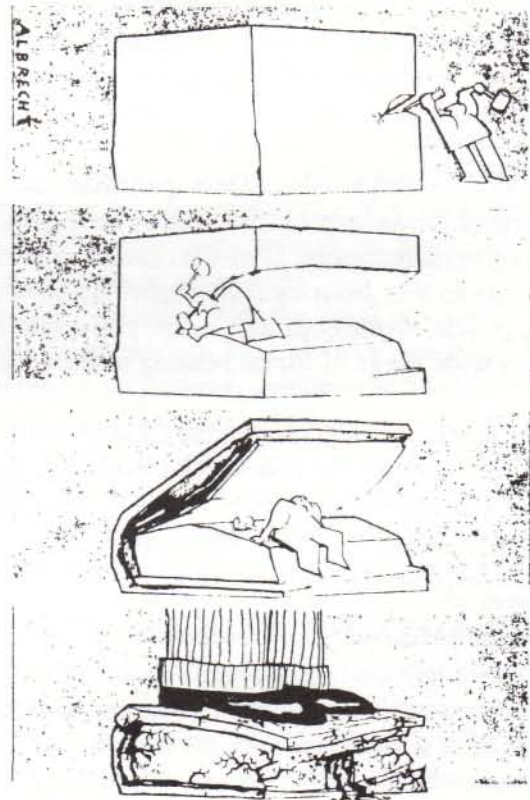
Drawings by Albrecht

C. **The Pedagogy of Production** Joyce Evans, Brett Rhyne, DeeDee Halleck

11:45-1:15 *Lunch with Local Chicago Media Activists*

1:30-3 *Concurrent Panels*

A. **Chicago Media History**

"People's Newspapers and People's Culture in Chicago, 1880-1930," Jon Bekken

"Conflicting Visions of Community Television: Class and Race in Chicago Broadcasting, 1964-1968," Nathan Godfried

"The Chicago School of Television"

B. **Critical Issues in Questions of Diversity**

"Mass-Mediating Movements in a Corporatized World: Communicative Access and the Fourth U.N. World Conference on Women," Lisa McLaughlin

"The Devil Finds Work: Notes on Youth, Identity, Popular Media and Education," Cameron McCarthy

"The New Storytellers: Recruitment and Retention of Native American Students into Journalism and Mass Communication," Lucy Ganje

C. Discussion: **"How Cultural Studies Became the Chief Obstacle to World Wide Proletarian Revolution and Other Amusing Myths,"** Chuck Kleinhans

3:30-5 *Concurrent Panels*

A. **Resistance from here and there: Cultural politics and U.S. Hegemony in Puerto Rico**

Jocelyn A. Geliga Vargas, Aixa L. Rodriguez Rodriguez, Maximiliano Dueñas Guzman

B. **Visual Texts and their Conditions of Productions**

"Violent Awakening: The Politics of Representation in Gay and Lesbian Film Festivals from Cruising to Frisk," Gabriel Gomez

"Integrating Serial Drama: The Real Mission Impossible," David Payson

"Cooptation as a Function of Niche Marketing: The Lifetime Study," Jackie Byars and Eileen Meehan

C. **Regimes of Knowledge**

"Canadian Communications Policy and Community Access Cablevision," Shawn Yerxa

"'Don't You Ever Just Watch?' American Cinema Verite and Don't Look Back," Jeanne Hall

Interview with Noam Chomsky, Rita M. Csapo-Sweet

5-10 *Reception & Meeting & Party*

Dallas Smythe Award
Dinner and business meeting
Dance!

Sunday, October 13

10-11:30 *Plenary session:* **What's Left? Theorizing Methodology from a Global Multiculturalist Perspective**

"Methodology in International Feminist Research," Gretchen Soderlund

"An Everyday Border Methodology," Maria Victoria Ruiz

"Cloth, Culture and Power: A Methodological Proposal," Boatema Boateng

"Transnational Feminist Politics: Questions of History and Place," Carrie A. Rentschler

"Theorizing Method in the Nineties," Angharad N. Valdivia

"Bearing Witness to Voice: The Politics of Feminist Methodology and Academia Methodolatry," Sara Connel

11:45-12:30 *Wrap-up Session*

Video screenings will take place throughout.

Registration fee includes coffee, snacks and meals. $100 for members, $150 non-members ($40/$60 low-income) before Sept. 15; late registration: $120 members, $175 non-members ($50/$75 low-income). Send registrations *with payment* to Kate Kane, UDC Conference, Communication Dept., DePaul University, 2320 N. Kenmore, Chicago IL 60614.

Airline Info: Call Oswald Travel 800/842-0059 to get 5 percent off your best United fare (you can't get it directly from the airline).

Hotel Info: Call hotels directly. All hotels are in downtown Chicago and near public transport that will easily take you to the Loyola Campus.

We recommend: Bismarck Hotel $109 plus tax single or double (LaSalle and Randolph Streets, rate guaranteed until Sept. 15, this is the most reasonable rate we could find). Reservations: 800/643-1500.

Clarion Executive Plaza $149 single/$169 twin + tax. 71 E. Wacker. Reservations: 800/621-4005 before Sept. 10

Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 E. Wacker Drive. $189 single or twin before Sept. 16.

Whitehall Hotel, 105 E. Delaware Place. $170 single or twin, before Sept. 19

Alternative accommodations: Inquire to Kate Kane, 312/325-7000 ext. 2965, email kkane@condor.depaul.edu.
On campus: some dormitory space may be available.
Near campus: a youth hostel
Staying with local folks is also possible.

Talk Radio

Hot Air: All Talk, All the Time by Howard Kurtz. New York: Times Books, 1996.

Reviewed by Christopher Lee
University of Arkansas at Fayetteville

A century ago Friedrich Nietzsche held forth as the conscience of philosophers; now Howard Kurtz tries to play the same role to journalists. Nietzsche scorned philosophers' pretenses to objectivity in "Beyond Good and Evil," writing that when they make discoveries what happens at bottom is that a prejudice, a notion, an inspiration, generally, a desire of the heart sifted and made abstract is defended by them with reasons sought after the event.

Kurtz levels the same charge against the supposedly objective journalists who make appearance after appearance on news and talk programs. According to Kurtz, the prevalence of talk shows has corroded public debate about issues important to the United States, bringing it down to a level where everyone is an expert and an unhealthy obsession with personal lives and personalities has usurped concern with public policy. Kurtz observes that journalism is slowly breaking down into infotainment because of network obsession with ratings and advertising money; a journalism that caters to expectations of any kind rewards factors other than impartiality. It eventually rewards volubility over informativeness, showmanship over accuracy and a misleading reductionism over well-worked out arguments.

Whether talk shows are truly journalism – is journalism even expected to formulate arguments or to make opinion? – is beside the point since the talk-show mentality now influences even daily news reports. In spite of his perceptive comments on the state of journalism and his insistence on the necessity of logical argument to public debate, Kurtz seldom argues his own points at any length, which is a bit of a disappointment.

I picked up the book hoping to find a well-reasoned and coherent set of ideas about talk shows as they relate to American culture generally, but apart from a few concerned remarks about our obsession with personalities instead of issues, Kurtz confines himself to the world of journalism (of which he is a sort of policeman, writing about the media for *The Washington Post*) and comments about talk shows. This is probably appropriate – perhaps Kurtz feels that if he were to argue about culture, he would be committing one of the faults of the talk show hosts he criticizes by exceeding his authority and pretending to be a social scientist.

He does, however, make a rudimentary attempt to explain exactly how talk shows threaten the existence of a sophisticated and well-informed national dialogue about important issues. Over and over again he comes back to the same three points. First, talk shows tend to make everything sound the same; no matter how diverse the topics of conversation, hosts and guests who have to talk, talk day after day, end up fitting those topics into the same conversation-friendly templates. Second, audiences don't generally want to hear complex argument, so only the most glamorous-sounding phrases make the cut, and talk show producers relentlessly prod their conversationalists into packaging issues into sound bites. Third, Kurtz raises the ethical issue of how reporters who are expected to criticize the government often make themselves cozy with officials in that very same government.

Unfortunately, Kurtz' determination to be objective and journalistic has produced a repetitive, monotonous read. Each chapter recounts the history and quirks of a particular related group of talk shows and hosts. Kurtz piles up anecdote upon anecdote, quote upon quote; the book is no doubt accurate, but after reading the history of John McLaughlin, then the history of Phil Donahue, then the history of Larry King, and so on, all very similar, one feels as though one has read a catalog, not a book of substance – much data but little variation, little style, little (although it begs the question to say it) argument.

The ninth chapter, "Talking for Dollars," breaks the tedium and proves to be the most interesting part of the book. Here Kurtz reviews the tendency of journalistic talk-show hosts and guests to make speeches for large amounts of money at university, organizational, and corporate events. He raises some real ethical problems for journalists. Most defend their speech-making by protesting that they are private citizens and can make money however they want. Kurtz rightly points out that they do serve public interests:

> The essence of journalism, even for the fiercest opinion-mongers, is professional detachment. The public has a right to expect that those who pontificate for a living are not in financial cahoots with the industries and lobbies they analyze on the air. They have been seduced by the affluence and adulation that comes with television success.

Chapters such as this make the rest of the book tolerable, for one gets the feeling that despite the relentless accumulation of trivial anecdote and boring history, Kurtz does have a message; he is crusading for his profession, for the objectivity that is the aim of journalism. All the detail does serve one salutary function: by exposing talk-show hosts as the hacks they are, Kurtz provokes the reader into wondering why they are paid so much money to analyze subjects about which they usually know little more than the average well-informed person, and often less. Everyone being his or her own expert in matters of policy, why should we need these people on the other ends of cameras telling us what to think?

The Actual and Most Drastic Consequences of Media: Communication & Culture in War and Peace

Communication and culture in war and peace.
Edited by Colleen Roach. SAGE Publications, 1993.

Reviewed by Charles Fairchild, Ph.D. Candidate
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Academic debates can often seem inconsequential, even silly, when compared with the dramatic escalation of the intensity of social conflicts in our society and other societies around the world. The ongoing debate between the so-called 'active audience' and 'political economic' perspectives in media studies is a good example. This debate has consumed so much space and has been witness to so many fatuous claims about the untrammeled social power of 'interpretive communities' or 'individuated acts of reception' that one may be tempted to ignore the din altogether. The evidence and research in this book indicates, and often argues with tremendous urgency, that those concerned with the political economy of the mass media not abandon their concerns about the power of media to 'shape the perceptual environment' (to use a PR phrase) in favor of less combative and depoliticized academic atmosphere; that it does so by tackling truly huge issues, successfully in my view, is testament to the efforts of its authors and editor.

The book is an interdisciplinary collection of nine essays that resembles more of a collaboration between related disciplines than it does a broad collection of perspectives on a single issue. It includes contributions from five communication scholars, a political scientist, and three of the leading figures in the discipline of peace studies. Most interestingly, it includes three essays from three different disciplines which provide a valuable convergence of related but distinct feminist perspectives on the nature of what the authors call 'the war system' and the possibilities for creating a contrasting 'peace culture.' I'll give a brief summary of the subject areas of the essays and address a few specific concerns I have with a few essays.

The book begins with a startling preface by Johan Galtung, a central figure in Peace Studies in Western Europe and the United States. He begins by writing about a fax he received from the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Secretariat in Prague which was collecting signatures for an appeal to the European Community, the UN, and the United States, urging them to act with regard to the war in Yugoslavia. He cites a section of the plea:

> "Will the West take the historic responsibility for the devastation in the Balkans? ... The international media, too have failed to recognize the many democratic anti-war movements

in different regions of former Yugoslavia ... receiving almost no coverage in the Western media at all." (p. xi)

As Galtung later notes, our media have a fascination with violence and power, but have only scant interest with those working for peace and democracy. He cites two classic recent examples of this ignorance, the fall of authoritarian communism in Eastern Europe and the Gulf War. In the first case he notes that representatives of the conventional wisdom consistently argued that a unpredictable and spontaneous citizen uprising combined with the internal fatigue of a bankrupt system caused the collapse of political structures which, until then, had appeared quite stable. In the second case he notes how all possibilities and voices for peace were simply ignored in favor of fascination with the power of a 'surgical' war. Clearly, the consequences of media coverage in the latter case were powerful in suppressing contrary messages with little competition from any subversive interpretations' from the general populace. In the case of the former, he argues that the Western media simply ignored those who had worked for peace for decades all across Europe. Thus it appeared that years of cold war hostility were brushed aside in an instant with a complete lack of historical contextualization or even simple factual explanation. Instead breathless network commentators marveled as huge (and mostly peaceful) crowds, the size of which are rarely seen in the West, gathered to finally refuse existing arrangements. A radically peaceful alternative was transformed into a perversely American triumph.

Colleen Roach's introductory chapters set out the broad parameters for the research that follows. Roach begins by integrating the four key concepts of this book: war, peace, communication and culture, which she notes have remained, for the most part, separate concerns in the scholarly literature. The basis for this integration is a critical examination of "the hallowed Western doctrines of objectivity and rationality, which have done so much to exclude normative and value considerations from the social sciences" and which have greatly contributed to war system, both in terms of facilitating violence through technical research and stunting public perceptions through adherence to standard and acceptable journalism practices. (p. 1-2) Roach connects the four concepts by creating an active definition of 'peace' and 'culture' where peace is defined not merely as the absence of war, but as the maintenance of conditions which foster social justice and equality. These conditions are reflected more generally in systems of social

communication and as broadly as one can imagine in the interactions between those living in a given society. Roach gives weight to her argument by citing recent works in anthropology and psychology which indicate that war is not some mystical and inevitable biological imperative, but primarily a cultural phenomenon, one that is just as subject reproduction and persistence as it is subject to reconstruction and positive change. (p. 7-8)

Roach then introduces the central and specific kinds of questions which are addressed throughout the volume. What kind of a culture can produce, for example, a Gulf War, what mythologies and ideologies support such an enterprise, and how are these transmitted or disseminated throughout a society? Clearly the mass media are central to such a culture. She also cites controversies in other areas, such as continuing battles between conservative advocates of 'traditional values' and multiculturalists over educational curricula as an important example of the kinds terrain on which such ideological conflicts are fought. The kinds of bitter stalemates such contests can often produce make any form of detente or compromise difficult to imagine. As an antidote, she cites the recommendations of the Alliance for Cultural Democracy as a possible way to move beyond the current destructive ideological impasse to a broader more participatory culture where those most affected by the centralized command and control structures can have some significant measure of power and influence in decision-making processes. (p. 17-8) It is a familiar and important call for democratization in all areas of society and is an effective foil to the right's call for a return to 'traditional values' confronting the right with its own anti-democratic ideology.

Roach then moves from the larger 'cultural' questions to a specific discussion of how three elements of the North American mass media contribute to the ideological and cultural basis of the 'war system': 1) the centrality of the military-industrial-communication complex, 2) several dominant structural-operational aspects of the mass media, and 3) news values, sources, and censorship. (p. 17) She argues first that the contribution of the mass media to the maintenance of a war system comes from the intimate involvement of their owners in the militarization of American society, through relatively simple and straightforward corporate connections. Second she argues that the uniquely American system of private media ownership and financing insulate the mass media from popular or democratic political pressures; increased concentration of ownership has only padded this insulation. Roach successfully demonstrates that these formal characteristics of media increase the social and political power of their directors and administrators beyond that of any other institution or individual,

public or private, in our society. The evidence on this issue is so pronounced and so obvious as to make further comment here unnecessary.

Roach concludes her critique of the mass media by citing several empirical studies which show that the journalistic mantra of 'objectivity' is undermined by their insistence for a "conflict criterion of newsworthiness" which is, to put it crudely, if it bleeds it leads. (p. 22) This shifts the practice of journalism not only in the direction of covering dramatic and violent events, but also towards relying on 'official' sources to dispassionately explain these events. This is contrasted with the attitudes of many journalists towards those working for specific and identifiable causes, like peace, who are seen as "having an axe to grind"; by contrast public officials are viewed in their role as public servant, inherently pursuing what is best for all. (p. 22-3) Again, the evidence on these issues is so strong as to require little comment here. She concludes her essay with some practical suggestions towards creating a peace culture, lessons drawn from the struggles for media equity at UNESCO and in the alternative media culture in the U.S.

Since Roach's introductory essay covers so much ground and introduces so many of the central concerns of the other authors, for the sake of space I've broken down the essays into three groups and will try to deal with them in a general thematic way, critiquing specific aspects of the essays in only a few cases. The first group deals with the conflict between the political economic and active audience perspectives cited earlier. It includes essays by Vincent Mosco, Peter Bruck (with Colleen Roach), and Herbert Schiller. The second consists of three essays which draw on explicitly feminist sources to describe the war system and propose a peace culture. It includes research by Sheila Collins, Riane Eisler and Colleen Roach. The last two essays both call for new power relationships between and within countries. Majid Tehranian calls for a 'communitarian' perspective on global ethnic conflicts which embraces existing social and political trends, but in non-violent and anti-hegemonic ways. Howard Frederick reviews current international communication law with a eye towards its liberating potential.

The essays by Vincent Mosco and Herbert Schiller follow the contours of their recent work, especially Mosco's articles on deregulation and related issues in the *Journal of Communication* and in the edited collection *Cyborg Worlds*, and Schiller's *Culture Inc: The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression*. Therefore, I will only present a cursory outline of each.

Mosco's essay, "Communication and Information Technology in War and Peace," critiques the current continuing trends towards deregulation and privatization in

media systems around the world and demonstrates that both, contrary to the claims of their advocates, increase concentration and control in fewer and fewer hands, exacerbate information inequality, and privatize power to an extent unparalleled in recent history. Also, Mosco's description of the continued integration of most communications technology producers and users within the realm and influence of the U.S. military-industrial complex is particularly important. The recent trends towards deregulation and privatization in the three years since this book was published have only proved the importance of Mosco's writings.

Schiller's essay, "Not Yet the Postimperialist Era," refutes notions, particularly popular in the cultural studies literature between 1989 and 1993, that the era of American imperialism is over. He shows clearly that globalization has been of particular benefit to American corporations, especially entertainment conglomerates. He further shows that the location of the power to determine the contours, content and distribution of cultural products around the world have yet to 'trickle-down' in any significant way, and that audiences currently have little power to change the situation.

Of particular relevance to the arguments of Mosco and Schiller is Peter Bruck's essay "The Role of Mass Media in Promoting Peace." Bruck argues that while most mass media systems especially in North America are defined by capitalist priorities, there exist numerous possibilities (or what Bruck calls "discursive spaces") for significant access and influence for those promoting a peace agenda. He argues that "the media system does not operate and reproduce itself in a noncontradictory or conflict-free fashion" and thus researchers must ask a key question: what existing pressures can open these contradictory spaces and how can such pressures be increased and utilized effectively by those with less than acceptable views or evidence? He further argues that a full examination of this and related questions will mitigate against the tendency of most empirical studies of media bias towards "a formalist, ahistorical, and in the end, very theoretical tendency" (p. 80).

His article is centered around the coverage of peace, disarmament and security issues in 13 English-language Canadian newspapers. He examines in particular the testing of cruise missiles over the Northwest Territories and Alberta in the early 1980s. His results show that in the areas of news sources and major themes, while the views of the military and government were the central feature of the coverage and that what he calls "bureaucratic-technical discourse" was dominant, the theme which appears most often is the opposition of peace groups to the testing program. His data further show that challenges to the "bureaucratic-technical discourse" used by institutional sources were often present in the coverage. Not exactly stunning results, but Bruck does

draw some very prescient and interesting conclusions, most notably that while the larger system of news reporting is clearly insufficient and biased, "a different coverage is no substitute for different social relationships" and investing too much social power in the media is a mistake. (p. 89)

My primary criticisms of this particular article are threefold. First, long before the publication of this book, the possibilities for the spaces Bruck speaks of had begun to contract considerably, not only in the popular media, but also in the academy and academic publishing. In addition in both Canada and the United States, the ownership concentration of the press has been increasing dramatically in recent years while public media have been gutted. The effects show up in the mainstream coverage, for example, of a very similar story to the one Bruck examines, low-level training flights by NATO fighter jets over unceded Innu land in Labrador. The mainstream coverage has been very bad for the most part, with almost all of the 'balance' in coverage coming from local alternative media. The hope Bruck holds out for exploiting 'discursive spaces' has become increasingly precarious and Bruck does little to place his data within the specifically North American context of these trends.

My second criticism of Bruck's argument is that he fails to consider the uniquely Canadian aspects of his study. Having had direct access to a wide range of Canadian media for about six years, and having lived in Canada during both the Gulf War and the Yugoslavian war, I tend to view the Canadian media environment as more critical and varied than that which exists in my region of the United States, in spite of current economic and political trends towards greater concentration and less diversity. The variance is especially evident in terms of public media and newspapers. This lack of contextual specificity is a significant lapse.

Finally, Bruck's overall argument is not entirely sufficient. After all, even if peace and social justice groups are able to enter the spaces Bruck speaks of, the efforts and resources required to do so are often more than such groups can bear. In addition, they are almost always fighting against enormous public relations machines which can create canned news and mask corporate advocacy as established fact, usually without a seam showing; this can result in a very expensive stalemate. Media battles remain very dangerous kinds of struggles for social justice groups on what remains somebody else's turf. Unfortunately, there are few alternative media organizations which are capable of carrying on a sustained and specific campaign in all areas of the continent at the present time, so effective alternatives remain limited and Bruck's perspective is an important hedge against nihilism and despair.

The essays by Collins, Eisler and Roach are central to

the broader understanding of a 'peace culture' which this book pursues. Collins' essay, "The Culture of Western Bureaucratic Capitalism: Implications for War and Peace," critiques the core values of the current economic and political system, defined here as diffuse and pervasive cultural values as opposed to discrete specific activities. Collins defines five "sacred" values of Western capitalist societies: private property, individualism, competition not cooperation, European cultural superiority "often expressed as white male supremacy," and Western scientific objectivity. (p. 121) She then dismantles each through classic and often searing critiques by Marxist, feminist, and 'Third World' scholars within a solidly defined historical context. Collins' central and most searching critique is her implication of the mechanisms of oppression within the very fabric of our lives, as made manifest in the relentlessly dualistic logics and languages which form the structure of the five sacred myths cited above. These tools serve to isolate and segment otherwise integrated aspects of human life and sever people from one another and the direct conscious experience of the sensual world around them. Collins then states her central argument: "Because the bureaucratic capitalist culture is so encompassing, we must look for signs of a peace culture among sectors of the population and subcultures that have not been fully drawn into its orbit" (p. 139). The meaningful resistance sought by the authors in this collection comes in part from the experience of oppression and the realities and lessons of cultural survival.

Eisler's essay is primarily concerned with presenting a "gender-holistic" approach to understanding the kinds of cultural transformation necessary to move from what she calls the dominator model of power relationships to the partnership model. She begins by citing recent archaeological and anthropological works which directly contradict notions of a universal culture of war and male domination so often used to justify such institutions as 'natural.' The evidence she cites is convincing and solidly linked to the more recent history of women's movements for social change. This prelude serves to introduce her proposals for positive change focussing on the everyday lived relationships between men and women. While it is not possible to recount the totality of her model here, her central argument bears repeating. Eisler is not seeking a utopian future free of conflict, but an attainable future where conflicts exist within the context of equitable power relationships and non-violent resolution. A large piece of this future has to do with what she calls 'remything,' or "laying the psychic foundations for a world of partnership and peace" (p. 166).

While her discussion of the mass media is not nearly as strong as her critique of the dominant myths justifying war or her social model for replacing such myths, she does raise the central question of this volume: why has the war culture not merely persisted, but flourished in recent years? Other questions also come to mind. For example, in an era in which the end of imperialism and the flowering of a global media culture was supposed to cure us of our 'base human desire' to dominate one another, why have particularly brutal conflicts dominated this decade. Further, why are we often so ignorant of the aspects of our collective history which challenge reigning models of domination? While work such as Eisler's is often dismissed as new age utopianism, it nevertheless challenges the comfortable notion of a global informational commons capable of creating the foundations for a global cultural democracy.

Colleen Roach's essay "Feminist Peace Researchers, Culture, and Communication" begins by stating that the "scale of calculated brutality" in the Gulf War "obliges us to probe more deeply into the phenomena of war and peace." The recent proliferation of feminist literature, while not central to most disciplines, can nevertheless help us understand not only "why we go to war against another country" but also understand "why we are war with ourselves" (p. 176). Roach's literature review begins by noting that feminist researchers have been recently active in three areas of research: works specifically concerned with peace, more general works which have been widely influential for peace researchers, and recent works which critique the ideologies of Western scientific rationality. (p. 177-8) She uses this general template to frame several interrelated critiques.

The first argues against the prevalent myth that war is a biological imperative by using the language of war as a primary example of how the culture of the military is carried into the general society, the obfuscatory terminology used for various kinds of killing being a particularly salient case. Roach then cites several recent works of the nature of social violence, both mediated and interpersonal. As many feminists have noted for years the structural violence of highly militarized societies always falls most heavily on women. This is due in large part to the fact that our social environment is saturated with both simulated and actual violence. As Roach notes, these examples "suggest that we should learn to 'make connections' (a feminist slogan) and take note of the synchroneity of massive violence inflicted on a country and the violence against women that is part and parcel of our mass culture" (p. 185). She concludes by citing the contradictory status of women in ongoing social movements for peace noting that while women have taken the lead in numerous grassroots peace movements around the world, in the mass media and even in many progressive journals, the discussion is dominated by men. (p. 186) And yet she notes that new feminist research and literature has shown an extraordinary creativity and social consciousness

in recent years, both of which she sees as signs of hope.

The final essays by Tehranian and Frederick attempt to deal with the liberatory potential of existing social institutions and arrangements. Tehranian's essay, "Ethnic Discourse and the New World Disorder: A Communitarian Perspective," identifies five existing trends, globalism, nationalism, regionalism, localism and spirituality, which he argues have the potential for engendering peace where it does not now exist. The essay takes the form of a series of principles reasoned out of competing visions guided by an overall vision of nonviolence, ecological sustenance, re-

> *The authors do not rely on hopeful gestures or hollow populism... they rely on hard-edged, unflinching analysis of some often ugly facts, and engage in solid and searching historical and theoretical work ...*

spect for cultural and human rights and voluntary community structures. Each of the five core trends are examined in terms of their destructive and constructive possibilities. For example, globalism is acknowledged to have its hegemonic and destructive aspects, which are central to its current manifestation, but he notes that it is also possible to imagine a global system in which ecological sustainability is made paramount as evidenced through the limited but actual success of some development efforts. Such a system, Tehranian argues, would be marked by inclusionary and benign enactments of regionalism, nationalism and localism and these could serve to provide some protection to vulnerable populations by shifting the locus of power away from Western and American institutions and states.

Tehranian concludes by suggesting that political and cultural pluralism may be the most positive and constructive trend emerging from the global disorder, but it can only survive as a viable force if it is recognized and embraced. This essay is perhaps the most utopian in the book and I kept waiting for a series of practical suggestions to balance the contradictory aspects of the forces Tehranian examines. The desire for a benign nationalism or globalism is admirable and his theoretical discussion of global trends is informed and accomplished, but it is immensely challenging to balance the competing aspirations of entire societies which are in conflict, and Tehranian provides few practical examples where competing forces have been able to balance the contrary forces which currently confront them.

Frederick's focus is entirely different, but he speaks to the same concerns as Tehranian: how do we ensure that global cultural diversity is reasonably protected and that social change is voluntary and positive? Towards these ends he presents a detailed study of existing international law on communication by tracking the evolution of the international human rights of communication with an eye towards balancing the power relations between "the info-powerful and the info-weak." (p. 217) The article is a well-reasoned and complete description of the ideological and practical foundations of international law and the specific precedents which govern communication. Most interesting are Frederick's conclusions regarding the kinds of change institutions in the United States would have to undergo to conform with international law.

Most obviously, domestic private media would have to abandon their blind and often fanatical attachment to profitability and the mega-deal. Instead they would have to adopt measures that would ensure services in the interests of all sectors of the public without regard to the bottom line, especially, as Frederick notes, to ethnic minorities and women. The U.S. government, in turn, would have to cease its propaganda wars against foreign states and its more pleasant 'informational campaigns' in less hostile places. As Frederick notes, while the U.S. has been hostile towards most international conventions and the organizations who draft them, it is uniquely hostile towards any impositions on its communication activities.

The persistence of the war system and the difficulties of creating a culture of peace are the central questions of this book. Both highlight the subtle and occasionally imperceptible effects of a society's mythologies on the population and the persistence of these despite the supposedly contrary forces of an evolving 'global ecumene' and the penetration of truly global mass communication systems into every society on the planet. Indeed, all of the authors in this book recognize that we have only recently entered into a new world primarily defined by the negotiation of international and multinational institutions, conflicts, and agreements. But all refuse to accept the plainly simplistic notion held by so many diverse parties of a 'new world order' based on peaceful relations guided by the beneficent forces of global capital. Instead, each has adhered to a series of principles, neglected for the most part in official circles, that affirm decent, peaceful, voluntary, and democratic social change everywhere at all times for all people.

Further the methods they use do not rely on hopeful gestures or hollow populism to provide the impetus for such change. In most cases these authors rely on hard-edged, unflinching analysis of some often ugly facts, and engage in solid and searching historical and theoretical work using the tools provided by political economy, feminism and a human rights-based perspective.

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