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21st Century
COMMUNICATION
A Reference Handbook



Edited by

William F. Eadie

21st Century
COMMUNICATION
A Reference Handbook

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Volume 1 & 2

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William F. Eadie

San Diego State University



Los Angeles | London | New Delhi
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A SAGE Reference Publication

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PREFACE

The discipline of communication has grown in popularity from the time professors of journalism and speech decided, in the mid-1960s, that the term *communication* was an excellent general descriptor for the theory and research that each group aspired to create. Over time, the two groups grew closer together and began to recognize significant overlap in their theoretical and research interests, but there were also differences in their traditions that kept them apart. While both groups agreed that communication is a practical discipline, journalism professors focused a great deal of their attention on the education of media professionals. Speech professors, on the other hand, often were more oriented to the liberal arts and valued the fact that communication could be approached from a variety of traditions, including the arts, humanities, social sciences, and even the sciences.

A key term in 21st-century communication, however, is convergence. Not only are media and technology converging with each other to produce new means of communicating but also individuals are increasingly using both new and existing communication tools to create new forms of communication. And this convergence forces the various “camps” within the communication discipline to draw on each other’s theories and research methods to keep up with explaining the rapidly changing communication environment.

This convergence of ideas and theories provides a space to challenge conventional ways of thinking about the communication discipline, and that’s what I’ve attempted to do in these volumes. I wasn’t alone in my concerns: When I first accepted the assignment to serve as Editor, I immediately convened several informal groups of scholars at a professional meeting to discuss how I should approach this task. Uniformly, these scholars said, “The ways we talk about our discipline are tired—look for different ways to approach the material that needs to be covered in such a work.” And they said, “Even though we’ve relied on contexts of communication (interpersonal, group, organizational, public, and mass communication) to describe ourselves over the years, this contextual approach hasn’t served us very

well.” So I looked for another way, one that would not only honor the diversity of the study of communication but also integrate that diversity into a coherent form.

In the end, following the sections that introduce the discipline and a number of different approaches to studying communication phenomena, I divided communication study into four basic properties: (1) the different *processes* that people typically use to accomplish the task of communicating with each other (such as message creation, information processing, and identity construction); (2) the *forms and types* of communication (such as conversation, public speaking, interviewing, and decision making) that are commonly encountered in everyday life; (3) the *characteristics* (such as strategy, style, and the interplay of verbal and nonverbal codes) that a communicator must consider in creating messages; and (4) how communication changes depending on the nature of the *relationships* (such as familial, work, and romantic) that individuals build and maintain through these various processes, forms, and types and carefully or not so carefully constructed messages. To these, I added a number of factors that influence how we communicate (such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and globalization), as well as a number of topics that could be considered to be both challenges and opportunities for communicators (such as communication competence, sexual harassment, deception, and bias).

While media topics are not ignored in Volume 1, they are the centerpiece of Volume 2. The study of media has been somewhat more organized than has been the study of the communication process more generally, and there are a number of widely recognized theories of media as communication for which considerable knowledge has been generated through various research studies. The first section of Volume 2 presents a number of these theories and approaches (such as agenda setting, cultivation, uses, and gratifications), as well as topics related to how people use technology in the communication process.

The remainder of Volume 2 focuses on communication as a profession and the various professional courses of study in the communication discipline: journalism, public relations, advertising, and media management. The curricula for

these programs of study contain courses that are commonly taught across much of the United States, and so I tended to organize the topics in these areas around those common course titles. These sections are most in keeping with the Sage Publications editors' original concept for the *21st Century* reference work series, to have topics tied to course titles in the curriculum discussed in essays of approximately the same length (about 7,000 words per essay) and to have them provide comprehensive coverage of each topic, along with suggestions for further reading should the reader wish to pursue the topic in greater depth.

But because the communication discipline consists of diverse approaches, these chapters are written in diverse styles and from different points of view. I am extremely pleased both with the quality of the authors that I was fortunate to recruit to write for this work and with the quality of the work that those authors produced. I asked the author(s) of each chapter to cover the chapter's topic in a comprehensive manner, to write from that author's knowledge and experience with the topic, and to provide a perspective that readers (both students and their professors) might find to be unique. And the authors took advantage of that challenge, producing approaches that range from personal history to advice giving to vivid descriptions of research and, yes, essays resembling traditional reviews of literature. In many cases, authors sought to place the knowledge that they were discussing into new forms or to make new connections that might not have been made before. This work is no compendium of highlights from textbooks; rather, it reads more like a series of opening-day lectures, where the professor attempts to engage students with the course material. I see the differences in style and approach as both representing the diversity of the communication discipline and also pointing to the strength we obtain from gathering together such a variety of approaches and viewpoints.

Perhaps I have a somewhat unique perspective on this material. I was trained in the speech tradition of the field; my undergraduate degree is in speech, but my doctorate is in communication, from one of the first departments to call itself by that name. I have served not only in traditional professor roles but also as Associate Director of the National Communication Association, the largest of the communication scholarly societies, where I found myself working on projects to the benefit of the entire discipline and explaining our discipline to a variety of external audiences. And now I am serving as Professor of Journalism and Media Studies, and although my colleagues still think of me as "that speech guy," they also allow me from time to time to push them toward the convergence of ideas that I described above. We are a long

way from that convergence, but my, admittedly biased, hope is that our two traditions will continue to look for what unites us rather than what divides us.

No enterprise of this size and scope can be the product of one person. I appreciate very much the invitation from Sage Publications to edit this work, the vision of Jim Brace-Thompson of Sage's Reference Division in creating this series of works and seeing them to fruition. Sara Tauber served ably as Development Editor, even through a pregnancy and the early infancy of her child. Leticia Gutierrez and Laura Notton provided a multitude of behind-the-scenes technical assistance to me and to the authors. Kate Schroeder and her staff provided efficient and effective production services to make the completed work a reality.

I also would like to thank the individuals (too numerous to name, but you know who you are) who advised me on creating the structure for the work. Sherwyn Morreale, my former colleague from our days together at the National Communication Association, and Glen Broom, my present-day colleague, agreed to assist as associate editors, and they helped me refine the chapter structure and to generate ideas for the chapter authors. They also each wrote an excellent chapter for this work.

In fact, *21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook* would not exist were it not for the generous and high-quality contributions of the many authors who agreed to participate in creating it. I frequently received comments that the idea behind this work was a wonderful and needed one, and when authors agreed to write they did so enthusiastically. That enthusiasm shows in their work.

I want to thank in particular my colleagues and the administration at San Diego State University. The administration recognized this project as being an important one and allowed me to work on it as a significant part of my scholarly duties. My colleagues across the campus, in the School of Journalism and Media Studies, the School of Communication, and the Department of Marketing, not only encouraged me, but many of those talented individuals also contributed chapters.

Finally, editing such a large project can become obsessive at times (maybe even most of the time). I am grateful to friends and family (and you, too, know who you are) for putting up with my obsession, for worrying about me at the times when the workload was at its peak, and for listening to me endlessly and supporting me all the same.

21st Century Communication has been a labor of love on the part of many people. I hope that the love and care that went into its creation comes through to its readers.

William F. Eadie

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Editor-in-Chief

William F. Eadie is Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at San Diego State University. His teaching and research interests include the development of theories of media and communication, the history of the communication discipline, and the role of media in social influence campaigns. He also served as director of San Diego State's School of Communication between 2001 and 2005. Prior to arriving at San Diego State, he was Associate Director of the National Communication Association (NCA) in Washington, D.C., where he worked with researchers and promoted communication research to a variety of audiences. His other faculty appointments have been at Ohio University and California State University, Northridge, and he has served as adjunct visiting faculty at the University of Minnesota; University of Maryland; University of California, Los Angeles; and California State University, Los Angeles. He served as the first editor of *Journal of Applied Communication Research* after it became an NCA publication, and he has been an advocate for the application of communication research in ways that affect the lives of ordinary people. He also has served as president of the Western States Communication Association and as president of its auxiliary, the Executives Club, and he is currently serving as editor of *WSCA News*, the association's e-newsletter. He has received the NCA Golden Anniversary Award for a journal article that was judged to be outstanding and NCA's Samuel J. Becker Award for Distinguished Service to the Communication Discipline, and he has been elected a member of the national honorary societies Phi Kappa Phi, Golden Key, and Phi Beta Delta. With Paul Nelson, he coedited two books for SAGE: *The Language of Conflict and Resolution* (2000) and *The Changing Conversation in America: Lectures From the Smithsonian* (2001). His next book project is tentatively titled *When Communication Became a Discipline*, and it will focus on the period from the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s, when both the journalism and the speech fields adopted the term *communication* to describe scholarly work in those

fields. He received his PhD in communication from Purdue University and his bachelor's and master's degrees in speech from the University of California, Los Angeles.

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Glen M. Broom, PhD, is Professor Emeritus, School of Journalism and Media Studies, San Diego State University (1979–2007) and Adjunct Professor, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia (2003–present). He began his career in 1963 at the University of at Urbana-Champaign as Assistant Extension Editor in the Cooperative Extension Service. His work included an assignment as a radio consultant with the U.S. Agency for International Development in Amman, Jordan. He moved to Chicago in 1968, becoming the part owner, vice president, and director of public relations of the Chicago-based management consulting and training firm Applied Behavioral Science, Inc. He left the company to pursue his PhD in Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He joined the UW–Madison faculty as the head of the public relations sequence (1975–1979). He also has been a visiting professor at the University of Texas at Austin and universities in Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne, Australia. He is a coauthor of *Effective Public Relations* (6th–9th eds., 1985–2006), author of *Cutlip and Center's Effective Public Relations* (10th ed., 2009), and coauthor of *Using Research in Public Relations* (1990). He also has written more than 50 scholarly journal articles, convention papers, and book chapters. He was awarded the Pathfinder Award (1986) by the Institute of Public Relations, named Outstanding Educator (1991) by the Public Relations Society of America, and presented the Jackson, Jackson and Wagner Behavioral Science Prize (1993) by the Public Relations Society of America Foundation. At San Diego State University, he was selected three times as the outstanding journalism/communication professor (1989, 1995, and 2006) and named outstanding professor and faculty commencement speaker for the College of Professional Studies and Fine

Arts (1993). The School of Communication selected him as faculty commencement speaker in 2003. He earned his BS and MS degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Editorial Board

Sherwyn P. Morreale, PhD, is Director of Graduate Studies in Communication at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. For 8 years, she served as associate director of the National Communication Association (NCA), where she worked actively to promote communication pedagogy and research. She has authored or coauthored 20 refereed scholarly articles in national and regional journals, 13 books and monographs, and 14 book chapters. She has made 140 presentations at national and regional conventions and numerous workshops on communication assessment, curriculum development, and public speaking on campuses across the country. She has just completed a handbook for graduate students in communication, distributed nationally to all graduate programs, and *Pathways to Communication Careers in the 21st Century* (7th ed.),

intended for undergraduates. She also recently wrote two encyclopedia entries on the nature of communication competence and two articles for NCA's leading journal, *Communication Education*, one on the centrality of communication education and the other on the nature of the basic communication course. In the past year, she worked with NCA to produce new editions of three publications on communication assessment, including *Assessing Motivation to Communicate* (2nd ed.), *Large Scale Assessment of Oral Communication: K-12 and Higher Education* (3rd ed.), and *The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Program* (2nd ed.). She is presently working on two book projects, a public speaking textbook and a coauthored scholarly book on organizational trust, and on a major review of communication assessment for *Communication Education*, as well as several other research studies. In her capacity as Graduate Director at University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, she presently teaches Introduction to Graduate Study in Communication, Advanced Communication Theory, a seminar in Communication Competence, and a seminar in Organizational Communication with the campus chancellor, Dr. Pamela Shockley. She received her PhD from the University of Denver.

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PART I

THE DISCIPLINE OF COMMUNICATION

1

COMMUNICATION AS AN IDEA AND AS AN IDEAL

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“What we’ve got here is failure to communicate.”

Cool Hand Luke, 1967

It is rather passé, if not overindulgent, to characterize communication as a ubiquitous phenomenon. As an ever-present process in our lives, not only is it convenient to take communicating with others for granted, but we are quick to blame communication maladies for many of the social ills confronting us. For some years, it was fashionable to refer to discussion about communication as meta-communication. Craig (2005) more recently referred to such deliberations as meta-discourse. Almost 50 years before the buildup of interpersonal communication as an academic specialty area, Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) promoted the idea that one “cannot not communicate.” That is, at any point when we develop reciprocal awareness of another, anything we do (or don’t do) is the act of communicating. We’re trapped—we can never *not* communicate. So instead we become obligated to a process that more often than not is judged uncharitably. Take most terms associated with the outcomes of communication. *Communication breakdown* is a popular one and generally refers to incompetent or indolent effort. The opening quote of this chapter, about a “failure” to

communicate, was popularized from the 1960s movie *Cool Hand Luke*. Communication failures are often associated with perceptual misalignment or cultural ignorance. Another perspective altogether is that engaging in *more* communication is a ready answer to many problems, whether they be personal, professional, or political.

Lest we appear sanguine about communication as an ideal, fodder for the canons of those who view communication as a panacea can be observed from substantial organizational entities. Communication was the focus of a study reported in the *MIT Sloan Management Review* where 50 former and current CEOs and CFOs were interviewed about their views on communication in organizations. To a person, these organizational leaders viewed the communication function as vital to their success. Their remarks can be summed up as follows:

- You cannot overcommunicate; use every mechanism (*The New York Times*).
- Speak in harmony—one story, one basic message (GlaxoSmithKline).

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- You must modify your messages by constituency (Dell).
- Move from a “want-to-communicate” to a “have-to-communicate” strategy (Textron).
- I’m either communicating or thinking about it (FedEx).

Robert Craig (2005) once noted,

The idea that communication is important, the idea that human problems are caused by bad communication and can be solved by better communication, the idea that communication is a technical skill that can be improved by applying principles and techniques disseminated by communication experts, the idea, in short, that it is “good to talk”—these ideas are elements of a cultural pattern that has evolved in particular historical circumstances in close association with specific social practices and related cultural themes of human progress, modernization, and globalization. (p. 660)

Craig’s treatise was one of almost resignation blended with a dose of responsibility. Where do our responsibilities lie for the idea and ideals of communication?

We’ll first consider how some of our present ideas about this “thing” we call “communication” came about, and we’ll offer a rationale for why common ideas about communication are inadequate. We’ll summarize some of the current thinking about the idea of communication, and then we’ll offer a view of the idea of communication that can also serve as an ideal for communication study.

Communication as an Idea

The easiest way to think of communication is through its common meaning in several languages: as transportation, or a means of getting a message from one point to another. In fact, some of the earliest models of communication emphasized this mechanical means of moving a message. Harold Lasswell (1948) described communication simply as “Who? Says What? To Whom? With What Effect?” Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver (1949), in describing how the telephone works, indicated that a source encodes a message and that encoded signal is transmitted via a channel to a device that decodes the signal and makes it come out of a receiver in the form of the original message.

But these models are more complex and more of a problem than they might seem on the surface. Lasswell’s (1948) model, for example, assumes an entire psychology behind each of his people in the model (“Who?” and “To Whom?”). He assumes an entire social process behind the construction of the “Says What?” portion of his model, including the nature and meaning of language, the expectations of the situation, and cultural influences on what is said. And then, there’s the matter of the “With What Effect?” portion of the model. Lasswell clearly saw this as the central element of his model, because at the time so much attention was being paid to how both various media and various forms of persuasion influenced individuals—and there were considerable debates over the conditions

that would produce either strong or weak effects, both on individuals and on public opinion.

Shannon and Weaver’s (1949) model seems straightforward enough until you add in one factor: noise in the channel. As engineers, these authors were interested in noise in particular, because it interfered with telephone conversations, particularly long-distance connections. Noise was a technical problem that could be solved, in theory, by reducing the number of connecting points through which the signal had to travel in order to get from Point A to Point B (satellites proved to be wonderful ways of reducing those connections), but it was also a human problem, because people would try to guess the content of the message and in doing so would fill in the blanks that were left by the noise. So the model wasn’t as clean and elegant as, perhaps, its creators thought, because at each end of the encoder or receiver you not only had a piece of technology but also a human who was trying to make sense of the message that was sent or received.

How to make sense of the human piece? A popular approach of the same period as the models we just discussed involved looking at how people use language. The study of what was called *general semantics* was popular in the era immediately following World War II, and it was based on the idea that the world would be able to get along much better if we used language in a more precise fashion. As outlined by its founder, Alfred Korzybski, and popularized by scholars such as S. I. Hayakawa and Irving J. Lee, general semantics sought to explain how people use language by using the central metaphor of how maps fit with the territory being charted. The three metaphoric propositions about language were as follows:

1. *The map is not the territory.* Words are arbitrary, though agreed-on, symbols that usually have no correspondence to the things they are supposed to represent.
2. *The map is not all of the territory.* Words can never completely represent the things for which they stand; words are, to one degree or another, abstractions.
3. *The idea map would include a map of itself.* We have to use words to describe other words, and so abstraction is built upon abstraction.

General semanticists liked to come up with catchy slogans to make their points—for example, “Words don’t mean; people mean.” By this, the general semanticist meant that meanings of words were constantly changing, even though their meanings might appear to be stable. Hipsters, for example, tend to play with language, and at various times have described things they like as “bad” or “hot” or “cool.”

While these ideas about how we use language in communication are useful, the concrete suggestions that general semanticists make are good to remember but don’t solve the “problem” of communication. General semanticists remind us that we are most likely to be understood when we are using concrete, as opposed to abstract, words

when we remember that someone's use of a word at one time may not be the same at another time and when we recognize that we can never cover "all" of something with the language we use.

A more contemporary outgrowth of general semantics has been a focus on how we use language to "construct" the world around us. While general semanticists assumed that the world is material (the "territory") and words are but arbitrary descriptions of the material world (the "map"), those who use social construction as a perspective turn that notion on its head and contend that the world exists because people have constructed it, together, through the agreed-on use of symbols. So words become most important, rather than the things the words may be describing. The classic story about the three baseball umpires discussing their philosophies of working behind the plate illustrates this point. One umpire said, "Some's balls and some's strikes, and I calls 'em as they is." The second umpire said, "Some's balls and some's strikes, and I calls 'em as I sees 'em." And the third umpire, who took social construction to heart, said, "Some's balls and some's strikes, but they ain't nothin' until I calls 'em." There is a good deal more discussion on social construction and its implications for understanding communication in a different manner in "Social Construction and Meaning Creation" (Chapter 15).

In his landmark book *Speaking Into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication*, John Durham Peters (1999) contended that our fascination with communication comes primarily from the use of technologies to disseminate messages to those who would be unreachable otherwise. These technologies need not be mechanical ones; they could be as simple as addressing a group of people face-to-face. Philosophers and ethicists have been well aware that using technologies to disseminate messages has the potential for mischief, and so our understanding of communication often arises out of the activities associated with communication that we wish to avoid, such as manipulation, deception, or lack of authenticity. Miscommunication is typically the problem; while "communication" is typically reified as an ideal state (we'll have more to say about this point in the second portion of this chapter).

Peters (1999) identified two basic forms of communication: dissemination and dialogue. Both have roots in ancient times. Dissemination is illustrated quite clearly in Jesus' parable of the mustard seed. This parable exists in various versions, but in each version Jesus uses the idea of something small that potentially can grow into something quite large to illustrate how his teachings would take root and spread.

Dialogue is the other basic form of communication. Here, Peters (1999) calls on *Phaedrus*, which was written by Plato, as an illustration. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to go into a detailed explanation of this philosophical exchange between Socrates, a renowned teacher, and Phaedrus, his student. Suffice it to say, though, that the conclusion reached by their philosophical conversation, according to Peters, is that the ultimate goal of human

interaction is authentic connection, with mutual love being the highest form of that bond. In such a view of communication, dissemination of information is relatively unimportant, except in how what we perceive we have in common serves to bring us together.

Dissemination and dialogue are not stand-ins for "mass communication" versus "interpersonal communication," however. Radio can be a very intimate medium, for example, creating at least the illusion that the host and listeners are having a personal exchange. On the other hand, much of our daily face-to-face interaction revolves around routine exchanges of information, creating almost no bond in the process. We surround ourselves with media and interpersonal environments that provide plenty of information, and yet each of us experiences loneliness and yearns for true connection. How to manage the dissemination and promote the connection is the central problem that all of us, as communicators, face, and it is the ultimate problem on which communication scholars focus their work.

Communication as an Ideal

Communication is thought of both as an ordinary action and as an extraordinary act. It is ordinary because it is a major human activity that we engage in each day, but it is extraordinary because communicating with others has the capacity to provide social support and comfort (see "Social Support," Chapter 32), engage others in deliberation and debate on important issues (see Chapter 18, "Persuasion and Compliance Gaining;" Chapter 23, "Deliberation, Debate, and Decision Making;" and Chapter 31, "Rhetorical Exigency, Strategy, and Argumentation,"), delight us with stories and performances (see Chapter 17, "Performance and Storytelling"), help us understand and manage who we are as people (see Chapter 19, "Identity as Constituted in Communication"), and manage or resolve conflicts (see Chapter 24, "Conflict Management and Mediation"). There are far more often calls for more (and better) communication than there are for less (or worse) communication, though there are often calls for moderation in the use of both pen and tongue. As Shakespeare's Hamlet put it,

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines . . .

Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action. (Act 3, Scene 2)

In point of fact, we probably don't follow Hamlet's advice as often as we should. We assume that more (and better) communication will nearly always produce a more positive outcome than will less (or worse) communication.

Many times, such is the case, but not always. Let's consider, briefly, the kinds of problems that scholars were considering when the field of speech, one of the components of the communication discipline, was just beginning to establish itself as an area of scholarly study.

We usually assume that we are better off today than in earlier times, although it is wise to remember a comment from George Orwell—"Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it." When considering the scholarship from the early years of our discipline, it is easy to observe that much of the work was pedagogically based. However, there were some pioneering intellectual thoughts given to the scientific study of communication. In 1915, in the first publication year of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (then known as the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking*), J. A. Winans argued for a more scientific and practically relevant study of the speech discipline:

Problems enough of every sort. Some are large, some small. . . . We shall not for some time be driven to the painful emendation of the text of Demosthenes or to studying the influence of Quintillion on Patrick Henry. We ought not to be led into dry-as-dust studies, and I do not fear that we shall be; we are too constantly confronted by the practical nature of our work. Our difficulty will be in getting into a sufficiently scientific frame of mind. Probably we shall do foolish things at first, as others have. We should begin humbly and grow. Each man of course can do but a small part of the work. We shall proceed, but slowly—all the more reason why we should begin soon. (p. 22)

In 90+ years, have we delivered on the idea and ideals of communication research so eloquently advanced by Professor Winans (1915)? Our goal is to comment on the virtues and vices entangled in thinking of communication as an idea or as an ideal. "It is always a perplexing challenge to resolve in one's own mind whether conditions lead us down paths of promises that excite us or promises that frustrate us. Sometimes these promises are one and the same" (O'Hair, 2006, p. 6). We all have ideas about what constitutes communication and its essence. In thinking through our history, we have identified three essential elements that capture our notions for communication as an ideal: (1) voice, (2) community, and (3) responsibility.

Voice

The communication field is quick to engage the metaphor of voice to represent the freedom and empowerment to participate and express oneself. Two common elements are often thought to constitute voice: access and agency. *Access* underlies the more basic of these phenomena and will be construed as a permissible entrée to the expression of ideas and opinions. *Agency* is a qualitatively different construct in that elements of empowerment stand ready to impose a privileging function in service of one's rights to expression and contribution.

Access

Access is more easily judged from a general perspective, although it is more elusive to assess from a local or contextual perspective. Most feel that access to participation is a worthwhile ideal. Perhaps the immigration debate stands as representative of that assumption. However, at a general level, too many of us offer lip service to the need for greater access to communication—including the challenge of the digital divide that we conveniently assumed was a temporary and embarrassing blip on our moral radar screens.

Access has captured our attention in more subtle ways through the lure of transformative communication technology. Instant messaging and cell phone use have reconceptualized how we communicatively relate with others in very strategic ways. More specifically, communication technologies have created an assumption of what Katz and Aakus (2002) describe as *perpetual contact*. In their book by the same name, these authors describe "how the internal psychological feeling of being accessible or having access changes social relationships" (p. xxi). Their position, situated among many others, is that cell phone use in particular is having a profound effect on normative communication patterns and that many of the unanticipated uses of this technology are proliferating.

We can first look to surveys as evidence of widespread use. In a poll conducted by BBDO Worldwide in 2005 (and reported by Peter Leo in the *Pittsburgh Gazette* on March 16, 2006), 75% of cell phone users reported that they had their devices turned on and within reach during waking hours, 59% would never loan their cell out, and 26% felt that it was more important to drive back home to get their cell phone than their wallet. Take, for example, the notion of *absent presence*. Kenneth Gergen (2002), a pioneer of the social construction approach, claims that, "at times our presence may go completely unacknowledged. We are present but simultaneously rendered absent; we have been erased by an absent presence" (p. 227).

James Rule (2002) illuminates a potential conundrum in understanding cell phone use. Rule wonders, "Does the demand for mobile phones . . . more closely resemble the need for an appendectomy or that for a drug fix? To what extent do the needs for which people use mobile phones appear to have pre-dated the technology?" And, as Rule points out, some needs are clearly important such as in emergencies; other needs more likely resemble an addiction model (p. 251).

Another issue of access focuses on the strategic management of interaction. For some, communication technologies offer opportunities for strategic communication. Text messaging in particular is preferred when users are motivated to reduce cues in order to avoid emotional expression. Teenagers suggest that text messaging friends about their plans on Saturday night can appear innocuous instead of desperate—"So what's going on tonight?"

Recipients can then strategically avoid the issue (“Not sure yet”) without implicating themselves and, at the same time, helping the friend save face—an essential strategy in teen life (O’Hair, 2006).

Strategic management of interaction also implicates less talk altogether. There is often an assumption that more communication is better. That is, we should always communicate to fix our problems. Communication scholars have frequently agreed that less talk is sometimes better. One of the hallmarks of conflict management techniques is avoidance in certain situations—cooling-off periods. In other instances of strategic interaction management, less talk and more action is a superior alternative. Walk the walk should not be discounted. Issues of access and responsible communication will continue to capture our attention.

Agency

Agency constitutes a fundamental issue in communication scholarship and will be no less important in advanced technologically embedded contexts. Broadly conceived agency starts with the rights to free speech and exhortation in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. For its part, the National Communication Association (NCA) has dedicated itself to the ideals of free speech, with several of its policy resolutions contained in the NCA Policy Platform promoting uninhibited but responsible expression, including the following:

- Credo for Free and Responsible Communication in a Democratic Society
- Credo for Free and Responsible Use of Electronic Communication Networks
- Policy on Diversity
- Policy on the Digital Divide

The mere fact that a large professional communication association advances a number of statements on free expression suggests that free speech continues to be temporally affected and socially constructed. Communication agency has always been at risk of compromise due to the interpretative lenses of those who find it not as a pure ideal but as one that is managed in service of other ideals. The alternative is a position advanced by Daniel Gilbert, a psychologist from Harvard University, who remarked,

We live in a world in which people are beheaded, imprisoned, demoted, and censured simply because they have opened their mouths, flapped their lips, and vibrated some air. Yes, those vibrations can make us feel sad or stupid or alienated. Tough shit. That’s the price of admission to the marketplace of ideas. Hateful, blasphemous, prejudiced, vulgar, rude, or ignorant remarks are the music of a free society, and the relentless patter of idiots is how we know we’re in one. When all the words in our public conversation are fair, good, and true, it’s time to make a run for the fence. (Retrieved August 11, 2008, from www.edge.org/q2006/q06_8.html)

This standpoint harkens back to earlier contests over absolute free speech, and this perspective may not suit the tastes of those holding more moderate viewpoints—hence the notion of responsibility. How do we in the discipline of communication promote the ideal of free speech in a responsible manner? With the advancement of communication technologies, issues over free speech will come up ever more. With access and agency come two critical issues: maintaining a comfortable level of privacy and disentangling the relationships between communication and terrorism.

Privacy

For some, agency necessarily entails the right to privacy and anonymity. Take recent examples of college professors being videotaped during class and finding their performance published on *YouTube*. Predictably, many in the academy are disconcerted by such instances of privacy violations. The American Association of University Professors considers posting videos of professors a violation of intellectual property rights. In an online discussion of the issues, faculty weigh in from multiple perspectives, with some suggesting that video content can be digitally manipulated characterizing professors as bumbling fools (some do not need any editorial help in this regard); others suggest that the issue can be addressed by videotaping all lectures with a time stamp to be used as incontrovertible evidence of what actually happened in class.

Privacy issues extend to general society in meaningful ways as well. Consider the perspective of Kevin Kelly (2006), Editor-at-Large, *Wired* and the author of *New Rules for the New Economy*:

Fancy algorithms and cool technology make true anonymity in mediated environments more possible today than ever before. At the same time this techno-combo makes true anonymity in physical life much harder. For every step that masks us, we move two steps toward totally transparent unmasking. We have caller ID, but also caller ID Block, and then caller ID-only filters. Coming up: biometric monitoring and little place to hide. A world where everything about a person can be found and archived is a world with no privacy, and therefore many technologists are eager to maintain the option of easy anonymity as a refuge for the private.

How do we unpack the baggage that surrounds privacy as a form of communication agency? Is anonymity an essential characteristic of agency?

An additional issue worthy of consideration is the public-private dilemma that has recently caught up with high school students who post online content from home. With MySpace and Facebook reaching millions of high school students in increasing fashion, school administrators have entered the fray of what constitutes responsible communication agency. Note the following

incidents, which were reported in the October 26, 2006, edition of *USA TODAY*:

- A student was expelled at an Indianapolis-area school for posting sexually explicit remarks about a teacher on MySpace.
- A cheerleader in the Fort Worth area was dismissed from the squad for allowing someone else to post content regarding other cheerleaders on her blog.
- Pittsburgh school officials removed a student from the volleyball team for criticizing an art teacher on the Internet.

School officials argue that issues of First Amendment rights have less applicability based on the two issues raised earlier: temporal dynamics and socially constructed perspectives. To wit, Paul Houston, the executive director of the American Association of School Administrators contends that school safety issues, especially in light of recent instances of school violence, are enough to trump freedom of expression. “The context of the times obviously adds a dimension of concern.”

Communication and Terrorism

One last point is worth consideration. Access and agency, through technology, create opportunities for communication of all types—those that empower and those that intimidate (O’Hair, Ploeger, & Moore, in press). Thomas Friedman (2005), in his best-selling book *The World Is Flat*, makes salient the argument that a flat world is one where communication is handy, inexpensive, and limitless. He goes on to emphasize that it is important to understand that it is not only the computer geeks, elementary students, and grandmothers who become empowered with flat-world communication, it is “also al-Qaeda and other terrorists networks” (p. 8). Miller, Matusitz, O’Hair, and Eckstein (2008) remind us that crimes of terrorism are communication acts, marked processes where terrorists symbolize their views with the help of unwitting audiences. Miller and colleagues take up the issue of describing differently the relational partners involved in terrorism: the terrorist group, the media, and the audience. Miller and colleagues describe the relationship as

a more complex web involving terrorists groups, their symbolic messages, the codependency of media and the obligatory sense of the audience. Such a codependency phenomenon goes beyond a simple dyadic relationship between eager, gullible, naïve viewers and enthusiastic, greedy, corrupt media corporations. The codependency is, at minimum, triadic, for it must of course include the terrorists themselves. Terrorists must trust in the media to accomplish one of their primary objectives: the spreading of fear and terror. . . . The media provide a means for social integration and social empathy by allowing audiences to gain insight into the circumstances of others—identifying, empathizing, and sympathizing with them in efforts to gain a sense of belonging. The public may feel obligated—even compelled—in their need to

comprehend the destructiveness of a terrorist act or the impact it must have on its victims. (pp. 58–59)

Communication is indiscriminate in its ability to empower. It is always well to remember the ideals of our profession for supporting the promise of voice. With freedom of speech comes responsible expression. Communication scholarship must stand ready to offer insights into this conundrum.

Community

Community is a term employed by multiple disciplines with the intent of characterizing patterns of interaction. Community can be conceived in a geographic sense, as a composite of individuals who work, live, and play in close geographic proximity to one another, such as local communities. “However, geographic convenience does not itself create a sense of community. Another way of thinking about communities is from a perceptual sense where proximity may or may not influence how a community is constituted” (O’Hair, Heath, & Becker, 2005, p. 311).

The idea of communication is frequently found in communities. As O’Hair and colleagues (2005) commented,

We know about communities of scholars and communities of practice; even spiritual groups and softball leagues think of themselves as communities (*a sense of community*). Key to concepts of communities is how they are fashioned and sustained through communication processes and shared meaning. (p. 311)

Within this section, we will take up several issues that are emerging as staples of community communication. Marc Andreessen, the founder of Mosaic, later known as Netscape, captures some important thoughts about how communities form:

People have an innate urge to connect with one another. And when you give people a new way to connect with other people, they will punch through any technical barrier, they learn new languages—people are wired to want to connect with other people and they find it objectionable not to be able to. That is what Netscape unlocked. (Friedman, 2005, p. 63)

It is through community participation that we are able to confirm the democratic vision espoused by Thomas Jefferson. Most important, citizen involvement increases government accountability.

Families as Reemerging Communities

After decades of surveys and polls lamenting the decline of the family as an important social unit in people’s lives, perceiving families as communities is on the rise. In fact, some research suggests that families are enjoying resurgence as a place for communication and community.

Consider the following poll results, as reported in the May 22, 2006, issue of *Newsweek* and the October 30, 2006, issue of *Time*:

- 76% of parents claim that they are closer to their children than they were to their own parents, and 71% report more communication with their college offspring than with their parents at the same age.
- A generation ago, parents were seen as obstacles to social interaction, while today they are embraced as among their children's best friends.
- College surveys found that freshmen report more than 10 interactions per week with their parents using cell phones, e-mail, and text messaging. Most reported broad satisfaction with this level of contact, and 28% reported that they would like even more interactions with their fathers.
- Many college students fully expect to move back in with their parents regardless of their financial situation.

Compare these data with a survey conducted with 1,622 Americans by *USA Weekend* for its October 27–29, 2006, issue, which revealed that 67% of respondents think that “eating together as a family is a better way to instill good values in children than going to religious services regularly or volunteering regularly.” Or consider an extensive study conducted in 2005 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics reporting that parents now spend much more time with their children than in previous generations, with fathers reporting twice as much time communicating and caring for their children.

Are we experiencing a “cocooning” effect, alluded to by community scholars such as Robert Putnam (2000), whereby families wrap themselves in each other and fail to engage the members of other communities? As we examine other community effects, we may find that only communication research will be able to tell us how family communication influences wider community participation.

Virtual Communities

One of those communities is of the virtual type. Research investigating online communication has provided insights into how individuals interact in a virtual fashion for the purpose of sharing information and opinions and thus cooperating to form social systems (Jones, 1995). A rather poignant position was advanced by Katz, Rice, Acord, Dasgupta, and David (2004), which dismantled the arbitrary chasm between online and physical communities promulgated by others. Instead of insisting on distinctions, they argue for a bridging or progression of these communities, which serve humankind in similar ways. Take, for example, the phenomenon known as *smart mobs*. “Smart mobs consist of people who are able to act in concert even if they don’t know each other” (Rheingold, 2002, p. 63). Instantiations of this sort are

numerous, as evidenced by the following examples, taken from Rheingold (2002):

- The “People Power II” smart mobs in Manila that overthrew the presidency of President Estrada in 2001 organized demonstrations by forwarding text messages via cell phones.
- The Web site www.upoc.com enables fans to stalk their favorite celebrities in real time through Internet-organized mobile networks and provides similar channels for journalists to organize citizen-reporters on the fly.
- Cell phones relieve teens from temporal restrictions, allowing them to sustain communities without regard to time. “For teens, if you have a cell phone you can be late.”
- Muslim parents have become distraught at the idea that once disallowed social relationships between boys and girls now flourish through cellular technology. In Syria, community building among teenage girls has disrupted a once paternalistic and restrictive family structure.

Virtual communities should be examined from an opportunistic perspective, offering instances for understanding how people choose to form social bonds.

Community Resilience

Community involvement is not a new phenomenon; a National Research Council committee recommended that deliberative and participative community processes should be engaged to inform public policy choices (Stoto, Abel, & Dievler, 1997). The committee argued that these processes lead to a more informed public and more support for decisions. Even community members who do not directly participate in the planning and deliberating process have more positive views of policy decisions based on their perception that the process was fair and inclusive of community members’ viewpoints (Arvai, 2003).

Regardless of physical or virtual means, increasing community involvement and participation spawns positive civic and social effects often referred to as *resilience*. “Resilience is a community-building idea promulgated by Grotberg (2002). Resilient communities are those that enjoy strong relationships within and outside the family, understand the need for vibrant community services (such as education, health, social welfare), and are energetic in developing a community climate that is compassionate, empathic, respectful, and communicative. Building resilient socially networked communities, where stores of communication capital reside, offers greater comfort and security than disconnected communities” (O’Hair et al., 2005, p. 313).

Communities have offered up the promise of communication for centuries. Community is a convenient but essential element of how societies function. It is within communities that we find out what people are thinking and how they are relating to one another. Rebecca Townsend (2006), in a

recent review essay in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, wrote that it is within communities that we develop “an appreciation for how knowledge, identity and agency are related” (p. 214).

Responsibility

The third issue of communication as an idea or ideal involves responsibility. We have acknowledged earlier that communication is not the answer to all the maladies facing society. However, when conditions present themselves, communication scholars do have fundamental responsibilities in addressing the problems and missteps of humankind. This becomes apparent in the articles in communication journals that take a critical perspective to societal problems and the embrace of journals that are devoted to a critique of society and especially hegemonic institutions (e.g., *Critical Studies in Media Communication*). There are a number of viewpoints that could be privileged from this perspective, but we focus on two: responsibility to the human condition and advancing meaningful contributions.

Responsibility to the Human Condition

As Vitousek, Mooney, Lubchenco, and Melillo (1997) suggest, “We are changing Earth more rapidly than we are understanding it” (p. 494). Isn’t *understanding* an essential element of the “ideal of communication?” Our understanding of others must come not only from investigations, as we have been doing, but also from monitoring conditions and trends. The IBM Center for The Business of Government published a report titled *Six Trends Transforming Government* (Abramson, Breul, & Kamensky, 2006). The report identifies key drivers for change:

- The aging population
- The continued rapid development of technology
- Globalization of economies and services
- Lack of confidence in government
- External threats—terrorism, disasters, and so on

To these trends, we must add income inequality. The Economic Policy Institute reports data (in *The Economist*, December 29, 2004) that between 1979 and 2000, household income in the lowest fifth grew by 6.4%, while income from households in the highest fifth grew by 70%. Historically, we know that income disparity is a fundamental source of societal distrust and unrest. How do we in communication respond to these trends and challenges?

One answer for communication scholars lies in taking advantage of opportunities meant to address societal problems. Communication and related disciplines are now seen as integral to addressing a host of emerging practical problems. For example, disciplines such as communication are expected to play a key role in reforms in health care. Communication scholars are expected to make substantial contributions to homeland security initiatives ranging from

surveillance to interdiction, community preparation, and violence mitigation. Communication scholars will also be expected to contribute to the identification and communication of meteorological risks. These new initiatives reflect a shift in priorities to problem-based solutions. The idea of communication moving more toward a pragmatic enterprise for its research is a new idea that is contested as an ideal.

Advancing Meaningful Contributions

How will communication professionals respond to these and other challenges facing the human condition? Many in the academy consider communication to be an inherently applied discipline. It is ironic that many in the field of communication thought just the opposite—that the only practical or applied aspects of communication were instructional practices, pedagogy, and controlling communication apprehension. As O’Hair and colleagues (2009) wrote, applied communication research “has been graced with an ever-expanding exposure to methods. Post-positivists, humanists, interpretivists, and critical theorists find applied research an enterprise that more easily accommodates their ideas and questions” (see Chapters 5–11, this volume, for more details about these varying approaches). Moreover, communication scholars have made important contributions to our understanding of communication problems such as the following: severe weather warnings, pandemic flu campaigns, organ donation, food safety, gender equality, safe-sex messages, shelter-in-place (terrorism), direct-to-consumer drug advertising, terrorism, community building, cancer patient advocacy, and climate change.

The NCA has pursued practically relevant contributions for some time. Article II of the NCA constitution states, “The purpose of the association shall be to promote criticism, teaching, research, and *application* [italics added] of the artistic, humanistic, and scientific principles of communication.” NCA’s 2003 strategic plan specifically states, “NCA will engage in selected projects that extend and apply communication scholarship to other academic, professional, and civic communities.” A second stipulation states that “NCA will promote its publications to a wide audience of scholars and practitioners.”

Of course, as communication scholars, we hope to be in step with our colleagues who believe that theory should always play an indispensable role in applied research. We are mindful of Kurt Lewin’s famous statement, “There is nothing more practical than a good theory.” Theory and practice inform each other. Julia Wood (2000) perhaps said it best when she argued that “applied communication research is not bounded by domain. Its nature cannot be demarcated usefully by context . . . What defines and distinguishes applied communication research is its insistence on putting theory and research into the service of practice, and equally, of studying practices to refine theory in order to gain new understandings of how communication functions and how it might function differently, or better” (p. 189).

Communication as Both an Idea and an Ideal

In closing, we are persuaded by Martin E. P. Seligman (2002), a psychologist from the University of Pennsylvania and author of the best-selling book *Authentic Happiness*, who argues that the greatest achievements “occur in cultures that believe in absolute truth, beauty, and goodness.” We join with Thomas Friedman when he argues for promoting dreams instead of memories. The future of the communication discipline lies *not* only in celebrating our past but also in honoring our obligation and commitment to the human condition. In this sense, we embrace the idea of communication both as an intrinsic part of the human condition and as an ideal for making a difference in the lives of those who surround us, locally and globally.

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2

COMMUNICATION AS A FIELD AND AS A DISCIPLINE

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Is communication a “real” area of academic study? If so, how did it evolve as a discipline? In this chapter, I will trace the evolution of communication as a discipline, outline the reasons why I believe that it is a discipline, and discuss three means for describing the content of the discipline.

Communication is a topic that has fascinated both scholars and ordinary people from the earliest days of human civilization. Traces of writing on the subject can be found in most ancient civilizations around the world, but the most complete discourse on the topic came from ancient Greece, where rhetoric, or the art of persuasion, was an essential part of any discussion of how to be effective as a citizen in a democratic society. Writing on communication in the Greek era tended to focus either on how to be a more effective communicator or on the role of communication in society. A major debate erupted between the philosopher Plato and his student Aristotle on this topic. Plato contended that rhetoric was important for the pursuit of beauty and for entertainment purposes but its use should be ignored in society because rhetoric could lead people away from what was true and cause them to make bad decisions. Plato preferred a philosophical method he called dialectic, where individuals carefully searched for new truth based on what was already known. Aristotle, on the other hand, contended that the importance of rhetoric was to help those in society create probable truth out of what was known or could be deduced. Rhetoric, then, in Aristotle’s way of thinking,

was important to the substance of communication as well as to the style a communicator might use.

Rhetoric as a Key to Communication

Rhetoric was an important area of study for educated people throughout history, but how it was studied depended to at least some degree on the nature of the society where the study was taking place. In the days of ancient Roman democracy, for example, Cicero wrote a manual for structuring the content of public speaking that is still referenced in public speaking textbooks. But by the time the more autocratic rule of the Roman Empire was established, Quintilian, that era’s leading educator, defined rhetoric almost completely in terms of style when he wrote that rhetoric consisted of “a good man speaking well.”

The style side of rhetoric became dominant, to the point that good rhetoric was thought to be not just stylish but also stylized. Entire books were written on elocution, which purported to advise a speaker on the proper forms of speech, appropriate diction, and the ways in which the body should be positioned to convey particular emotions. Watch a play from the Restoration Era (from 1660 and into the 1700s), and you’ll observe the actors behaving in the very stylized manner that was an integral part of the success of those pieces of entertainment.

Rhetoric began to focus on substance again with the publication, in 1776, of George Campbell’s *The Philosophy*

of *Rhetoric*. Campbell emphasized that there were different purposes for speaking (to inform, to persuade, and to entertain), and each type required a different approach. The key to success, according to Campbell, lay in the quality of one's ideas. Ideas themselves had vivacity, Campbell argued, and thus, rhetoric need not be covered up with excesses of style. This approach proved to be very appealing to intellectuals in the newly formed United States of America, as they saw the pursuit of lively ideas as essential to building an effective democracy. So while professors of literature teaching at colleges and universities in the early days of the United States continued to examine how rhetorical style was used to create beautiful essays, stories, and poetry, debating societies focused on arguing about the best ideas for building a better democracy. Typically, these debating societies were not a formal part of the university curriculum, but eventually colleges and universities started hiring faculty who were adept in teaching students how to use rhetoric in order to communicate ideas effectively, both orally and in writing.

Technology and the Beginnings of Professional Journalism

The development of printing and the subsequent increase in literacy, the ability to read and write, among ordinary people also helped not only to preserve ideas but also to contribute to public debate on important issues. Printers began to report and publish the news as a means of having a steady income for their businesses, and these businessmen would train their apprentices to gather and write the news for distribution. The British parliamentarian Edmund Burke was credited with having dubbed the press "The Fourth Estate" (the other "estates" were the clergy, the nobility, and the citizenry) and with having acknowledged the press as being the most influential of them all. His term underscored the importance of journalism in a free society. The founders of the United States recognized that importance as well by including both freedom of expression and a free press in the Bill of Rights, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Speech, Journalism, and the Democratizing of U.S. Higher Education

The advent of large public universities in the United States, especially those known as "land grant institutions," whose missions included the development of agriculture and technology in the regions they served, brought formal instruction in both oral rhetoric, or speech, and journalism into higher education. Land grant institutions reached out to educate talented students whose parents were not among the elite, and these students were not used to the

idea that they might use their education to become leaders in society. So speech education focused on developing and supporting one's ideas for oral presentation in a manner that would appeal to the particular audience that the speaker was planning to address. Journalism, on the other hand, made a transition from being taught as a craft to being taught as a profession. As members of the Fourth Estate, journalists needed to understand not only how to report and write accurately and clearly but also the context and the history of the issues on which they were reporting. Land grant universities valued democracy above most other ideals, and effective speech and a free press were the cornerstones of democracy.

At many colleges and universities, speech and journalism were taught in the English department. This arrangement made some sense, as English shared an interest in rhetoric with speech and an interest in writing with journalism. But it also produced tensions, as English professors treated rhetoric differently than did speech professors, and English professors regarded writing as a liberal art, while journalism professors regarded it as part of a profession. As a result, both journalism and speech professors began to break away from the English department and start separate programs. They also each formed professional organizations that were separate from the National Council of Teachers of English. In 1912, journalism faculty founded what today is called the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, while in 1914, speech professors founded what today is called the National Communication Association.

Both speech and journalism professors were focused on teaching rather than on scholarship. They recognized that universities were concentrating both on teaching and on scholarship that generated new knowledge, but they resisted becoming scholars. In the case of journalism faculty, many had professional experience as working journalists, and they wanted to maintain a professional identity as well as help prepare the next generation of journalists. In the case of speech faculty, most were focused on teaching students to be better oral communicators, and there was some disagreement regarding what would constitute appropriate scholarship. While speech faculty began publishing a scholarly journal almost immediately after forming their association, much of the scholarship that was published in that journal was related to the diagnosis and treatment of speech disorders, such as stuttering.

Communication as an Agent of Social Order and Change

Meanwhile, another new field of study, sociology, was taking root around the country, most notably at the University of Chicago. Sociology was a natural field of study at Chicago, as that university had been founded with

a mission not only to be a first-rate educational institution but also to study and improve the poor and working class neighborhoods of the city that surrounded it. Chicago's sociology program became one that was central to the university's mission, and it developed its own expertise or cultivated expertise in other disciplines that would help it accomplish its mission. The rise of various avenues of mass communication, including, in large cities, several competing newspapers, film screenings for entertainment, and, later, radio, led to the Chicago scholar Robert Park and others constructing the first theories of mass communication.

Chicago also was the home of the philosophers John Dewey and George Herbert Mead. Dewey and Mead arrived at Chicago together and were close friends. Even though Dewey left Chicago in 1904 to move to Columbia, Mead and Dewey stayed in contact. Both were interested in how people used symbols in thought and how they acquired and shared meaning through interactions with others. So Mead and Dewey can be thought of as early theorists of face-to-face communication, even though neither of them probably would have thought of himself in those terms. Nevertheless, both Mead and Dewey's ideas have continued to influence communication scholars to the present day. In addition, Chicago's sociology program was influenced by Mead in particular, and it became a champion of Mead's ideas about symbolic interaction and its role in creating societies. Formal communication scholarship may well have begun at Chicago, but communication there was more of a topic in a larger effort to determine how to define and improve communities, as well as the larger societies in which they were located.

Undoubtedly, the development of media technologies and the unsettled world conditions following World War I led to additional advances in communication scholarship. While the telegraph provided a means of reporting the news from distant places quickly, and films proved to be an excellent supplement to live entertainment, it was radio's immediacy and ability to provide information that was even more current than what was communicated by the telegraph that probably spurred scholars to begin to worry about how the media would affect politics and public opinion. The use of various forms of media for propaganda purposes during World War I, which was continued in Europe following the conclusion of that war, also concerned both scholars and policymakers.

A group of scholars, most of whom were working outside the mainstream of their academic fields of study, started to pursue these issues in various ways. Notable among these scholars were a group of European immigrants (e.g., Paul Lazarsfeld and Kurt Lewin) who were escaping persecution by fleeing to the United States. These scholars produced a number of insights about the nature of media effects and also contributed significantly to understanding how media content and presentation interacted with face-to-face communication to form and change public attitudes.

During World War II, a number of scholars and artists gathered in Washington, D.C., to put to use what had been learned about effective media use in producing and countering propaganda. This group worked at the Office of War Information; it included Wilbur Schramm, who had left his position as head of the famed Iowa Writers' Workshop to participate in the war effort. Schramm was fascinated by what his social science colleagues had learned, and following his stint in Washington, he wanted to put his newfound knowledge to work. He also wanted to return to the University of Iowa, where the only appropriate position open was as director of the School of Journalism. Schramm took up the position and used it to form a Bureau of Communication Research, as well as to begin a doctoral study in mass communication. Schramm's career would take him to the University of Illinois and to Stanford University before his retirement, and in each place, he would establish a distinguished communication program that focused primarily on mass communication research.

In a like manner, the social psychologist Carl Hovland, who was also among the scholars at the Office of War Information, returned to Yale and continued to do research on propaganda and mass communication. This research led him to study communication more broadly, focusing on social interaction and attitude change. Among Hovland's group at the Yale Program in Communication and Attitude Change were individuals who would become renowned figures in social psychology over the next generation.

Journalism and Speech Become Communication

Partly at Schramm's urging, scholars in journalism programs took up social science research in mass communication. Likewise, speech scholars began to do the same for face-to-face and group communication, led by Elwood Murray of the University of Denver, among others. Murray and a group of scholars established what is now called the International Communication Association. Though this group had decided to be interdisciplinary, it was dominated by speech scholars and served as a means for those individuals to become active in communication research.

A watershed mark for speech scholars occurred in 1960 with the publication of David K. Berlo's book, *The Process of Communication*. Berlo delineated a model of communication that, while not enormously different from those offered by other scholars, focused on face-to-face communication. The model outlined variables that might be studied to understand face-to-face communication better, and it introduced the word *process* to indicate that theorizing about communication could not simply focus on its individual parts but needed to take into account how those parts fit together.

By 1968, a group of speech scholars meeting in New Orleans had proposed to rewrite the definition of the academic study of speech to include the study of communication.

Over time, the use of *speech* waned and was replaced by *communication* in describing what was going on when people talked with one another. Likewise, the term *mass communication* waned over time and has been gradually replaced with *media studies*. And “communication” scholars stopped distinguishing between whether communication was mediated or face-to-face and started to use the term more generally to describe an area of study.

Communication as a Topic, Field, and Discipline

So communication progressed from being a *topic* of interest in disciplines such as sociology, social psychology, and political science to becoming a *field* of study within journalism and speech and then to becoming a *discipline* that encompassed and moved beyond the boundaries of both speech and journalism. Communication is still a topic of interest in sociology, social psychology, and political science, among other disciplines, and that interest has been substantial enough to prompt some scholars to contend that communication is an interdisciplinary field of study and not a true academic discipline.

The argument for communication as a field revolves around the fact that communication scholars have historically done research using theories and techniques developed by other disciplines and have coveted publication of research findings in other disciplines’ journals. But, primarily, this argument is based on the idea that communication scholarship is inferior to scholarship in other disciplines and that communication as an area of study lacks prestige. Evidence for this argument comes from the fact that publications in communication journals cite articles from other fields more often than publications in journals of other fields cite communication scholarship. Evidence is also drawn from the fact that communication is not well represented as an area of study in the elite universities of the United States and from the perception that communication scholars, and thus communication scholarship, are generally not well-known.

The argument for communication as a discipline acknowledges the evidence for the opposing argument but adds evidence that indicates that scholarly life in communication is changing. Such evidence includes the proliferation of journals in communication; the movement away from self-publication of these journals by the scholarly associations and toward publication by academic presses; and the continuing low rate of articles accepted for publication, despite the proliferation of scholarly journals devoted to some aspect of communication. The evidence also includes the upcoming first-time ranking of communication doctoral programs by the National Research Council; the classification of communication as a scholarly, as opposed to professional, discipline by the National Science Foundation; and the creation of categories of

funding for health communication research by the National Institutes of Health. And elite U.S. universities are starting to sponsor places where communication scholarship occurs in some form or another, even if they do not include communication as a formal academic department.

Communication’s Subfields of Study

A discipline has its own body of knowledge, its own set of theories and research methods associated with those theories, and a number of recognizable subfields of study. Communication’s body of knowledge is being developed by its substantial number of journals, including one devoted exclusively to publishing theoretical articles (*Communication Theory*). Its research methods may have been borrowed initially, but communication scholars have refined those methods to fit the type of scholarship being pursued. And there are recognizable subfields that are producing a stream of doctoral-level researchers. In 2004, the National Communication Association did a ranking study of communication doctoral programs focusing on subfields. The study identified nine subfields producing doctoral graduates in at least 15 of the 67 universities that responded. The subfields were communication and technology, critical/cultural studies of communication/media, health communication, intercultural/international communication, interpersonal/small-group communication, mass communication research, organizational communication, political communication, and rhetorical studies.

Many of these subfields describe the contexts in which communication occurs: one-on-one or in small groups, organizations, politics, and health care settings. Rhetorical studies and mass communication are familiar as topics of early study within the discipline. Two of the subfields, communication and technology and intercultural/international communication, deal with how individuals use and interact with various technologies and new media or with people from other nations or other cultures within the same nation. Finally, critical/cultural studies of communication/media concern how both face-to-face communication and the media reflect the power structures of the societies in which they occur and are an integral part of the construction of those power structures that greatly influence how we understand our cultures and how we interpret symbols within those cultures.

Three Approaches to Describing the Communication Discipline

There are at least three other approaches available for describing the discipline of communication that should be outlined in this chapter. One is an intellectual description of communication as a collection of scholarly “traditions.” The

second is the description of the communication discipline that the U.S. federal government's National Center for Educational Statistics developed for purposes of collecting and reporting data on instructional programs in higher education in the United States. And, third, the structure of this reference work also provides a means of understanding the content of the communication discipline.

Scholarly Traditions

Robert T. Craig (1999) of the University of Colorado, Boulder, has noted that communication scholarship is conducted in a number of different ways, and he has identified seven of these overarching approaches that he calls "traditions." These seven traditions are (1) rhetorical, (2) semiotic, (3) phenomenological, (4) cybernetic, (5) sociopsychological, (6) sociocultural, and (7) critical. I'll explain each one briefly in the paragraphs that follow.

The Rhetorical Tradition. Rhetoric should be a familiar topic by now. For Craig, the rhetorical tradition focuses on discourse, which can be expressed both face-to-face and via media. Rhetoric has always been conceived as an art rather than a science, and so the best way of examining it has been through the use of criticism—that is, examining the discourse itself and discovering how the creators of the discourse used various kinds of strategies to maximize the effects of that discourse. So whether examining the text of a speech, a newspaper editorial, or a film or television program, the critic is looking to get underneath the surface to see how language is being used for purposes of influence.

The Semiotic Tradition. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and how they are used. Scholars using the semiotic tradition look at how people cooperate to produce meaning and how meanings can be manipulated through the same process as they are created. The most common use of the semiotic tradition has been to examine media content to reveal how signs and symbols have been used to create artistic forms of meaning.

The Phenomenological Tradition. This tradition looks at the communication process from a philosophical standpoint. It treats effective communication as dialogue and values openness and authenticity in both speech and action. Scholars using this tradition analyze communication looking for misunderstandings and seeing how they can be corrected for the betterment of society as a whole.

The Cybernetic Tradition. Cybernetics deals with the control of systems. The most common example, using a mechanical system, is a thermostat, which controls when heating or air conditioning should be turned on and when it should be turned off to maintain a comfortable environment. Likewise, the primary cybernetic function in a communication system is feedback, with positive feedback encouraging the system to keep operating as is and negative

feedback indicating to the system that something needs to be changed. Scholars who use a cybernetic approach tend to study how communication systems are regulated and how they can be changed to make them more efficient and productive. The focus of scholarship in a cybernetic system is how information flows within the system.

The Sociopsychological Tradition. This tradition is the one that has generated the most amount of scholarship, historically, in communication. Scholars working within this tradition are typically interested in attitudes, behaviors, and patterns of interaction that can be isolated and studied as objects that exist in a real world rather than as something that is created. This sort of scholarship often isolates variables to study (e.g., do women speak differently than men?), and it often studies these variables using methods that can be quantified and analyzed statistically. This tradition is at the root of many theories of both interpersonal communication and media effects.

The Sociocultural Tradition. This tradition reaches into the sociological roots of the study of communication, but scholars who study communication from within this tradition typically eschew thinking in terms of "causes" and "effects." Rather, these scholars take the viewpoint that communication is constructed by the participants and that, in turn, those constructions influence our views of both society and culture. Communication both produces and reproduces those patterns that we recognized as societal or cultural.

The Critical Tradition. The critical tradition arises to a degree out of the sociocultural tradition. Scholars in this tradition also look at media and communication at the societal and cultural levels, but they focus on how communication helps create and re-create power structures within that society. In turn, these power structures seek to maintain themselves by becoming normalized through both talk and media content. Scholars working within this tradition regard the criticism of society as both a natural and a necessary part of their scholarship.

Craig's essay contended that communication scholars tend to gravitate toward one of these traditions, identify with it, and then pursue scholarship only from that tradition, though he acknowledged that some scholarship has been accomplished by generating findings from more than one tradition and then attempting to use those findings to produce a richer view of a particular communication topic than might otherwise be available. Craig found it encouraging that this sort of integration was going on, as doing so tended to break down the somewhat artificial differences among approaches. Rather than finding the discipline to be a hodgepodge of different approaches, however, Craig indicated that doing scholarship from these different traditions could actually strengthen the knowledge base of the discipline, assuming that scholars working from within

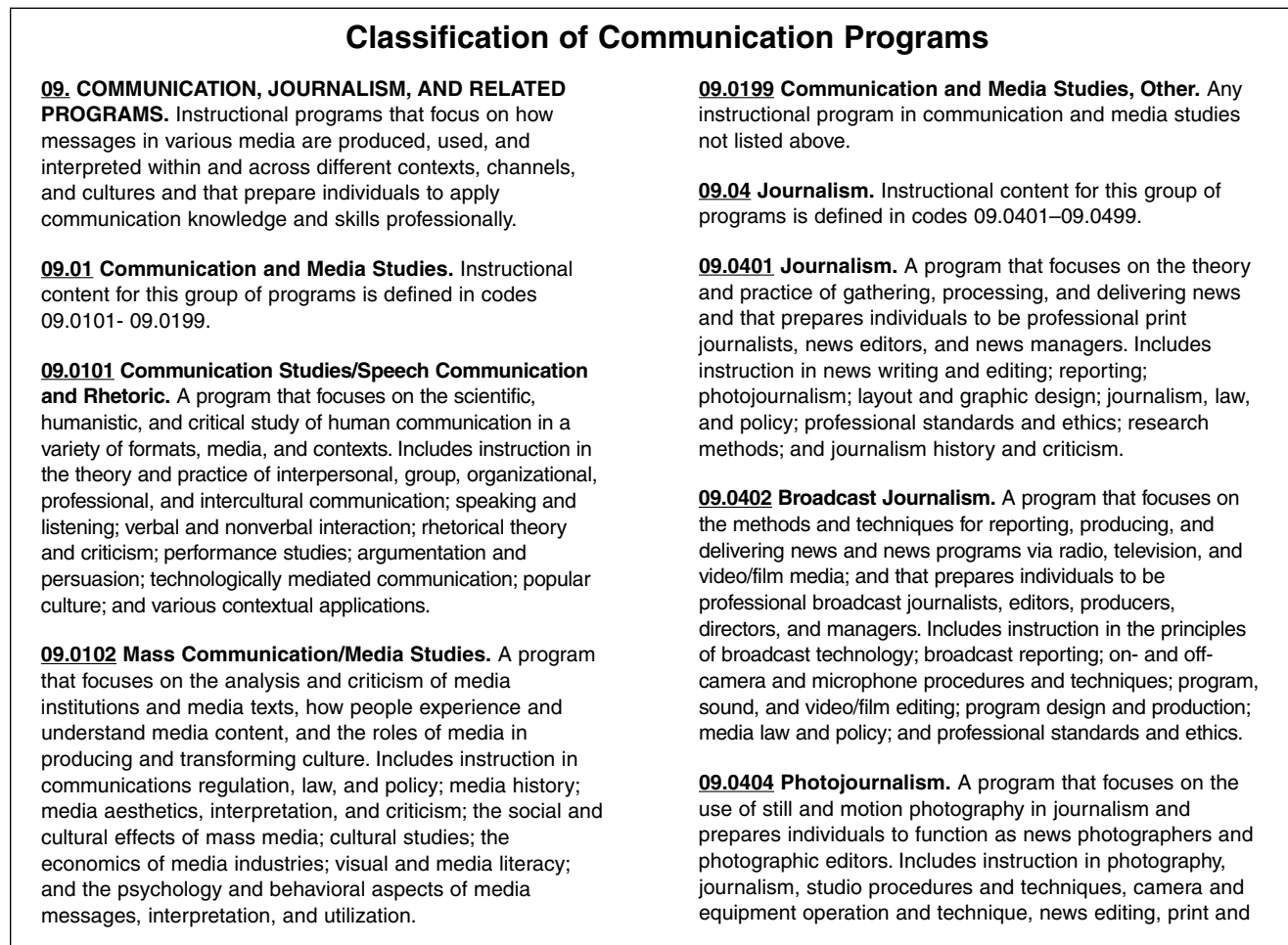
these different traditions were willing to integrate the scholarly insights coming from these traditions. Though there has been a period where the defenders of each tradition supported their own kind of scholarship at the expense of scholarship from the other traditions, such an argument seems now to be largely passé.

Communication as a Collection of Programs of Study

The second approach to describing the discipline focuses on what we teach, particularly what sorts of programs of study we offer to undergraduates. The U.S. federal government collects extensive data on programs of study in colleges and universities around the country, and to do so, it needs a category system for the data. This system is called the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), and it is maintained by the National Center for Educational Statistics. The “Communications” category within the CIP was originated in 1980 and featured mostly definitions of programs that

provided professional education in media fields. The 1980 system also contained a vaguely defined category called “Communications, General,” into which much of the scholarly work in the discipline was placed. There was also a category called “Speech and Rhetorical Studies,” which was included under the general heading of “English.” (See Figure 2.1.)

In the 2000 revision of the CIP, the “Communications” category dropped the “s” and therefore made the title more generic (*communications* generally refers only to the media). Professional programs of study were still an important component of the category, but the “General” section was eliminated, and in its place was added a section titled “Communication and Media Studies.” This section described the liberal arts programs in the discipline, where education focused on knowledge generated from theory development, instead of from research on professional practice. Unfortunately, the creators of the CIP retained the category of “Speech and Rhetorical Studies” under “English.” The word *speech* appearing as a subtopic of English is potentially confusing.



(Continued)

Figure 2.1 Classification of Communication Programs

(Continued)

film editing, news scene composition, subject surveillance, media law and policy, news team field operations, and professional standards and ethics.

09.0499 Journalism, Other. Any instructional program in journalism not listed above.

09.07 Radio, Television, and Digital Communication. Instructional content for this group of programs is defined in codes 09.0701–09.0799.

09.0701 Radio and Television. A program that focuses on the theories, methods, and techniques used to plan, produce, and distribute audio and video programs and messages and that prepares individuals to function as staff, producers, directors, and managers of radio and television shows and media organizations. Includes instruction in media aesthetics; planning, scheduling, and production; writing and editing; performing and directing; personnel and facilities management; marketing and distribution; media regulations, law, and policy; and principles of broadcast technology.

09.0702 Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia. A program that focuses on the development, use, and regulation of new electronic communication technologies using computer applications and that prepares individuals to function as developers and managers of digital communications media. Includes instruction in the principles of computers and telecommunications technologies and processes; design and development of digital communications; marketing and distribution; digital communications regulation, law, and policy; the study of human interaction with, and use of, digital media; and emerging trends and issues.

09.0799 Radio, Television, and Digital Communication, Other. Any instructional program in radio, television, and digital communications not listed above.

09.09 Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication. Instructional content for this group of programs is defined in codes 09.0901–09.0999.

09.0901 Organizational Communication, General. A program that focuses on general communication processes and dynamics within organizations. Includes instruction in the development and maintenance of interpersonal group relations within organizations; decision-making and conflict management; the use of symbols to create and maintain organizational images, missions, and values; power and politics within organizations; human interaction with computer technology; and how communications socializes and supports employees and team members.

09.0902 Public Relations/Image Management. A program that focuses on the theories and methods for managing the media image of a business, organization, or individual and the communication process with stakeholders, constituencies, audiences, and the general public; and that prepares individuals to function as public relations assistants, technicians, and managers. Includes instruction in public relations theory; related principles of advertising, marketing, and journalism; message/image design; image management;

special event management; media relations; community relations; public affairs; and internal communications.

09.0903 Advertising. A program that focuses on the creation, execution, transmission, and evaluation of commercial messages in various media intended to promote and sell products, services, and brands; and that prepares individuals to function as advertising assistants, technicians, and managers. Includes instruction in advertising theory, marketing strategy, advertising design and production methods, campaign methods and techniques, media management, related principles of business management, and applicable technical and equipment skills.

09.0904 Political Communication. A program that focuses on human and media communication in the political process and that prepares individuals to function as members of political and public affairs organizations, political campaign staffs, and related government and media entities. Includes instruction in media effects, political speaking and debating, political advertising and marketing, image management, political journalism, opinion polling, and aspects of print and broadcast media related to the production and distribution of media messages in political settings.

09.0905 Health Communication. A program that focuses on how people, individually and collectively, understand and accommodate to health and illness and the role of communication and media in shaping professional health care messages and public acceptance of these messages. Includes instruction in the development and use of health-related and care-related messages and media; the goals and strategies of health care promotion; relationships, roles, situations, and social structures in the context of health maintenance and promotion; and applications to disease prevention, health advocacy, and communications concerning treatments.

09.0999 Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication, Other. Any instructional program in organizational communication, public relations, and advertising not listed above.

09.10 Publishing. Instructional content is defined in code 09.1001.

09.1001 Publishing. A program that focuses on the process of managing the creation, publication, and distribution of print and electronic books and other text products and prepares individuals to manage the editorial, technical, and business aspects of publishing operations. Includes instruction in product planning and design, editing, author relations, business and copyright law, publishing industry operations, contracting and purchasing, product marketing, electronic publishing and commerce, history of publishing, and professional standards and ethics.

09.99 Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs, Other. Instructional content is defined in code 09.9999.

09.9999 Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs, Other. Any instructional program in communication, journalism, and related fields not listed above.

Or perhaps not. After all, there is a communication and media studies category titled “Communication Studies/Speech Communication and Rhetoric,” which uses *speech* as part of its name. Under this category are listed the following areas of study:

- Theory and practice of interpersonal, group, organizational, professional, and intercultural communication
- Speaking and listening
- Verbal and nonverbal interaction
- Rhetorical theory and criticism
- Performance studies
- Argumentation and persuasion
- Technologically mediated communication
- Popular culture

The first group of these areas of study is identified by the context in which communication occurs: two-person face-to-face (interpersonal), three or more people face-to-face (group), an organization where not everyone may interact face-to-face (organizational, professional), and face-to-face interaction that takes place between people of different cultures (intercultural). The second group of these areas describes aspects of the communication process (speaking and listening, verbal and nonverbal interaction). The final group describes topics of study within this aspect of the discipline: rhetorical theory and criticism (understanding and critiquing messages and communication situations designed to be persuasive); performance studies (understanding and appreciating how performers interpret texts for audiences); argumentation and persuasion (understanding the nature of arguments and how audiences are influenced by advocacy); technologically mediated communication (understanding how people use technology in communication); and popular culture (understanding the role communication plays in cultural trends).

The second category is titled “Mass Communication/Media Studies,” and under this category are listed the following areas of study:

- The analysis and criticism of media institutions and media texts
- How people experience and understand media content, and the role of media in producing and transforming culture
- Communications regulation, law, and policy
- Media history
- Media aesthetics, interpretation, and criticism (i.e., appreciating and evaluating media as art)
- The social and cultural effects of mass media
- Cultural studies (i.e., studying how the media influences our understanding of culture)
- The economics of media industries
- Visual and media literacy (i.e., understanding and evaluating how the techniques of media production and visualization affect how richly we can take apart media content)
- The psychology and behavioral aspects of media messages, interpretation, and utilization

The second major section in the CIP description of “Communication” is titled “Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication.” This section includes courses of study that are primarily professional in orientation, as opposed to the liberal arts orientation of “Communication and Media Studies.” Courses with a professional orientation typically try to ground students in what we know about a given area, but they also focus on how to use what we know in some sort of occupation. Besides advertising and public relations, this section includes the following:

- Business communication, which focuses on the production of printed and Web-designed materials for business use
- Organizational communication, which, in this section, focuses on consulting skills for improving communication within organizations
- Political communication, which, in this section, focuses on the knowledge and skills required to manage political campaigns and the constituent and media relations of officeholders
- Health communication, which, in this section, focuses on the knowledge and skills required to improve communication in health care settings and between health providers and the public

Organizational, political, and health communication also have substantial bodies of theory associated with them, and so they are also topics of study in the “Communication and Media Studies” part of the discipline.

The third major part is titled “Journalism,” and it is also a section where professional education is the norm at the undergraduate level. The topics of study listed under journalism are likely to be found in most undergraduate programs in U.S. universities. Broadcast journalism is listed as a separate category under the “Journalism” rubric, but at most U.S. universities it is just as likely to be an area of specialization within a journalism program as it is to be a separate field of study.

The final major section is titled “Radio, Television, and Digital Communication.” This part focuses on how media content is produced, from a technical point of view. Included here are two major categories, radio and television production and digital media production (and several that describe related courses of study that are located in other fields, such as films or computer science). The “Radio and Television” category also includes a section on management, that is, understanding how broadcast media are programmed and how the entertainment needs and desires of audiences are assessed. This category is also likely to operate from a professional education perspective at most U.S. institutions of higher education. In fact, some of the practical courses in media production are offered as programs leading to professional or technical certification at 2-year institutions (i.e., community or technical colleges).

The Communication Discipline, as Represented in This Work

The third approach to describing the discipline will be my explanation of the topics I selected for inclusion in *21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook*. When the Reference Division Editor at Sage Publications asked me to take on editing the two-volume work in which this essay is included, he described the project to me as “covering the discipline of communication in 100 topics.” As editor of the work, it was up to me to select the 100 topics for inclusion. I did a considerable amount of consulting with colleagues before making the decision.

Many of my consultants urged me not to use standard categories for describing the communication discipline. So I tried to think through what alternatives I would use. This approach worked much better for the liberal arts section of *21st Century Communication* than it did for the professional education section, so, in the end, a bit more than half the work reflects my own ideas about how to organize the discipline, while the rest represents descriptions that are more familiar and agreed on. The result was 100 chapters divided among 14 major parts. I’ll describe the contents of each major part briefly.

The first part focuses on the *discipline* itself. In it, I’ve included a chapter on the idea of communication but also on how “communication” has become a societal ideal; this chapter and the chapters on the history of the discipline form both the “speech” and the “journalism” perspectives.

The second part describes various *approaches* to the study of communication. This part includes methods used to generate research from many of Robert Craig’s seven traditions of study, which I described earlier in this chapter.

The third part looks at communication as a *process*. The eight chapters here reflect my thinking as to the major elements that contribute to our understanding of everyday communication. These are not necessarily traditional categories, but each does represent a significant area of scholarship within the discipline.

The fourth part considers a number of different *forms and types* of communication. These range from the most traditional forms from the speech tradition, such as public speaking and debate, to forms that have been pioneered by rhetorical and media scholars in more recent times, for example, visual rhetoric and examinations of forms of collective memory, such as public memorials.

The fifth part is devoted to the characteristics of *messages*, primarily, though not exclusively, from the standpoint of rhetorical scholars. Included are topics such as style, genre, and rhetorical strategy, but the part also features an examination of how messages are constructed to indicate social support.

The sixth part catalogs how communication affects the development of various kinds of *relationships* that are common in individuals’ lives. These relationships include ones involving family, friends, work colleagues, or people

who provide important functions, such as teachers and medical professionals. Although these chapters are written from the standpoint of a particular relationship, they include much of the information that might have been placed in the chapters on communication contexts, such as interpersonal, group, or organizational communication.

The seventh part explores how a variety of individual and societal *factors* affect communication. These factors are not the only ones that affect communication, but they represent ones where a considerable amount of scholarship has taken place. Included in this part are individual factors such as gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, as well as societal factors such as culture and globalization.

The first volume of this work closes by considering several areas of communication scholarship that reflect the different *challenges and opportunities* most of us face as communicators. Included here are topics such as ethics, communication competence, deception, and systemic media bias.

The second volume focuses primarily on media and the professional career opportunities that media industries provide. The topics in this volume are organized in a more traditional manner than are the ones in the first volume. The chapters in the first part of this volume cover many of the major research traditions on *media*, along with some of the research on how people interact with technology.

The rest of the second volume is devoted to topics common in *professional* education in journalism, public relations, advertising, and media management. The first part, titled “Communication as a Profession,” contains only one chapter, which provides an overview of the kinds of practices that are important to learn if one plans to become a communication professional.

Then, each of the following parts contains chapters on topics that are covered in individual courses that make up a typical curriculum in that professional area. So under *journalism*, there are topics on reporting, editing, and photojournalism practices, along with law, ethics, history, and various forms of journalism. I’ve also included chapters on international journalism and the business of journalism, though this last topic is not a typical part of most journalism programs.

Under *public relations*, I’ve included both basic concepts and more advanced topics such as issues management, crisis communication, and political communication. As journalism, I have included chapters on international public relations and the business of public relations.

The *advertising* part follows a similar pattern. I’ve included chapters on basic concepts and also on specialized topics such as social marketing, and integrated marketing communications. And, as in the previous two parts, I’ve included chapters on international advertising and the business of advertising.

The final part covers *management* topics relevant to media organizations. In this part, there are chapters on economics and ownership of media organizations, policy and

regulation, and media programming issues. The work concludes with reflections on media convergence, or how the boundaries among traditional media such as print and broadcast are being blurred by the widespread use of the Internet to deliver content and services that previously were the province of these older media.

Concluding Remarks

Communication is a multifaceted discipline that resists easy classification. I have attempted here to describe it by (a) tracing the history of the areas of study that led to what we now know as communication scholarship; (b) reviewing how communication can be considered a topic of inquiry in some fields of study but how it has emerged over time as its own field with identifiable subfields; and (c) discussing three approaches to conceiving of a communication discipline as (1) a set of scholarly traditions, (2) a collection of undergraduate programs of study, and (3) the contents of the reference work in which this essay is located. Even though all these descriptions are, in their own ways, reasonably accurate and complete, none of them is wholly so. The good thing about the communication discipline is that it is continually growing and changing, and the direction of that growth and change

relies on bright and committed individuals becoming fascinated enough with this thing we call “communication” so that they produce the scholarship that takes our field of study in new and interesting directions.

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3

THE SPEECH TRADITION

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Where do disciplines and departments come from? We often speak as if they had always existed in the same form they do now, as if there were a natural set of categories for subjects and study. But just like everything else, disciplines and departments in the contemporary U.S. university have a history. What we think of as “communication” may be covered by two or three different departments, and all of them may have started out very different from their current form. We currently imagine communication as a universal process that happens in different media (television, radio, print, the Internet) and is attached to different professions (journalist, writer, producer, actor). The development of all these things proceeded by complex paths, however, and the bewildering diversity of communication departments reflects this. In some places, all kinds of communication are in the same department or college. In others, the communication professions (journalism, public relations, advertising) are in a separate department or even in the business school. In some cases, theater is contained within the communication department, while in others it is by itself or linked with other performing arts, such as music and dance. For the purposes of this article, we’ll take the core of university education in communication to be public speaking, debate, and the traditions that follow from them. In some places, the department in this tradition is called Speech Communication, though that term is increasingly disappearing in favor of Communication or Communication Studies.

To explain the general growth and direction of the communication discipline, we’ll first look at state universities 100 years ago and the received understanding of communication education. Then we’ll examine how public speaking

and debate became the core of a new kind of department, the Speech department, and unpacked the commitments of speech education to civic rhetoric and social improvement. The evolution of the field, lending it a humanistic and social science side, will be next, as we consider the unfolding research programs that grew out of the teaching interests of the Speech faculty. Finally, we’ll observe how current teaching and research in the field are organized.

Changing Universities

Before looking at the emergence of the field itself, let’s consider the background of higher education; the field of speech emerged out of changing teaching practices in U.S. higher education in the early 20th century. Between 1880 and 1920, many of the academic fields in the United States formed associations and university departments. Until that period, colleges had “faculties,” groups of people who taught a certain course. They usually didn’t have advanced degrees but were just university-educated men teaching various liberal arts subjects to students from prosperous families. Both the faculty and the students, however, were changing. University education, with the rise of the research university and the land grant schools, was becoming accessible to a larger and more diverse group of Americans. Higher education was outgrowing its traditional function of reproducing an elite class. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, college was mostly an exercise in self-improvement; its job preparation was limited to qualifying students for the “gentle professions” of the clergyman, the lawyer, and the politician, acceptable jobs for “gentlemen.” All these professions were

“public” (in the sense of public speaking) and reflected a civic approach that derived from a model of classical education focused on principles expounded by the Roman orator Cicero.

Where did communication fit into this model of education? Speech instruction had until this point been integrated into the general, liberal education of the private colleges, with students writing and speaking as part of the study of the classics and philosophy. But as the 19th century came to a close, speech instruction, focused mainly on delivery, became a separate course in the curriculum. Speaking as a performance art, the “platform entertainer,” had become lucrative and popular, and college instruction reflected that reality. People also expected that anyone with a college education could speak eloquently, with beauty and complexity and, at length, whenever the occasion demanded.

The resulting pedagogy, called *elocutionism*, focused heavily on the delivery and performance aspects of speaking and was perhaps more closely related to theater than to public address. Elocutionism harmonized with the middle-class culture of oral and musical performance but remained in tension with the civic traditions of public address. In 1890, the National Speech Arts Association (NSAA) was founded, with the intention of bringing together both private and university elocution teachers under the term *speech*, allowing them to include diverse activities involving the voice.

Speech as a Discipline and a Department

In U.S. universities, speech instruction was evolving from traditional patterns. A precursor to the field of speech was “Oral English,” which continued the elocutionist pattern by including courses (or sometimes parts of courses) that focused on students reading out loud or interpreting essays, stories, or poetry (either classic pieces or those written by the student); speaking was understood as a complement to writing instruction. This relationship to the dominant, literature-oriented part of English departments resulted in a kind of second-class status for those who taught speaking; they were paid less than others and typically were not eligible for promotion. Oral English itself was short-lived, as most of the people who taught these courses eventually moved to Speech departments when they were formed. The relationship between speech teachers and English departments was generally unstable, although some faculty made attempts at professional unity.

In 1910, the Eastern Public Speaking Conference became the primary organization for college teachers of speech. The idea of a conference for public speaking teachers in particular came from James Winans of Dartmouth College, later a renowned teacher at Cornell

University; Winans was concerned about the differences between NSAA teachers, who were sometimes more similar to today’s “motivational speakers,” and the emerging group of academic speech teachers and debate coaches. The journal of the conference was the *Public Speaking Review*, a mix of teaching tips, professional news, and reports from the conference. The conference and the journal met the needs of public speaking teachers to be able to talk to each other about teaching issues and professional issues. It was here, really, that the idea of speech as a distinct discipline was born.

But the *Review* was only part of the picture; overall, speaking instruction was flowering all across the country. At the national level, speaking teachers met as a section of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), an organization that supplemented the research-oriented Modern Language Association (MLA) by focusing on teaching and including secondary school teachers. Due to the tension within English departments, the meetings of the NCTE and MLA became increasingly uncomfortable; James O’Neill of the University of Wisconsin, in particular, spoke out strongly about the need for speech teachers to organize themselves and to maintain the quality of both their teaching and their professional lives.

At the 1914 meeting of the public speaking section of the NCTE in Chicago, Illinois, O’Neill suggested a post-convention meeting of the speech teachers, and there, about 10 faculty members, mostly from the Midwest, decided to create a new association, the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (NAATPS), along with a journal, the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking*. O’Neill would be president for the first 5 years, with Howard Woodward of Western Reserve University in Cleveland as the treasurer. The members took each part of their association’s name seriously. They wanted to be a *national*, not a regional, organization, similar to many other scholarly organizations formed in the previous 20 years. They were interested in the *academic* teaching of speech, which would be tied to research and scholarship; much elocution instruction happened in local, private academies, much the way private music schools still operate. The new organization saw itself as composed primarily of *teachers* who were brought together not so much by a common body of knowledge as by a common vision of instruction and skills.

Speech and the Civic Tradition

Most important, the founders of the field chose *public speaking* rather than “elocution” or “oratory” to designate their primary area of instruction. Oratory had been traditionally tied to the contexts of either elite speakers in the political arena (the Mayor, Governor, or President) or an aesthetically pleasing mode of speaking (what we would nowadays call “motivational speakers” were extremely

popular in the late 19th century). Public speaking represented a turn toward the practical. It included a variety of speakers, not just those in political power or entertainers. Public speaking also included a great many more contexts. Most of the communication professions we know today had recently appeared, in particular advertising and public relations, and people understood the emerging importance of what we would call “business and professional communication.” In addition, in a democratizing move, they envisioned almost all citizens as potential speakers. The widespread growth of civic organizations, from the Masons to the Lions Clubs, the Rotary, and innumerable other local organizations, would provide a platform for just about anybody to be a speaker. Public speaking was not only a broader category than oratory; it contained the possibility of an entire new field.

But in a larger sense, the new speech teachers did not give up on the civic mission of speech instruction; they simply realigned and reinterpreted it. They saw that the “public” in public speaking could have wide applicability without losing its civic meaning. Speaking to the Rotary on matters of public concern was just as civic, democratic, and political as a candidate’s campaign stump speech. The area where the civic dimension of speech was most hotly contested was intercollegiate debate, between teams of college debaters representing their schools. In “switch-side debate,” as it is called, a question is posed (for the whole season), and teams of two students (a school typically fielded several teams) debate other students through four or five rounds in a tournament. In each round, they switch to the opposite side of the question they are debating.

The first 10 years of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* reveal a preoccupation with debates about debate. While public speaking instruction apparently wasn’t too controversial (except for the questions of standardization of grades and the role of speech correction), the proper organization and judging of debates provoked fierce quarrels, in which the political character of pedagogical choices became very clear. Several issues commanded the attention of those who cared about the fate of debate pedagogy. First, questions about the aims of debate emerged continually from the practical problems of conducting debate contests: What does debate do for students? So coaches argued over questions such as the following: (a) How much help should a coach give? (b) How much of a debate should be written and delivered as speech? (The impromptu rebuttal was an innovation around 1920.) (c) Should the judges be debate coaches and speech faculty, or eminent citizens of the community? (d) Do you let students debate both sides of the question?

The question provoking the angriest confrontations was the fourth one. A bright line emerged between the sides: If the debate is judged, then either we get technically better and more skillful arguers or slick and cynical sophists. If the question is judged, then either we’ll get better citizens

later on or we cheat students by having them stoop to local politics instead of learning excellent debating skills. Each side in this controversy saw significant values on the line. For those who wanted to judge the debate, led by James O’Neill, the president of the NAATPS, the professionalization of the speech profession was at stake; if you could bring in (say) Judge Smith or Rev. Jones to judge a debate, then there was nothing particularly professional or technical in teaching debate. For those who wanted to judge the question, led by Hugh Wells, a former judge then coaching at the University of Southern California, the civic context of speech instruction was at stake; if you didn’t mimic the form *and* content of civic occasions by holding students responsible to real audiences (i.e., members of the community), then debate became a game with no necessary connection to civic life. For many critics, the competitive nature of debate fundamentally undercut any civic ethos it might have; democracy, to be ethical and effective, must be much more than a game.

Dissatisfaction with debate has thus been around as long as debate has been an intercollegiate sport. In the 1930s, unhappiness with debate led to the introduction of a new course on *discussion*, which focused on deliberation and decision making in small groups. The discussion course brought together the various pedagogic threads we’ve seen. Discussion was collaborative and cooperative rather than competitive—group members work together to solve problems. Discussion represented an idealized form of civic communication. While many people identify democracy with voting, it could—and should—be more than that, since votes ought to be based on rational reflection about what to do. Discussion mimicked the deliberative aspects of democracy by bringing together diverse people and allowing them to engage each other rationally in decision making. Discussionists, including Alfred Sheffield, Craig Baird, and James McBurney, among many others, contrasted discussion sharply with debate and used John Dewey as their philosophical justification. Debate begins with a proposition (the “resolution”), and so when a debate begins, all the important decisions except one have been made. Discussion begins with a problem, which a group discusses until the participants feel that they have a common understanding of it. They then proceed to consider alternative solutions, asking of each one not only whether it solves the problem but also how its trade-offs compare with alternate solutions. Discussion isn’t mere talk; it is intended to be a framework for argument and reasoned speech that allows the focus to be problem solving rather than “winning the debate.” The important aspect of discussion is its “microdemocratic” character; at each stage, any member of the group could have input, challenging or modifying the characterization of the problem or the details of the solutions, whereas in a debate, once the resolution is proposed, the only choice is to vote it up or down. The discussion course evolved, during the 1960s, into the

“Small-Group Communication” or “Group Dynamics” course, though discussion was a competitive event in college forensics until the 1970s and remains one in some states’ high school forensic contests.

The Structure of Speech Departments

The first years of the NAATPS saw the widespread evolution from departments of Oratory and Elocution to departments of Speech; partly this was a change under way already, but the Association also encouraged members to form separate departments when they could. The new field quickly became more than public speaking. The most common pattern for Speech departments, sometimes called the “Midwestern” or “Illinois” model (after Charles Woolbert’s design for the department there), included every activity that involved human speech. Instead of courses that focused on a particular speaking situation (in the way the Oratory department focused on political and legal discourse), speech teachers expanded their domain into all the *uses* of speech. Courses thus included public speaking, debate, persuasion, physiology of the voice, diction and vocal expression, theater, and interpretation (of literature), the new name for what had been called “reading.” The early speech field did not view these as separate areas simply thrown into a department (as had been partly the case with speech in English departments) but as a unified course of study, beginning with the voice mechanism and proceeding to the various functions of human speech. Sometimes the “psychology” of speech was included as a unifying perspective, with each aspect of verbal communication depending on an underlying psychological mechanism. Sometimes classical rhetoric was invoked to provide a common thread, picturing a discipline that began with Aristotle and Cicero and was now moving into the 20th century. The Midwestern-style department would typically have four areas: (1) public speaking and debate, (2) theater and performance, (3) speech disorders, and (4) (with the advent of radio) some type of mass media.

This curriculum included some novel areas. Rhetoric became a standard part of the curriculum due to the many PhDs produced by the program at Cornell University; sometimes the focus was classical, sometimes on the emerging idea of “rhetorical criticism,” but most often, it was a study of British and American public address of the past 200 years. Speech pathology, pioneered by Smiley Blanton (who had an MD from Johns Hopkins) at the University of Wisconsin, became a staple of the field. Speech pathology (later called *speech pathology and audiology* and now most commonly called *communication sciences*) covered everything from nonstandard accents to cleft palate and stuttering to deafness and was a standard part of a general speech education right through the 1970s. Within 10 years of the founding of the field, radio had

become important enough so that universities offered courses in “radio speaking,” or training one’s voice for radio. At some schools, journalism was a part of the Speech department; at others, it grew out of news-writing courses and remained in the English department; and in others, it had its own department.

Consistent with the unified vision of the field, improvement of “speech” by addressing lisping or stuttering was of a piece with improving speech by “normalizing” a student’s accent or improving his or her interpersonal skills. This last function was often glossed as “social hygiene” or “speech hygiene.” By the late 1920s, teachers assumed that civil society was organic and that there was a normal, “healthy” function for individuals in social groups. Rather than a simple-minded conformity, they had in mind a kind of civic humanism inspired by John Dewey; the democratic functioning of groups both large and small required individuals who possessed the skills for both contributing their individual points of view and helping the group to function overall. In particular, Elwood Murray, in his classic work *The Speech Personality* (1937), not only launched the first serious use of social scientific methods in the field but also outlined the type of person that speech training was supposed to produce: someone “well-adjusted,” who could get along well enough with others to solve problems. This perspective was a considerable advance over the earlier skills approach, which had emphasized individual competence and success.

The NAATPS changed its name in 1920 to NATS, the National Association of Teachers of Speech, which conserved the pedagogic focus that defined the field previously while accommodating the move to teaching the full range of courses involving speech. In 1947, the name became the Speech Association of America, recognizing the growing research component of the field, demonstrated in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech and Speech Monographs* (now *Communication Monographs*), established in 1934. *The Speech Teacher* (now *Communication Education*) began in 1952 as a forum for teaching methods and later published mainly social scientific work on communication pedagogy. So, as it diversified, the field at this point has two branches, the humanistic (using the word *rhetoric*) and the social scientific (more closely identified with *speech* or *communication*). Let’s examine each of these in turn.

Rhetorical Studies

While working in Speech departments, humanistic scholars in communication increasingly identified themselves as “rhetoricians”—those who study rhetoric. With their discovery of Kenneth Burke’s work on rhetoric in the early 1950s, they merged a classical tradition of rhetoric with symbolic interactionism, developing a general approach to the human use of symbols. Through the 1960s, they expanded their notion of public discourse beyond speeches

by politicians to include pictorial and nonverbal rhetoric, protest rhetoric, and the rhetoric of social movements; in the 1980s and 1990s, literary theory and cultural studies decisively influenced the course of rhetorical theory and criticism.

Even though the term *rhetoric*, since the 18th century, had been a synonym for style instead of content and in the early 20th century was associated in the United States with composition courses (the “freshman rhetoric”), a more dignified and intellectually satisfying account of rhetoric has been natural to (Speech) Communication departments. From Henry Hudson’s “The Field of Rhetoric” to Donald Bryant’s “Rhetoric: Its Function and Scope” and the proceedings of the Wingspread Conference in 1970, scholars in this tradition sought to illuminate the social, cultural, and intellectual value in the study of persuasion.

In the 1930s, in part due to the efforts of Craig Baird at the University of Iowa, a rough consensus emerged about the outlines of rhetorical study. Humanists in Speech departments began with the idea that they would be studying “rhetorical history,” the historical elements (events, people, and words) that intersect at important political speeches in the American and British political tradition. But there could be very different emphases in studying speeches, as noted by Herbert Wichelns (1925/1993) in his landmark essay “The Literary Criticism of Oratory.” Wichelns points out that there are many different ways to understand the importance of a speech, and that some of them are not consistent with a rhetorical approach. He considers and rejects several options, most important a literary approach, where the speech is treated as a text just like a poem or a novel, and a biographical approach, where the emphasis is on trying to tie the personality or character of the speaker to specific features of the text. Wichelns argued that the approach that should be most characteristic of rhetoricians in Speech departments is a functional one: Speeches should not be evaluated on their aesthetic merit but on how well they achieved the speaker’s purposes in the situation. (Edwin Black would later contest this formulation in his 1965 book *Rhetorical Criticism*.) Craig Baird realized in the early 1930s both that Wichelns’ view didn’t exclude historical approaches (you might need to have a deep historical understanding to evaluate success) and that two things were needed for rhetorical criticism to become systematic. First, the field would need collections of speeches and need to collect important current speeches; Baird and his students William Brigrance, Maxfield Parrish, and Lester Thonssen got this project under way, and speech collections continue to be published to this day. Second, they needed a method of rhetorical criticism that would enable scholars to systematically analyze speeches. Thonssen and Baird intended their massive *Speech Criticism: The Development of Standards for Rhetorical Appraisal* (1948) to meet this need. The key features of this text were its comprehensiveness

and its vision of rhetorical criticism as a methodology. *Speech Criticism* tried to establish rhetorical criticism as a continuous tradition from the Greek and Roman rhetorical theorists to the present. It presents the problems of theory and methodology as part of a long tradition, which to an extent was an invention of the authors; the field that began as “speech” was focused on teaching public speaking, not the analysis of speeches and texts. Thonssen and Baird integrated some useful bits of literary methodology but by and large attempted to find an entirely rhetorical approach. But their focus was on speeches, and they hewed close to the functionalist approach outlined by Wichelns.

The Wingspread conference, held in Racine, Wisconsin, in 1970, was sponsored by the Speech Communication Association (as part of its National Developmental Project on Rhetoric) and organized by the faculty at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. An interdisciplinary group of scholars responded to the question “What is the essential outline of a conception of rhetoric useful in the second half of the 20th century?” In a superb set of essays and responses, participants outlined an expanded notion of rhetoric, which went far beyond the public address tradition. In light of the political unrest of the time, contributors noted that a starting point must be the inadequacy of traditional conceptions of political discourse as a foundation for rhetorical theory and criticism. In the publication of the Wingspread proceedings, in a volume called *The Prospect of Rhetoric* (Bitzer & Black, 1971), we can see some common threads connecting the “new” rhetorical scholarship. Rhetorical analyses are not empirical studies or theories about the effects of persuasion; those are left to social scientists, marketers, and mass communication researchers. Rhetorical theory and criticism must account for common speech as well as the speeches of politicians, low-brow discourse as well as high-brow, science as well as popular culture. Rhetoric is never merely technical, never just a set of means to an end; rhetoric is always both style and substance, ornament and argument. The moral dimension of rhetoric cannot be separated from its technical aspects, and rhetoric is not only a conveyer of knowledge but is also constitutive of knowledge.

Rhetoric, in short, is not only about much more than “just” speeches, it covers the whole canvas of human symbolic interaction. Much of the impetus for the newer versions of rhetoric came from the work of Kenneth Burke, a self-taught symbolic interactionist who adopted rhetoric as his favored theory. Nearly any part of culture or human life, from movies to music to clothes to food, can be understood as symbolic, and thus analyzed in terms of both the audiences that consume it and the audiences it creates, or constitutes. In the 1970s, scholars increasingly moved away from the public address paradigm, where the audience and, to an extent, the purpose are given, and toward a constitutive view of rhetoric, in which audience and speakers create a cultural and social reality through their talk. This

expanded (“global”) conception of rhetoric empowered rhetoricians to study increasingly diverse types of cultural artifacts and eventually paved the way for a version of rhetoric that overlaps with cultural studies. Cultural studies, which originated at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) in the 1960s, is a multidisciplinary movement that studies, from a generally Marxist point of view, the effects of the production and consumption of cultural artifacts, in particular how they do or don’t challenge the political status quo.

From Speech to Communication

To understand how the social science side of the field evolved, and thus the structure of the modern Communication Department, we have to see how Woolbert’s original picture of the field fared over the years. The Midwestern school had looked forward to a social scientific account of communication and sought scientific foundations for “speech,” from the physics of the human voice to the psychological means of persuasion. Woolbert’s 1916 article on “The Organization of Departments of Speech Science in Universities” outlined the Midwestern approach quite comprehensively. The organizing trope was “speech,” embodied (quite literally) in the use of the vocal mechanisms. Departments of Speech Science were to study and teach about the uses of the speaking voice (which obviously excludes singing) in all their functions and contexts. Woolbert listed 10 headings for the academic student of speech:

1. Phonology: Physiology of the voice, the physics of sound
2. The Technique of Expression: Vocal technique, bodily action, history of elocution
3. The Psychology of Expression: Adjustment of mind and voice—the psychology of meaning and thinking
4. Application of Laws of Expression: Reading, interpretation of literature
5. The Acting Drama
6. Extempore Speaking
7. Argumentation and Debate
8. Persuasion
9. The Pedagogy of Oral Expression
10. The Aesthetics of Speaking, Interpreting, and Acting

The disappearing relationship of speech to elocution is apparent here, since drama, oral interpretation, persuasion, and argument all find a place. To characterize speech disciplinarily, Woolbert (1916) provided a diagram that showed, through an overlapping set of circles, how the study of speech was related to virtually every other field.

Yet the point of disciplinarity is to emphasize difference over similarity, and Woolbert’s attempt to leverage speech into disciplinarity through its relation to other fields didn’t succeed at first. Throughout, Woolbert emphasized the “scientific” character this new discipline will have; for example, he discussed the laboratory practices that will soon, he hoped, be a standard feature of Speech departments. Research was the key, and so he noted,

The reason speech is backward as a subject has been its frequent lack of academic character . . . Speech science, if it is going to persist in our universities, must raise up for itself a corps of fully trained men and women. (p. 72)

Woolbert thought that the issue of disciplinarity was central, since social significance and curricular coherence would follow from a clear “scientific” research program that placed speech among the disciplines that have already made it. He was, however, wrong in the long run. Social scientific research was either borrowed from other fields or emerged out of concerns about the social relevance of knowledge about communication, as we have already seen in the case of Elwood Murray.

In the post–World War II era, the speech discipline began, slowly but steadily, to lose the integrated structure that had characterized its early years, in tandem with the growth of social science. First, and most obviously, the Midwestern model of the departments began to break up. As speech pathology became increasingly professionalized, it had less and less in common with Speech departments. Their focus was on research into the physiology of speech and hearing and the treatment of speech and hearing disorders, and on the production of accredited audiologists and speech pathologists for private practice and schools. Theater, in many cases, had more in common with other performing arts such as music and dance, sharing their need for performance spaces and having its faculty evaluated for their artistic output rather than publications. In departments with the components of mass media, radio, television, or film, the level of student interest and the increasing scholarly and professional profile of media scholars and practitioners led in many cases to the formation of a separate department where there wasn’t already one.

The loss of the integrated vision also happened on deeper levels, both methodological and epistemic. To an extent, speech scholars in the 1930s and 1940s had seen themselves as answering similar questions about speech/communication in different forms: sometimes questions about the historical context of speeches, sometimes about the causes of stuttering or the correlates of effective speaking. Increasingly, especially with the development of sophisticated experimental and statistical techniques, some Speech scholars began to emulate researchers in psychology and sociology and adopt a more clearly social scientific approach to communication research. The rift between humanistic and social science

research would continue to grow, and by the 1970s, debates on the relative merits of each approach were common.

Before then, however, researchers often borrowed methodologies and made them their own. Some borrowings turned out to be highly significant. Expanding on the Yale studies of persuasion, communication research, both in Speech and in Mass Communication departments, began to take a variable-centered approach to studying interpersonal and public influence. The Yale studies of the mid-1940s (conducted by psychologists from Yale, including Carl Hovland, Irving Janis, and Harold Kelley) began as assessments of the World War II motivational films in the *Why We Fight* series directed by Frank Capra. Rather than looking simply at the properties of the films (i.e., the arguments and visual images, or “appeals”), the U.S. military asked Hovland and his associates to systemically assess which aspects of the films actually changed the attitudes of soldiers about fighting; their methodology consisted in giving before-and-after measures of soldiers’ attitudes, to measure any change, and systematically varying the content of the films and the audience members to see which variables produced the most change in specific kinds of soldiers (older/younger, more/less educated, and so on).

In the late 1940s, a group of researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, led by the social psychologist Kurt Lewin, began to study group interaction (“group dynamics”) reflexively, by having group members simultaneously participate in and observe groups. They established a site in Bethel, Maine, the National Training Laboratory (NTL), for intensive summer studies of group process. They introduced many radical ideas, such as the reflexive study of groups (members both participate and watch themselves participate simultaneously) and the terminology of T-groups (therapy), C-groups (community groups), and X-groups (experimental groups). They brought new philosophies into communication research, from existentialism to Freud, and pushed the speech hygiene concept to its limit: Bad communicators are pathological and in need of therapy. They began to believe that a healthy psychological state and good communication were the same thing, since poor communication was caused by insecurity, defensiveness, failure of empathy, and so forth. As the NTL evolved, it began to move away from strictly group process and toward interpersonal communication more generally. This focus on personal relationships was actually somewhat novel. The speech scholars who attended the NTL summer sessions came away not only with a new framework for studying communication but also with a new ethic for communication. Some of them became part of what was sometimes called the human potential movement, an approach that sought to maximize the possibility of authentic and transparent communication. This approach represented an extension and transformation of social hygiene and was typified by textbooks such as Virginia Satir’s (1972) *Peoplemaking*.

During the 1960s, the standard contexts of communication we recognize today became parts of speech pedagogy and research, including professional communication and organizational communication. As more and diverse topics were included in the curriculum, the term *speech* began to seem restrictive, and the more general term *communication* seemed more appropriate, since it easily accommodated nonverbal communication, written and mediated communication, as well as the perspective that focused on human relationships generally rather than the parts of them conducted through speech. In 1968, a conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, was sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education and the Speech Association of America and resulted in the book *Conceptual Frontiers in Speech-Communication: Report of the New Orleans Conference on Research and Instructional Development* (Kibler & Barker, 1969). At this conference, the recommendation was made to change the name of the field to speech-communication, and this name, minus the hyphen, was adopted the next year, resulting in the Speech Communication Association (SCA).

The conference’s recommendations were made in recognition of the expanding understanding of the field, so that *communication*, a more general term that encompassed diverse channels, media, and modes of human interaction, was a more appropriate name for the field than *speech*, even though they adopted “spoken symbolic interaction” as the focus of study. They emphasized, echoing Woolbert without realizing it, that all areas of the field should “use scientific approaches to inquiry” (Kibler & Barker, 1969, p. 21). The report acknowledged some old themes: the field as essentially interdisciplinary, the importance of speech processes to democratic decision making, the necessity of speech instruction for people to become functioning members of society. But these themes developed a new urgency due to the recognition of the plight of the underprivileged in society; “The conference participants encourage speech-communication scholars to design and execute research dealing with the speech-communication dimensions of current social problems” (p. 25). This conference also marked the emergence of applied communication research, serving the needs of both society and (later) business.

Speech Communication as a field of undergraduate instruction underwent explosive growth in the 1970s (Craig & Carlone, 1998). Students wanted to study in the many “new” areas of communication: interpersonal, organizational, group, and others. In fact, the diversity began, gradually, to outgrow the bounds of the term *speech* and the term *communication*, as cultural studies and media studies became integrated into the field’s teaching and research. So, despite being shared by other departments, including Media and Speech Pathology, *communication* seemed increasingly a better fit. Another name change, based on the

results of a vote by the membership, created the current National Communication Association in 1997.

Structures, Functions, and Contexts

A helpful way to understand the current structure of the field is to take seriously its tradition of linking pedagogy to research and look at the general structure of department organizations. Of course, each department is different, but there are some overarching similarities in how coursework is divided up. Courses (and research programs) tend to reflect different ways of categorizing communication. If a kind of communication is distinguished by the literal (sometimes physical) arrangement of communicators, we'll call that *structural*. If a kind of communication is typified by what it is for, we'll call that a *function*. When different functions and structures differ only in the setting for communication, we can call that a *context* (or *communication context*).

A primary division among types of communication is structural. If we focus on the individual, that's often called *intrapersonal* communication, a study of psychological processes; if we leave out the linguistic dimension, we would be studying *nonverbal* communication. If two people communicate, we call that *interpersonal communication*; typically, the interpersonal relationships studied are romantic and heterosexual, though a growing body of research studies friendships (same or different gender) and romantic relationships of the same gender. Add from one to a dozen more people to an interpersonal setting, and it would be called *small-group* communication. If one person is speaking to many, we often call that *public communication* or *public speaking*. And if one person (or a group) communicates with an unknown audience (through books, radio, TV, etc.), it has typically been called *mass communication*, though that term is increasingly being replaced by *mediated communication*, for the following reasons.

Mass communication was typically understood as a kind of structural analog to public speaking: one person speaking to many over the radio or TV, one person writing to many through the newspaper or a book. It's easy to see how that view can be extended to situations where the "speaker" is a group or organization; movies and television shows would fall in that category. But the structural assumption of broadcast media, from one to many, is now only one technological option among many others. Thanks to the growth of the Internet and digital media generally, many new combinations are possible. Using e-mail or a message board, many people can communicate with a single person and possibly see each other's contributions. Two people who've never met in person can form a close interpersonal relationship, and small groups can have their meetings remotely or even asynchronously. Social networking sites such as Facebook or MySpace allow contact among people

who know each other only indirectly. These new ways of accomplishing, through technology, different forms of communication are rapidly being integrated into the communication curriculum, in the form of a single course (called something like "Technology and Communication") or a variety of courses.

Communication departments also study and offer courses in certain *functions* of communication. For historical reasons, the functions studied are only a subset of the possible ones. For example, the function of relationship development is treated typically within the course on interpersonal communication. However, it's common to have courses in persuasion, mediation, and conflict resolution, all of which are important functions of communication and to a certain extent cut across the social science/humanities boundary. In the context of the communication professions, other kinds of functions are possible: sales, public relations, and training are uses of communication sometimes taught and studied in a Communication department.

The biggest growth in the study and teaching of communication has occurred in the expansion of the *contexts* of communication. A context is, roughly, the setting in which a structure or function of communication occurs, where the setting influences the nature or kind of communication. A brief list of contexts might include the following:

- Organizational communication
- Business communication
- Health communication
- Global communication
- Intercultural communication
- Marital and family communication

Each of these contexts brings together knowledge from structures and functions and tries to address specific question or problems of communication in that context. In fact, much of the study and teaching about contexts focuses on specific problems within the context, investigating what goes wrong with communication and how it can be improved.

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4

THE JOURNALISM TRADITION

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This entry will discuss the history of journalism as a practice, the various approaches scholars have taken to studying journalism, and the impact of journalism studies on the larger field of communication studies. The journalism tradition has been formative. Communication as a discipline first took root in journalism programs (Donsbach, 2006; Rogers, 1994). Its engagement with journalism has nurtured a concern within communication studies for public life, the public sphere, and democratic self-government, the domain that provides journalism and journalists their ideological legitimacy. Concerns about the impact of news, news bias, and propaganda on public opinion drove thinking about media effects and the interaction of media and interpersonal communication. Normative ethical and policy discussions have also been defined by discourses about journalism ethics and freedom of the press.

Origins of Modern Journalism

Journalism and news are often used interchangeably, even by conscientious scholars, but it would be more appropriate to distinguish between them. Journalism is the ism that disciplines the media presentation of news. Every society in known history has had something we can recognize as news: information about current events having novelty and timeliness as values. Journalism, however, is relatively recent. The word itself appeared in Western languages only in the first half of the 19th century, referring then to the advocacy writing of partisans in national politics. Journalism was first the journalism of opinion. The word came to refer to news reporting only

later in the 19th century. It took its modern meaning as the expert or professional construction and explanation of current events in the first half of the 20th century.

Journalism as a discipline of news was an Anglo-American invention. Journalism grew at the intersection of the news market and the public sphere. Jean Chalaby (1998) argues that the invention of journalism followed the creation of a mass market for news and the media organizations that would supply it. The mass market appeared when large populations of ordinary readers were able to purchase newly available cheap newspapers, a development that occurred first in the United States (mainly because of the absence of a newspaper tax) in the 1830s and then in Britain in the 1850s. The cost of producing printed products dropped through the 19th century in most countries. Paper became cheaper due to improvements in supplies and the mechanization of production, presses became much quicker and produced far more copies as steam power was hooked up to cylindrical platens, and advertising revenue became far more plentiful as markets for consumer goods expanded. All these economic factors introduced economies of scale. The new, cheap media became mass media.

But the industrialization of the press disturbed the ecology of the public sphere. The founding forms of the newspaper had been rooted in a fantasy about a virtual national public engaging in the sorts of deliberation that would produce effective self-government (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001). This early history of the public sphere has been most influentially outlined by Jürgen Habermas (1989).

Habermas (1989) argues that a public sphere appeared in specific European nations in the 18th century as “civil society” separated itself from the “state.” This kind of public

sphere was supposed to provide a space for political deliberation, a space in which private citizens might gather to discuss issues of common concern. The “bourgeois” model of the public sphere, as Habermas calls the 18th-century formation, was characterized by relatively free access to citizens and a broad and diverse representation of empowered voices, operating mainly through a newly political newspaper press. The people, observing the public arena, were supposed to be able to see their own concerns echoed there and to have confidence that the outcomes of public discussion would be reasonable. The public sphere became a key institution in the age of revolution. Activists took care to present reasoned arguments to the public at the same time as they mobilized actions on the ground. Much of this apparent debate was designed to conceal social conflict. And, of course, many were excluded, especially women, nonwhites, non-Christians, and the propertyless (Fraser, 1992; Warner, 1990). But in the age of small newspapers produced on hand-powered presses with circulations in the hundreds, it was possible to believe that expression was unrestricted (Tocqueville, 1835).

Industrialization of the media created an imbalance in the public sphere. New printing machinery, such as steam-powered presses; more abundant display advertising; and cheaper paper led to economies of scale for newspapers, turning them into big businesses and eventually turning daily newspaper markets into natural monopolies (Kaplan, 1995). Ordinary people as well as political leaders and activists believed that the owners of the wire services and the most successful newspapers had gained the power to shape public discourse and that they routinely abused this power (Blondheim, 1994; John, 2000; Lawson, 1993; Sinclair, 1919/2003). Public demands for restraints on media power gained traction (McChesney & Scott, 2004). In most Western countries, the development of a well-financed public service media sector mollified the public. In the United States, questions of media regulation repeatedly roiled politics. Movements for public ownership of the telegraph system arose throughout the period between the Civil War and World War I (Czitrom, 1982, chap. 2), and especially at the turn of the century, politicians raised the alarm at the growth of “yellow journalism,” as the sensational news of crime and sex in the cheap, mass-circulation press came to be called.

Media owners, editors, and reporters responded to public hostility by proposing ethical standards and claiming professional responsibility. They promised, in effect, to steward the public sphere. In some countries, journalists formed unions that afforded them the autonomy to elevate news standards. In the United States, media owners retained control. By the first decades of the 20th century, the public was well familiar with owners using chains of media properties to promote particular concerns—selflessly, as when E. W. Scripps used his chain as a mouthpiece for Woodrow Wilson’s administration during World War I (Zacher, 2008), or egomaniacally, as when William Randolph Hearst used his media empire to try to make

himself president (Nasaw, 2000). Such heavy-handed tactics produced a counterreaction. Owners were pressured to ensure the independence of their news operations by building a wall of separation between news/editorial departments and their business offices and to publicly commit their operations to fairness and balance, which came to be called objectivity. At the same time, traditional political and social elites, concerned with the state of public morality, pressured owners to resist market pressure for sensationalism and to respect the privacy of individuals.

The promise to steward the public sphere authorized a professionalization project for journalism. Media owners and working journalists together lobbied for college curricula in journalism and wrote codes of ethics, seeking to elevate the industry in respectability and public regard. In most developed countries, universities began offering journalism courses and degrees in the first decades of the 20th century.

Throughout the Western world, newswork underwent a reconfiguration as the professionalization project unfolded (Nerone & Barnhurst, 2003). The profession of journalism synthesized the tasks of the reporter with those of the correspondent. Reporting initially meant the faithful transcription of events and information. A reporter was someone who attended public meetings and transcribed what was said or who dropped by the markets and docks and gathered information about prices and arrivals. For a reporter, the world was filled with facts that could be collected and transmitted such as they were. Reporters were pieceworkers who were paid by the line. Correspondents, on the other hand, were letter writers. Stationed in distant locales, they constituted the eyes and ears of the public abroad. Unlike reporters, correspondents were supposed to be recognizable personae with opinions and voices.

The modern journalist combines these two subjectivities. The journalist is supposed to tell the truth about the world by giving expert explanation and context. The journalist has a name but not a voice; in fact, the journalist’s byline is not meant to promise a unique perspective but to assure the reader that any other journalist would have written the same story: It is a refutation of authorship. Citizens relied on journalists to explain the complexities of the modern world. Facts alone would lead to idiocy, while opinion could amount to propaganda. The stance of expert explanation, whether in the “objective” mode of U.S. journalism or the more engaged mode of European journalism, fit well within news media systems that were increasingly dominated by powerful national media that produced increasingly streamlined, modern accounts of the world.

Modern journalism had a predecessor in pictorial journalism. In the middle of the 19th century, shortly after the introduction of photography, “illustrated” newspapers appeared in each of the Western countries, beginning with Great Britain. Although similar in some ways to photojournalism, illustrated journalism relied on the artist’s traditional tools for incorporating narrative, commentary, and character analysis into pictures (Brown, 2003). Using

empirical traces in the form of photographs or sketches from roving sketch artists, illustrated newspapers provided middle-class readers with pictorial accounts of the nation's events, providing the visual repertoire that supported a national "imagined community," to borrow Benedict Anderson's (1991) term.

Origins of Journalism Studies

The academic study of journalism began against the background of World War I—era propaganda. It was then incorporated into the new schools of journalism, where it has sat uneasily beside the practical training of journalists.

In the United States, the founding text for journalism studies has been Walter Lippmann's *Public Opinion* (1922). Lippmann was a Harvard-educated journalist and an editorial writer of progressive temperament. During World War I, he experienced firsthand the propaganda campaigns of the Allied governments; after the war, he attended the peace negotiations at Versailles. These experiences left him troubled and disillusioned. He undertook a series of studies of news reporting during the war, which eventually led him to write *Public Opinion*, the work for which he is best known.

Taking his cue from the myth of the cave in Plato's *Republic*, Lippmann described the problem of public opinion as being rooted in the cognitive deficiencies of ordinary people, who think through personification, simplification, and stereotyping. Moreover, as their world becomes larger and more complex, ordinary people are forced to rely more and more on media than on personal experience. Media representations interact with personal interests and biases to produce the "pseudoenvironment," Lippmann's term for the "pictures in our heads" that intervene between ordinary people and the real environment. And media content is in turn distorted by market forces, which intensify the reliance on stereotyping.

For Lippmann, reliance on public opinion as a steering mechanism deeply compromised the effectiveness of democratic government. Instead, he proposed new institutions of expert opinion, "intelligence bureaus" that would provide sound information for decision making. He emphasized that the press was not an intelligence bureau because its work was always subservient to commercial motivations. Instead, he envisioned an array of think tanks (like the Brookings Institute) and bureaucratic agencies (like the Federal Reserve Board).

Lippmann's analysis of the vulnerabilities of public opinion did not go unanswered. Thinkers recognized much of his argument as common sense but considered his assessment of the situation too gloomy and his remedy too elitist. John Dewey's response was the most influential. In *The Public and Its Problems* (1927), Dewey acknowledged the vulnerabilities of public opinion but insisted that these problems were best addressed through a commitment to political education. Providing the spaces and institutions

for public engagement would encourage the development of more sophisticated and intelligent public information and public opinion.

The debate between Lippmann and Dewey produced an agenda for the study of news and public opinion. Lippmann himself produced a series of content analyses, beginning with *A Test of the News* (Lippmann & Merz, 1920), which analyzed 3 years of coverage of the Bolshevik Revolution by *The New York Times*. This study concluded that the coverage consistently distorted the prospects of the Bolsheviks to meet the expectations of a readership hostile to communism.

World War I also prompted the social-psychological study of propaganda. The most influential practitioner in this vein was Harold Lasswell (1927), whose book *Propaganda Technique in the World War* presented a systematic account of government-produced content and has been credited with offering a "hypodermic-needle" model of media effects, though Lasswell himself did not use that term. In Lasswell's account, the government "injects" propaganda into public consciousness, and the effects are predictable: Propaganda works to shape public opinion. This model fit the common sense of what had occurred during World War I. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, propaganda was the most influential mode of studying media effects. Its influence peaked and began to wane with the 1937 founding of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, a think tank that housed scholars such as Kirtley F. Mather and Alfred McClung Lee. The looming World War II made propaganda seem like an unpromising and even unpatriotic style of analysis, as it failed to distinguish between the propaganda efforts of actors such as Nazi Germany and the more palatable efforts of the Allied governments and the advertising industry (Sproule, 1997).

World War II and Its Aftermath

World War II and the Cold War that followed fundamentally changed the agenda for media and journalism studies. In the West, World War II produced an antitotalitarian consensus, leading to an urgency to explain why fascism should not arise in the liberal democracies and helping produce a settlement of the question of the relationship between media industries and the public sphere, which meant in turn a renegotiation of the responsibilities of the press.

During the war, the Allied nations pondered the growth and apparent success of fascist politics. Authoritarian systems seemed to be an effective way of organizing industrialized societies, perhaps even the natural way—this was one lesson of the rise of Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy and, as the war gave way to the Cold War, Stalin's Soviet Union and Mao's China. One ideological goal of the Allies during the war and the Cold War was to explain why "totalitarian" systems were not natural, not efficient, and not inevitable.

In the United States, much scholarly energy went into showing that aspects of the American system or the American character provided a firewall against authoritarianism. At the same time, deflating apprehensions about homegrown fascism became the chief goal of communications research. This can be seen across a range of research traditions, from the normative innovations of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, or Hutchins Commission (1947), to the “limited-effects” and “two-step-flow” models of media effects found in the work of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955).

The Hutchins Commission was a blue-ribbon panel of intellectuals funded primarily by Time-Life publisher Henry Luce to investigate the role of the mass media in a democratic society. The panel began with the recognition that the size and profit orientation of the agencies of mass communication posed a problem to traditional notions of a free press, which held that free and open competition among the media would allow for the voicing of a wide range of ideas: The media marketplace would represent the full spectrum of groups and opinions in society. But the industrialization of the media had closed off the media marketplace, while giving the surviving mass media tremendous power to define the range of debate. They had become, in effect, the “gatekeepers” of public discourse, to use D. M. White’s (1950) term. The gatekeeper metaphor accentuated the ability of the media, and especially journalism, to selectively grant public recognition to ideas and groups. The rise of media power and media monopoly imposed new responsibilities. The Commission tasked the media with providing a virtual “marketplace of ideas” as a substitute for the disappearing media marketplace. This meant the media must report the truth in context about society, provide a forum for comment and criticism, represent the groups and goals and values of society, and provide full access to the news of the day. Professional journalists were to play a key role in this function.

Such ideas about the responsibilities of media institutions were common in the West. In Great Britain, the first Royal Commission on the Press (1947–1949) came to similar conclusions. The notion that the media must serve the freedom of the people to express themselves, to acquire and impart information, and to communicate also permeated the early documents of the United Nations, such as the UNESCO Charter and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1947), though these did not necessarily envision professional journalism as the major instrument of popular communication. *Four Theories of the Press*, the most influential map of the terrain of normative press theory in the post–World War II era, called this constellation of ideas “social responsibility theory” (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1956, chap. 3).

While social responsibility theory expressed the new normative sense of the professional press, the limited-effects model seemed to describe the actual social functioning of mass communication. Katz and Lazarsfeld’s

influential book *Personal Influence* (1955) argued that primary groups and face-to-face communication offered a built-in resistance to top-down or mass-mediated messages, which reached the general public only through the mediation of local “opinion leaders.” This two-step flow countered the ominous influence of the increasingly concentrated media system and the mass society critique argued most memorably by C. Wright Mills in *The Power Elite* (1956). Mills had been an investigator on the primary research that had produced *Personal Influence*, by the way, and believed that the data showed strong media effects (Gitlin, 2006).

Both the limited-effects and the social-responsibility models can be seen as rooted in the Cold War. Both provided ideological assurance that totalitarianism was avoidable and unnatural. Both also addressed the problem of an apparently consolidated media system and its effects on the flow of public information, a situation that seemed to support the professionalization of journalism.

The High-Modern Moment

Dan Hallin (1994) refers to the Cold War era as the “high-modern moment” of U.S. journalism. At this moment, a relatively small number of national outlets—a handful of national newspapers, a couple of wire services, and a few national broadcast networks—offered an ideologically unified account of the news of the day in an apparently expert and nonpartisan fashion. Journalism in the United States has never fully professionalized and never can. The classic professions, such as medicine and law, exercise a monopoly on an occupational field through a licensing procedure that’s justified on the basis of some kind of arcane science: Doctors need to attend medical school and pass exams because medical science is recognized as crucial to sound practice. Journalism lacks anything like medical science, and the First Amendment prevents it from exercising a monopoly. But the bottlenecks in the media system that existed in the middle of the 20th century let it act like a profession. The owners and managers of these media had both an ideological and a business interest in maintaining professionalized standards.

In most Western countries, the media system was dominated by a handful of national partisan newspapers and by state-run broadcasting agencies. In Europe, Hallin and Mancini (2004) identified two other models beyond the North Atlantic’s market-based one: a northern European public service model, best exemplified by Scandinavian subsidies and state broadcast agencies; and a southern European model characterized by “political parallelism,” or media alignments with political parties. In these other systems, the inflection of professionalism differed, but in every developed system of mass communication, some form of professionalization took place, with “expert” journalists assuming a responsibility to explain the world to a more or less passive public.

Scholars tried to find ways to reconcile the evident power of journalism with the limited-effects model. One resolution, now common sense, was the “agenda-setting” approach (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Agenda setting meant that even if the media don’t tell the people what to think, they do tell them what to think about. Media content provided the matter out of which public discussion could form, and media professionals, as gatekeepers, had the power to fix and stratify content and therefore establish the agenda for the public. The agenda-setting model has been tested dozens of times, and the parallelism between news content and surveys of public attitudes on issue relevance has been firmly established (McCombs & Shaw, 1993). But scholars disagree on where the agenda comes from in the first place. Some, including most news professionals, argue that it’s set by the world itself: The news agenda reflects current happenings. Others see the agenda set either by the ideology and sociology of news or by the maneuverings of empowered groups.

Studies of the sociology of the newsroom suggested that a number of contextualizing factors shaped the agenda. Tuchman (1978) and Gans (1979) argued that the routines of the newsroom and the ideological apparatus of the journalists themselves inflected news coverage. Herman and Chomsky (1988) took this notion to an extreme by arguing that the structure of the news media is built in a series of filters, such as reliance on official sources and on advertising income. After the five filters they identified had done their work, what was left, they argued, was propaganda. Although this “propaganda model” seems too mechanistic to many scholars of journalism, some studies have supported it (Kennis, 2003; Mermin, 1999).

One influential answer to the question of how the media agenda gets set is W. Lance Bennett’s “indexing” model. Bennett argues that news coverage is indexed to power. Where the powerful are in consensus about an issue—as, for instance, in the U.S. response to 9/11—news coverage will be either minimal or inattentive with regard to alternative positions. When the powerful are in disagreement, news coverage will offer a larger range of “legitimate” opinion. Bennett, Lawrence, and Livingston (2007) have found confirmation of the indexing model in news trends in the first decade of the 21st century, as consensus over 9/11 yielded to dissensus over the U.S. government’s Iraq policy in the wake of Abu Ghraib.

Another conception of the working of power through the press is “framing” (Entman, 1993). As in agenda setting, frame analysis holds that the media help set the terms of public discourse by defining the larger narratives and significations that give meaning to the news. During the Cold War, for instance, U.S. news media paid far more attention to international affairs than they did at the beginning of the 21st century. But all international news was “framed” by the competition between the West and the Soviet Bloc. This “Cold War frame” brought some events into visibility but left others marginalized or absent.

Elections that pitted pro-Soviet against pro-Western parties, for instance, received attention, whereas labor struggles in nonaligned or pro-Western nations did not. As in agenda setting, the framing hypothesis does not necessarily provide an explanation for how frames get made. It does seem to accurately represent what journalists do. They look for frames that will make a series of events meaningful and intelligible. It also explains the tactics of *parajournalists*, the term Michael Schudson (2003) applies to public relations professionals, public information officers, and others who try to influence the flow of news. Activists, politicians, and advocates of all varieties work hard to frame issues in a favorable way.

The cumulative weight of agenda setting, framing, indexing, newsroom sociology, and the propaganda model has made the limited-effects model of the 1950s and 1960s obsolete. Added together, these approaches to news culture in fact approximate an ideological analysis based on Gramscian notions of hegemony, in which apparently independent news professionals are led by the system of news production to reproduce dominant ideologies and representations of social groups stratified by race, class, and gender (Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Robert, 1978; Reeves & Campbell, 1994). But one shouldn’t make too much of the eclipse of the limited-effects model. It was always opportunistically applied, inasmuch as non-Western media systems always appeared to scholars in the West as having powerful effects. And in the emerging interactive media environment, common sense is returning to the notion that readers or audiences are active in forming their own attitudes. The Internet, as it liberates users from the older mass media, appears to be a realm of limited effects.

Journalism Outside the West

The basic Western framework for understanding the world’s other journalisms received its classic expression in the book *Four Theories of the Press* (Siebert et al., 1956). This book told a story about a normative evolution from authoritarianism, with its distrust of the individual, reason, and free expression, to libertarianism, with its emphasis on limited government involvement and free competition. In addition to the authoritarian and libertarian theories, the book identified the social responsibility theory, described as a modification of libertarianism designed to accommodate the mass media, and the “Soviet Communist Theory,” which it treated as an extravagant version of authoritarianism. For much of the Cold War, deviations from the libertarian theory looked like authoritarianism to Western journalists and scholars.

But the 20th century saw a spectrum of noncapitalist and anticapitalist models of journalism. Even within the Soviet bloc and in Mao’s China, which are suitably called authoritarian systems, the notion of professionalism allowed for a range of autonomy under the rubric of “self-criticism.” Beyond these systems, a variety of “alternative,” “radical,”

and “development” media practices appeared, linked by a rejection of top-down flows of information and a resistance to North-to-South models of influence. Some called for journalism from the bottom up; some called for alternatives to the dominance of the North-based global wire services; and others criticized the news values that led coverage to obsess with “coups and earthquakes” (Rosenblum, 1979). Globally, these other journalisms gathered under the umbrella of resistance to “cultural imperialism” and advocacy of a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) (Nordenstreng & Schiller, 1979). The NWICO movement found a home in the UNESCO and was given its most influential expression in the report of the MacBride Commission (UNESCO, 1980), which invoked the UNESCO charter and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in calling for a “right to communicate” and the “free and balanced” flow of information.

The NWICO movement crested in the early 1980s and then came under withering counterattack. Reagan’s United States and Thatcher’s United Kingdom withdrew from the UNESCO in protest in 1984, calling NWICO a movement to sanction censorship. The UNESCO distanced itself from the movement in response. With the fall of the Soviet bloc, the influence of the nonaligned nations, which had been the primary sponsors of the NWICO movement, seemed less salient. Issues of media and news influence and global flow migrated from the political arena to the economic sphere, where they were dealt with under the guise of tariffs and intellectual property agreements. Finally, regional media dynamism—Bollywood movies, Mexican telenovelas, Arabic-language news—made the international communication order seem less stratified.

The bulk of the world’s information economy remains highly concentrated, however. Beneath the apparent diversity and openness of the global media system is an increasingly concentrated core of vertically integrated transnational corporations. The same is true of national systems, where a proliferation of channels coexists with an even narrower set of controlling actors.

The End of the High-Modern Moment

At the beginning of the 21st century, the coherence of journalism came under strain. Among the factors contributing to this challenge to the hegemony of professional journalism were the rise of social heterogeneity, the eclipse of the ideological map of the Cold War era, and the decay of the media bottlenecks that gave the dominant channels of the 20th century their ability to set the boundaries of the news of the day. Professional journalists sensed the barbarians at the gate.

In the United States, journalism identified a “credibility crisis” in the early 1980s. After an ascendancy in the 1970s, in which the heroic journalism that had come of age during the Kennedy assassination (Zelizer, 1992) had congratulated itself (perhaps falsely) for toppling an administration

in the Watergate crisis (Epstein, 1975; Schudson, 1993) and helping to end the war in Vietnam (Hallin, 1986; Hammond, 1999), news professionals were surprised to find public resistance to their objections of exclusion from access to the invasion force in the attack on Grenada in 1983 (Nimkoff, 2008). The major news organizations, including the Gannett chain, came to the conclusion that public ignorance of the role of journalism in a democratic society had to be countered by programs of public education. They undertook both outreach programs to expand public knowledge and survey projects to measure it; over the next quarter-century they would find that their efforts produced little improvement in popular attitudes toward the news media (Mindich, 2004).

As an institution, 21st-century journalism will not be able to set the agenda or frame the terms of debate. It will be more vulnerable to influence from parajournalists and competition from new journalisms—tabloid journalism, for instance, or what Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel (2006) call the “journalism of assertion” on cable television and the Internet. Professional journalists may also be freed from their demure captivity to objectivity and responsibility.

The end of the high-modern moment means a fundamental shift in journalism as the disciplined presentation of news. To alarmists, it means nothing less than the end of journalism. In all likelihood, journalism will adjust to its new circumstances and propose new elements of discipline. These will have to include a new humility about defining the world and a new frankness about the personhood of the journalists.

Three movements posed challenges to high-modern journalism at the beginning of the 21st century. First, “public journalism” expanded on the legacy of the Hutchins Commission and an awareness of the agenda-setting power of the press to argue that journalists should consciously align themselves with the public, deferring to public deliberation as the key agenda-setting function and dedicating themselves to making public life more engaging, more democratic, and more potent (Glasser, 1999; Rosen, 1999). The public journalism movement has waned in step with the monopoly power of media channels, particularly daily newspapers. Second, “citizen journalism” attracted attention with the rise of the Independent Media Center movement and made a spectacular contribution to the reporting of the protests against the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle in 1999. It continued to grow with the rise of the blogosphere, but the blogosphere itself developed an ambiguous relationship with the mainstream media, relying on reporting from dominant institutions of journalism such as the BBC or *The Washington Post* for much of its raw material. Third, various movements for “media reform” proposed structural change in the form of ownership limits, public financing, and copyright restriction. Media reformers cover a wide spectrum of political positions and congeal around specific policy initiatives with significant success but have not yet managed to advance broader restructurings.

In much of the world, the old journalism of the West constituted the new journalism. This is particularly true in the former Soviet bloc, where new translations of *Four Theories of the Press* anchored the canon of new journalism education programs. Western models of professional journalism also made inroads in the commercializing media system of China, although Party ownership and state censorship of newspapers and broadcasting limited innovation.

The tribulations of journalism in the beginning of the 21st century are reflected in changes in journalism education and journalism studies. Journalism education has always searched with difficulty for intellectual grounding. Because journalism lacks the legitimating science that medicine and law enjoy, it has always been somewhat uncomfortable in the academy and somewhat insecure in the practical world. A successful career as a journalist does not, in most countries, require college-level education, and the most prestigious news organizations have often made a practice of recruiting journalists from other fields. Especially in specializations such as business news or science reporting, higher education in a field other than journalism is often considered more appropriate. In spite of this liminal situation, journalism schools and programs have continued to grow in numbers, journalism graduates have continued to increase their share of new hires, and Western journalism education has continued to colonize new areas of the globe.

Journalism Studies has been housed, for the most part, in journalism schools. The critical study of journalism and the social scientific study of news have never been entirely consistent with the practical training of professional journalists, and journalism schools have always seen scenes of competition between scholars and practitioners. Ironically, the strain on professional journalism and the rapidly changing media environment eased these strains. Scholars and practitioners found common ground in a concern for the declining news hole, a fear of corporate ownership and media monopoly, and a regard for the impact of the vulnerabilities of journalism on a challenged public culture. The new media environment encouraged journalists to think beyond objectivity and professionalism at the same time as intellectual challenges to scholarly detachment encouraged academics to be more open to civic engagement and entrepreneurial activity.

Conclusion

The journalism tradition has done much to set the agenda for communication studies and to place concerns for the health of public life at its center. Questions about the ability of ordinary people to govern themselves, fears about the impact of propaganda, and a concern for the vitality of the public sphere in an age of mass communication instigated communication scholarship in the first half of the 20th century, and models of media effects followed the

shifting landscape of journalism in its second half. As the field of communication research moved to address the new media environment in the beginning of the 21st century, the journalism tradition, with its emphasis on a discipline of verification as an indispensable element of public life, continued to generate questions and models. Inasmuch as communication studies embraces questions of citizenship and public life as foundational, the journalism tradition will continue to reside at its core.

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PART II

APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION

5

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION

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The philosophical approaches in play in any field appear in the knowledge claims that mark the epistemological contribution of the field. For their part, these knowledge claims arise out of the theories that constitute the subject matter of the field. This entry, then, takes on the topic of communication theory. An entry on communication theory has three responsibilities: first, to define what theory is; second, to discuss the field of theory; and third, to explore what makes a theory a communication theory.

Theory

Theory is a way of thinking about something. It is a set of instructions that tells what and why things are (the way they are); how and why they function (the way they function); and the value it all represents. We find theory in every part of communication studies—in its empirical, critical, and analytical corners. We usually come into contact with theory in some discursive (speech or text) or symbolic (usually mathematical) form. This form may be as short as an equation or the few sentences of a proposition, each attributed to a single author, or may fill a library shelf with the work of several to hundreds of authors who produce a body of like-minded thought.

But for theory to be theory, it has to have certain characteristics and to accomplish certain goals. Theory has to have an object of explanation. It has to contain or connect to a method of analysis. In its objects and methods, it will

establish what counts as evidence as well as the warrants that justify the evidence while producing a characteristic explanation. It will have a set of boundaries that will set the scope of its performance and typical application. And it will have a consequence of value.

Explanatory Target

The point of theory is to explain something, to deepen our understanding of what's going on around us. The "something" that gets explained or better understood is the focal object or explanatory target of the theory. For example, the explanation provided by expectancy violation theory (Burgoon, 1978) operates in the domain of interpersonal relationships and offers an explanation for understanding what happens within a relationship when spatial or other nonverbal expectations derived from that relationship are violated. The explanatory power of the theory is not very high. It doesn't tell us very much about relationships, about how expectations are tied to different kinds of relationships, or even about the outcomes of a violation. But it does systematize what may have been just random observations about at whom we smile and nod or from whom we keep our distance. And that is plenty enough.

Method of Analysis

Theory's explanations operate in the abstract and at some level of generality greater than the individual case. At some point in its development, however, theory has to show

its value in understanding some set of specific conditions. The element of the theory that provides this understanding is its method of analysis. The method connects the constructs of the theory with the circumstances of the specific conditions in much the same way that methods of work connect a blueprint to a finished structure.

Every theory will have a preferred methodology or at least a methodology most commonly used. Methods can be classified as metric, interpretive, and analytical, as well as a host of hybrid forms that are some combination of these. Theories with their foundations in cognitive processes will most likely use metric measurement methods that use a logic of quantities (metric empiricism); theories based on action (rather than behavior) will use interpretive ethnographic methods that use a logic of narrative (hermeneutic empiricism); theories based on cultural texts will use interpretive/analytical methods based on close readings and critique and using syllogistic or enthymemic logic.

Contemporary discussions about the social construction of knowledge have complicated the relationship between the claims that theory makes and the understanding that we derive from those claims as to the specific case. The relationship comes down to the question as to whether the facts of the case are explained by the theory (facts and explanation are relatively independent) or the facts of the case are constituted in the theory (facts and explanation are both derived from the theory).

The answer to this question makes a difference if and only if the reality we are trying to explain is not itself a product of the social action that supports the theory in the first place. In our earthbound state, what happens when one steps off a curb is neither contentious nor subject to modification in social process. Our foot will fall to the street. We have a theoretical explanation for that circumstance—gravity. In the United States, we also have a factual certainty that over all full-time jobs, women will earn less than men. This fact is a different sort of fact from that of stepping off the curb because it is constructed in the data collection and analysis methodology in use by the U.S. Census Bureau and the subsequent interpretations applied to those data by other researchers. Change the methods as the Census Bureau did in 1993, and the facts change.

There is a fundamental ethical principle of equal pay for equal work, which is protected by the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in play here. Consequently, whatever the quality of the fact, if we generally agree that it is true, or fail to adequately challenge it, we then have to provide an explanation for the difference. The facticity of the difference is not by itself enough to warrant a claim of ethical and legal violation. We have to understand the nature of the fact; it has to be explained. There are a variety of theoretical positions from which we can develop that explanation. For example, we can use the economic theory of the market, or we might use any single or some combination of the critical issue theories of gender, class, or race.

If we choose economic theory, our method of analysis would undoubtedly be based on metric approaches with a heavy emphasis on quantitative data and statistical analysis (for an example, see the Government Accounting Office [2007] document “Women’s Earnings”). If we approached the problem from the critical issue theory of gender, or if the methods are narrational; we would create an argument as to how that wage gap should be understood as gender discrimination (for a practical—not scholarly—example, see the National Committee on Pay Equity Web site, www.pay-equity.org/about.html; accessed October 10, 2007).

So why would one see women’s earnings as a communication problem? It is a communication problem because regardless of the theory and its preferred method of analysis, the result will be an argument—a set of claims supported by evidence that makes sense inside some framework of warrants. It will not result in the of-course-it’s-true certainty of stepping off the curb. Furthermore, the issue cannot be resolved through epistemological force. It can be resolved only through political process, which means that both our understanding and the resolution of the inequity reside in communicative practices.

The argument character of the outcome or product of research is itself subject to argument. Objectivists (here played by the traditional science type) would contend that conclusions may be wrong but competent data are above contention just as the consequences of stepping off a curb are. Standpoint theorists (aka subjectivists, relativists) would argue that as long as the data are semiotic (based on language or action), the whole enterprise depends on the cultural moment of its production. The human condition (our ultimate explanatory target) is not transcendental but historical.

Evidence and Warrants

The preferred relationship between theory and some method develops out of the terms of the theory itself. If one is working from a cognitive theory that holds that internal cognitive states direct subsequent behavior and that these internal states are addressable through nonreactive linguistic measurements, why bother with the drudgery of field notes? In fact, under this theoretical structure, field notes would be considered insufficiently objective to count as adequate evidence for a subsequent claim. On the other hand, if one’s theory concerns the cultural hegemony embedded in the industrialized texts on relationships, objective measurements would be considered insufficiently nuanced to reach the complexity of the text, revealing only surface characteristics.

It is certainly true in the realm of theory production that the method can precede the theory. One exquisitely trained in ethnographic methods is unlikely to develop a cognitive theory of behavior. All of that researcher’s insight is based on the observable conditions of action. Researchers and theorists often resent this fall from Cartesian privilege, but knowledge production is a human activity.

Whatever its starting point, theory and its method of analysis establish the requirements of what will count as evidence by providing the foundational assumptions of the explanation itself. In the field of argumentation, these foundational assumptions are called warrants. These are the necessary prebeliefs that allow evidence and claim to be connected. If you are going to make a claim about the reliability of a scale, for example, you have to first believe that there is something independent of the scale to be measured (the scale is not simply responding to the interplay of language, for example). Furthermore, that something has to be stable enough to be measured accurately more than once. If you don't hold these warrants to be true, then a reliability coefficient cannot stand as evidence.

Warrants are the hidden game of theory. They are revealed by carefully addressing the question "What do I have to believe to be true for this theory to make sense?"—or in a less subjective modality, "What has to be true of the world for this theory to make sense?" Every theory has a nexus of warrants that are present but mostly unexpressed. This interconnected structure reaches some teleological or axiomatic point that may or may not be accepted. Depending on whether the axiom is accepted or not, the theory stands or fails, just as different geometries stand or fail on whether or not parallel lines meet at infinity. Espousing a theory entangles the spokesperson in the warrants of that theory. Without an adequate analysis of those warrants, we are ignorant of the implications of our theory beliefs.

The combination of theory, method, evidence, and warrants create the requirements of the explanation that can follow. A competent explanation has to be true to these requirements. It is also true that an explanation achieves competence by meeting these requirements. And there is more: The American Psychological Association (APA), for example, has a 400+ page manual innocuously titled as *A Handbook of Style*. It has rules for everything from the formatting of references to the parentheses in citations to spelling and punctuation. It also imposes a structure of argument and presumes the presence of certain kinds of evidence. Publication outlets that require the use of the APA style (or any single style sheet) impose a way of thinking on the writer. What we as readers see as the result in whatever scholarship we read, is a highly regimented argument, many elements of which can be there as much for these conventional requirements as for their epistemological force.

Scope of Performance and Application

Although we typically identify a theory by the author(s) whose formulation either captures the research community's interest at the time of presentation or is resurfaced at a later time, theory has to go well beyond the initial presentation and engage many other practitioners in order to be successful. (The whole issue of the

attribution of ideas to individuals is a cultural practice and is itself the subject of research.) Theory that is not picked up by others (and more meets that fate than not) is "dead" to the community, although resuscitations do occur. A theory "lives in a community of scholarship because it is productive—it generates hypotheses, research questions, frames arguments, and directs critical analysis in a way that the community finds valuable. In somewhat crass terms, works achieve publication, grants are secured, careers are advanced, and it might also have some lasting effect on our knowledge. This last marker of success is always in doubt. The Ptolemaic universe lasted from about AD 150 to Copernicus's heliocentric system of 1543, nearly 1,400 years. When we talk about the test of time, then, nothing in the social sciences comes close to meeting that standard.

The "test of time" is not just time, however. It is time that is needed to examine and refine the theory to find its areas of success and points of failure. This testing develops the theory's scope of performance and appropriate application. Every theory has a scope of performance and typical applications. Step off a curblike height in outer space and float away. The more mature and tested a theory is, the better defined are its scope of performance (circumstances where we gain knowledge) and its appropriate applications (the conditions under which it works as claimed). Determining the scope of performance and successful applications is a defined step in theory development. It involves a meta-analysis of the works that advance as well as those that critique the theory. A meta-analysis of a theory examines the primary research and scholarship that the theory has promoted to see if the set is coherent in its findings and claims. For example, Mares and Woodard (2005) examined 34 studies on the oft-neglected prosocial consequences of children's television viewing. They find about the same effect size for prosocial content as has been found for antisocial content. Mare and Woodward did not conduct any of the 34 studies they analyzed, but their meta-analysis allows us to see a developing preponderance of evidence that enlarges our understanding of television effects.

The appearance of meta-analysis is an important marker in the viability of a theory. It indicates that sufficient competent work has been done to allow the possibility of consilience. Consilience is the convergence of evidence that points to some conclusion—in our case, that the terms of the theory are supportable. Consilience is not evidence of validity (or truth). The convergence could be a convergence of error. The absence of consilience, however, is strong evidence of a failure to thrive within the community. Consequently, one should remain deeply skeptical of any theory until the meta-analyses start to show up in the literature.

One point that follows here is that theory is a work in progress. The theory of its initial formulation is rarely the theory of a mature meta-analysis. What a theory is, then, depends on when one engages it. The theory you learned in an undergraduate course is not the theory being used 10 years later. It is a process of continuing education.

Consequence of Value

Issues of value are always problematic in the discussion of theory. For some, theory is solely involved in the pursuit of truth, and questions of the good (value) are viewed separately across Hume's gap. This position is most easily held when the true is material and can be directly represented in theory. In this case, theory is a simple description and no more than a description of what is "out there." The position becomes untenable when the true is a social practice and represented in forms of discourse that load in preconception, hierarchy, and power relationships. In this case, something is true because it ought to be true—it benefits someone, some group, some class, some social structure. This sounds sinister, but the social construction of knowledge has to include the political processes endemic to the social.

But even if one holds to a 17th-century conception of the discovery of knowledge and the ultimate supremacy of truth over error, value inhabits theory. In the current battle of evolution and intelligent design creationism, there is much more on the line than which one is correct. There is identity, standing, voice, career, textbook market, and all the economic and political implications of the fight involved. To understand the intensity of the fight, one has to consider value. Individuals reap great benefits in the ascendancy of one theory over another.

There is a third framing of this issue that causes contention across materialists and social constructionists alike. This is the position that theory is an active form of advocacy. It is one thing to necessarily reproduce hegemonic social relations, as social constructionists believe, or to benefit from the success of a theory, as even materialists believe; it is quite another to say that theory is a deliberate form of advocacy. In this framing, theory is constructed to achieve its truth through its force of advocacy.

This position is justified as an extension of the social constructionist argument. If the realities of social life are created in social practice and if our knowledge of those social practices is itself a social practice, then a claim of knowledge reproduces and reinforces what is social practice. If, however, our knowledge claims disrupt ongoing social practices and change these practices to bring these practices in line with the claims, then the claims become true through advocacy. The advocacy forms of the critical issue theories of class, gender, and race are examples of this kind of theorizing.

Recapping

The effective engagement of theory in general and of a specific theory requires our attention to eight components: (1) target, (2) method, (3) evidence, (4) warrants, (5) explanatory form, (6) scope of performance, (7) typical application, and (8) value. For the nonpractitioner, communication theory is some discursive form. For the practitioner, however, a living theory is a way of thinking

that governs the scholarly practices of the members of that theory community. If it is only a discursive form, it is merely an artifact of some bygone scholarship. The eight components, then, can be summarized in the questions: What do I have to believe to be true about people and the world to accept this theory? And what are the scholarly practices that are enforced by these beliefs?

Levels of Theory

In more technical terms, we have been talking about the ontological (questions of existence), epistemological (questions of knowledge), praxeological (questions of action), and axiological (questions of value) issues to which every theory must explicitly or implicitly respond. How a theory in general responds depends on the prevailing preconditions of theory that are in play in the epistemological culture in which that theory is developed.

Theory doesn't just appear. It appears within a field of understanding. If, for example, you live in an era or cultural domain where all knowledge comes from authority, an empirical theory based on knowledge through experience would be marginalized and likely suppressed. In our current Euro-American epistemological culture, of course, empirical theories—theories connected to material evidence—are the norm. It was not always so, and in some areas of scholarship, it may never be.

At some grand level, these preconditions form the episteme. Our current Euro-American episteme has been called the Age of Enlightenment, and it puts a premium on the individual mind, rationality, and empiricism. Theory that develops in this era (which is now some 400 years old) will show these same characteristics (methodological individualism, deductive argument, and testable claims) or will spend resources in the struggle against them.

But of course there is more. As knowledge divides into domains of production, characteristic frameworks—generally called paradigms—develop. A paradigm establishes the norms, conventions, and warrants of the scholarship conducted within it. It is the ground on which the figure of the argument can appear. The paradigm provides for normalized scholarship. It allows us to evaluate the particular case to determine if it is good work and fits in with what we already know is true.

Paradigmatic theory has no single author, but rather it is the work of several to hundreds of authors who produce a body of like-minded work. Marxist theory, feminist theory, continental theory, cognitive theory, social action theory are all examples of paradigmatic theory. Theory at this level is an ongoing conversation of scholarly activity. This conversation creates a field of discourse, and while the boundaries of this field are both permeable and elastic—like those of a conversation, they do create real limits. If, for example, your characteristic explanations do not include the function of socioeconomic class, your theoretical position would be unlikely to be considered normal

Marxist scholarship. (On the other hand, one can address socioeconomic class from positions other than Marxist ones.) There are, therefore, rules of discursive membership. They are, however, dynamic not stable. The feminist theory of the 1980s is not the feminist theory of the first decade of the 21st century.

While there are many communities of scholarship in our discipline (collectively, our professional associations have more than 100 divisions and interest groups), paradigmatic communities ordinarily are not discipline specific but are distributed across many disciplines. In fact, one might consider that reach to be a mark of paradigmatic status. Paradigmatic theory would influence any field that addressed the issues that were the explanatory targets of the theory.

Kuhn's (1970) original formulation of the concept of paradigm referred to a way of thinking and scholarly practice that dominated a field of endeavor. In a field such as communication, which is widely understood as having no center to dominate, the term has come to mean any more or less organized community of practitioners who would recognize the same authorities, cite the same seminal works, produce common lines of argument, and use agreed-on protocols of evidence.

The social science of communication, for example, has been marked by the cognitivist paradigm for more than 50 years. Very briefly, cognitivism holds that physiological and psychological conditions lead to the formation of mental structures, which in turn direct behavior. If one can gain knowledge about or the ability to manipulate these mental structures, then one can predict and/or control behavior.

Cognitivists for their part want to predict and control behavior because prediction and control are hallmarks of the science to which they aspire. Consequently, when a cognitivist develops theory, the theory will be responsive to those requirements. Could one write theory that is independent of those requirements and not depend on mental structures or be directed toward prediction and control? Of course, but such a researcher would not be a cognitivist—he or she may be a radical cognitivist, postcognitivist, neocognitivist, or anticognitivist, but not a cognitivist.

We care about these constraints on theory because a paradigm refers as much to the political processes that control the appearance of new theory as to the epistemological principles that shape it. We know the stories of the true overcoming human ignorance—Galilean astronomy over Ptolemaic, oxygen over phlogiston, viruses over vapors, but we know little of the silenced desperation of those marginalized in opposition to normal scholarship. If one wants to claim the title of a social scientist in communication, the easiest route, today, is still through cognitivism. Paradigms are never secure even if long-lived, however.

The scholarly discourse within a theory field leaves an extensive record, far beyond what any one individual can access. Any one of us, then, can have only partial knowledge of a paradigm, and there may be as much variation within a paradigm as between paradigms. At this level, we create “versions” located in time, place, and authorship. Because this sort of theory is a constrained but unregulated mosaic of

different works, its specific terms and conditions depend on the way the works are compiled and analyzed. Consequently, the answer to the question “What is cognitive theory?” (or any other theory field) depends on the works that are chosen to represent it, the resolutions of the differences those works present, and the descriptive narrative the author constructs.

One might hope that as more of these meta-analytic compilations are developed, it is more likely that there will be convergence on some conventionalized sense of what the theory is, but there are tensions that seem to intervene. The compilations themselves are not neutral but rather have a point of view and often an agenda. The compilations of postmodern theory within the social sciences that appeared in the 1980s, for example, were mostly written by modernist authors. The postmodern theorists themselves were all too busy during that period writing the theory to step back and tell the rest of us what it was all about. As a result, many of the early meta-analyses were more about defending the turf of modernism than of illuminating the terms of postmodernism. All meta-analyses are purposeful.

Epistemologists such as myself are not very interested in the substantive content of theory—what their specific claims are. We are much more interested in the traces the theory leaves of the theorists' efforts to constitute the world for the pleasure of their theory and what the theory tells us about the knowledge production practices of that community of theorists. For us, theory and theories are just handy exemplars of what is really important. And of course, I write those lines from the vantage of a particular theory of knowledge from which I make sense of the practice of theorizing and to which I am beholden in my writing. Theory is everywhere. All this is a forewarning that what follows is at best incomplete and certainly written from the point of view of accomplishing this entry.

I have categorized the paradigmatic theory that appears most commonly in communication into five large classes and given exemplars (not a complete listing) of each. In the grand scheme of things, these five categories leave out as much theory as they include but not much that regularly appears in communication. The classes are (1) theories of human performance: behaviorism, cognitivism, developmental theory, sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, social action theory, performance theory; (2) psychoanalytic theory: Freudian, Jungian, Neo-Freudian, Lacanian, Deleuzean (Guattari); (3) critical issue theories: Marxism, feminism, critical race theory; (4) theories of discourse: semiotics, deconstructionism, postmodern discourse theory, critical discourse analysis, conversation analysis, Foucauldian theory; and (5) critical/cultural theory: critical theory, critical rhetoric, rhetorical theory, literary theory/theories of criticism, American/British/Continental studies, critical legal studies, disciplinary studies, media studies, popular culture, postcolonial studies, post-structuralism, queer studies, race studies, gender studies, women's studies, men's studies.

Theories of human performance have been most interested in why we humans do the things we do (the epistemology of performance). Most of the particular theories

arise out of the cognitivist paradigm. The bulk of research, on the other hand, has been interested in cataloguing what we do by collecting surveys on communicative behaviors (the ontology of performance). There has been very little effective ontological theory work. The field is still debating what communication is, what a message is, what a relationship is, what constitutes an organization and all the other nouns of the discipline, albeit definitions abound. The interpretive turn of the 1980s saw a reinstallation of an interest in how performances are enacted and constituted as action (the praxeology of performance). Most of this work has rested on social theory or social action theory. Finally, theories relating to the character (value) of human performance have been located in performance theory.

The language used in specific theories of human performance quickly locates the paradigm from which the theory emerges. Theories that talk about “acts and behavior” are most likely located in either—depending on the era of publication—the behaviorist (through the 1930s) paradigm or the cognitivist (from the 1940s to the present) paradigm. Theories that talk about action, interaction, or the semiotics (meaningfulness) of behavior rest on social/social action theory. Finally, when performance is the central term, the theory is part of the rapidly coalescing performance or critical ethnography paradigm.

Psychoanalytic theory considers the structure and performance of the conscious as a product of the disunity of the human mind. In very simple terms, for Freud, it was the struggle between the id and the superego; for Jung, it was the preconscious archetypes that shaped human understanding; for Lacan, the base is desire in the lack of self and other; and for Deleuze and Guattari, it is the schizophrenic character of capitalism that both liberates and represses the conscious. Freud and Jung attacked the “good man thinking well” conceptualization of human rationality, and Lacan and Deleuze and Guattari took the conscious out of the individual and into the political-economic system. In so doing, psychoanalytic theory undercuts the rationality and individual principles of the Enlightenment episteme by declaring that the thinking individual is not trustworthy (anti-Cartesian) and, consequently, is often held in disdain by U.S. and British empiricists.

Perhaps for that reason, until recent times, little of what communication theory textbooks consider as communication theory has been located in the psychoanalytic paradigm. Film theory has been the most likely member, although gender studies, particularly studies in masculinity, and cultural studies focusing on power and oppression have clear (if often unspoken) dependencies.

The critical issue paradigm generates theory that is initially universalist and utopian. Critical issue theories see the human condition as organized around their particular focus, whether it be economic class structure, power relationships, patriarchy, or race and ethnicity. In their early development, they tend toward monolithic villains and innocent victims instead of collusion and complicity. Throughout their development, they hold the promise of a

better world—at least for some—once their issue is resolved. As critical issue theories age, they develop greater complexity and less certainty, which in the eyes of this writer is much to their credit. Postmodern feminist theories and theories of resistance are two excellent examples. Both of these theoretical frameworks are making quite a presence in organizational communication.

Theoretical approaches based on the concept of discourse are also typically dependent on the principle of social constructionism. As with all ontological features of communication, discourse has a variety of definitions. The one to be used here is “language use that participates in social structures and relationships.” Social constructionism for its part holds that human practices constitute the features of human social reality. Discourse then is a player in the social structures and relationships in which it appears. For example, this writing is an exemplar of the discourse of scholarship. It is constrained by the rules of that writing; its appearance in turn validates and reinforces those constraints. It positions the author as knowing and the reader in a lower hierarchical position of learner. I write this because I know about discourse, and you read it because you want to find out, unless, of course, you are a critic/reviewer intent on enforcing the rules.

Most theories of discourse focus on the realities constituted in discourse, the structures of dominance and oppression it supports, and the power relationships that result. There are two notable exceptions: Semiotics can be a technical theory of language, a very broad investigation of significance, or a very focused analysis of meaning. Conversation analysis can range from a systematic theory of conversational structure to a broad argument concerning communicant relationships.

The critical/cultural paradigm is probably the most difficult to summarize because it covers widely diverse fields of theory such as critical theory, which comes out of 19th-century German intellectualism and radical hermeneutics, which is based on 20th-century American pragmatism. It is probably the least paradigmatic of the five, but it is, nonetheless, a location more likely to be called home by critical theorists and radical hermeneutists alike than any other. What makes it home is the common theme of social justice and the active pursuit of a redress of wrongs. There is also a common focus on texts, but the definition of text is expanded to include all meaningful construction of symbolic material. For some cultural and hermeneutic theorists, this definition includes the cultural performance of myths, rites, rituals, competitions, and the like. Cultural performances of this sort, of course, bring us back to performance theory and a connection to our first paradigmatic category. This connection underscores the premise that there are greater differences within a paradigm than between border occupants across paradigms.

Paradigmatic communities in communication tend to divide along two axes: empirical-analytical and foundational-reflexive. Empirical theories are ones that motivate the collection of data, whether those data are numerical values of a scale or the field notes of an ethnographer. Analytical theories

are those that put the focus on the argument. This distinction is a matter of balance as all theories begin with data on some sort of problem and have to construct some kind of argument. There is, however, a clear difference between a media effects theory that generates a survey and a media studies theory that generates a cultural argument.

Considering the second axis, foundational theories rest their validity on an unproblematic base that may be a set of universal, of-course-they're-true, principles or the unassailable evidence of experience. Reflexive theories rest their claims on more temporary standpoints that are themselves the product of the research and argument process. This axis cuts much more cleanly than the first. The cutting edge is the concept of the social construction of knowledge. This concept holds that human knowledge—particularly knowledge about social processes—has no independent source of validation but is always a product of the language, episteme, culture, scholarship, paradigm, theory, practice, and practitioners involved in its production. Reflexivity is the infinitely recursive practice of discovering how these sources provide for the claims that we make. Universal principles become much more local, their of-course-they're-true status appears because we create it, and our connection to experience is mitigated or constituted through language and culture.

Figure 5.1 presents a graphical image of the effect these axes have on communication scholarship. I have started the figure as a circle to indicate that while there are large differences among us, there is still a boundary that identifies our work as communication and separates us from other fields.

Some interesting interpretations of communication theory appear as one explores Figure 5.1. The left hemisphere contains much of the history of the scientific and critical

scholarship of the field. The right hemisphere represents the forces of change in communication theory, with the most action occurring in the lower right quadrant.

The upper hemisphere contains the qualitative-quantitative methodological divide. In this diagram, one can see that this divide is much more than methodological. The quantitative and qualitative methodologies typical of these quadrants connect to different ways of thinking about the world, our knowledge of it, and the purposes of scholarship. One can also see that foundational empiricism—the quadrant where metric approaches make sense—has a somewhat greater variety of theory than reflexive empiricism. There are good reasons for this difference that need not include the creativity of reflexive empiricists. Foundational empiricism in the social sciences developed along the well-trod epistemological trail of the physical sciences. The premise that the social reality in which we live is a product of our own practices is an entirely different pathway. The world history of the first half of the 20th century with its bevy of absolute dictators and two world wars greatly interrupted the scholarship of this field. One could go on: the conflation of Marxism with godless communism, the oppressions of the positivist regime, the control of science funding, the monolingual character of even the scholarly elite in the United States—all the juicy human practices that we often fail to discuss in most encyclopedias and textbooks.

There are, of course, other axes that we could use to divide the communication circle: Modern-postmodern, atomism-holism, propositional-narrational are three that come immediately to mind. Each would sort the theory list differently, and each would generate different explanations of the theory in our field. It's a never-ending story.

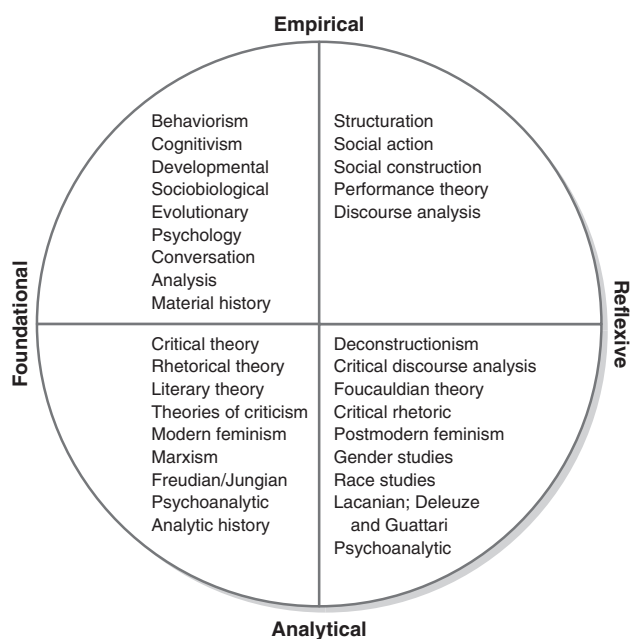


Figure 5.1 Location of Paradigmatic Theories on the Axes of Empirical–Analytical and Foundational–Reflexive

Communication Theory

Paradigmatic theories at the level we have been addressing them up to this point reach across a broad field of scholarship. The basic principles of discourse theory or of cognitivism or social action theory would easily reach across communication, sociology, psychology, and related fields. If we now have an idea of what theory is in its particular responsibilities and paradigmatic expressions, perhaps it is time to consider what makes a theory a communication theory.

The simplest and in many ways the best answer to that question is that a communication theory is whatever we claim as a communication theory. For example, Leon Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory is routinely included in the catalog of communication theories by our textbooks. Festinger was a social psychologist teaching at Stanford and developing his theory at a time when communication was still speech and journalism. The theory deals with the behavioral motivations of conflicting cognitions. It is centered in the heart of the cognitivist paradigm, connected as it is to Heider's (1946) balance theory. How does this theory become a *communication* theory? My reading of that is twofold. First, the experiments Festinger

conducted used messages to induce the conflicting cognitions and information seeking as the behavioral consequence. Messages and information seeking are clearly communication variables; consequently, the theory must be a communication theory. Not that simple, unfortunately, because cognitive dissonance does not depend on it being induced by messages—it could be induced by logical thinking—and information seeking is just a convenient behavior to measure. Nonetheless, it resonates as a communication theory, and consequently, we have appropriated it as a communication theory.

The second way it becomes a communication theory is that it has shown itself to be useful to the field. Communication scholars who take both a cognitivist and a message orientation have successfully used cognitive dissonance to explain the outcomes of competing messages or of messages competing with preexisting cognitive states. Sun and Scharrer (2004) used cognitive dissonance theory to explain the resistance of college students to critiques of the Disney studios' film *The Little Mermaid*. In their application of cognitive dissonance theory, Sun and Scharrer mostly use dissonance as a place holder for more appropriate cognitive balance theories (e.g., Feather, 1964)—a minor disconnection, one supposes.

In the Sun and Scharrer (2004) study, the cognition formed by the instruction in the “troubling ideologies of Disney” came into conflict with the preexisting admiration for Disney held by the students. Cognitive balance theory would predict four possible outcomes: rejection of the existing cognition (“I no longer admire Disney”), resistance to the new cognition (“Oh, it does not,” or even “I don’t care”), compartmentalization (“I’ll hold this belief in class and the other elsewhere”), or some synthesis of the two (“Disney films have troubling ideologies, and they provide clean entertainment for children”). The authors either found only resistance or used the theory to explain only the resistance they found. (A critique of their study would suggest the latter.)

If we return to our list of components of a theory (target, method, evidence and warrants, explanatory form, scope of performance, typical application, and value), one might assume that a *communication* theory would somehow target communication. Cognitive balance theories target the cognitive processes that work to maintain a desired balance of cognitions. What is the communication part of this theory? For some, the initiation of the cognitive processes to effect or preserve balance is seen as the consequence of communication. So in this case, resistance is seen as the effect of the course communication.

For others, it tells us something about cognitive processes but little about communication. The communication part of this study is held to be the construction of the instructional message that produced the dissonant cognition. The finding of resistance is evidence of that cognitive production (something of an ontological claim), but how and why the instructional message resulted in that production (the praxeological and epistemological claims) remain unknown.

Most communication epistemologists (Anderson, 1996; Craig, 1999; Peters, 1986) would argue that much of what we identify as communication theory is not truly *communication* theory. It is, rather, theory in which communication processes play some part. As a consequence, the field quickly fractionates into interpersonal communication, mediated communication, journalism, new media, organizational communication, cultural studies, and so on. Under this thinking, communication is an applied discipline. The real theoretical interest is in, say, the character and success of relationships; the formation and operation of organizations; the force of gender; the role of media in morality, violence, politics; and so on.

In the end, why does it matter? It matters because if our focal interest is in organizations, for example, and all we bring to the study of organizations and organizing is communication processes, we impoverish our theoretical efforts. At the same time, because communication processes are central to all social behavior, the study of these processes is centered in all interests in social behavior. Communication theory has made a strong contribution to our understanding of many social behaviors, not just a developed one in the social behavior of communication. Epistemologically, this puts us at risk because we have no secure intellectual center. It is an interesting, contentious, and unresolved issue.

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6

RHETORICAL AND TEXTUAL APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION

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The modern world is steeped in communication. In an average day, thousands of different messages are communicated via intrapersonal, interpersonal, public, and mediated channels. In fact, the world is so steeped in communication that much of the information that a person uses to become a member of their community is a result of communication (Mead, 1934). Scholars argue that humans come to understand the world and their communities as a result of communication. It comes as no surprise, then, that individual behavior can be shaped in important ways as a result of communication. Indeed, the way humans experience the world is filtered through communication so much so that rhetoric affects what we perceive, what we know to be true, how we understand our experiences, and how we conduct ourselves (Foss, Foss, & Trapp, 2002).

Rhetorical scholars engage in research that involves the close study of rhetorical texts or artifacts. This process is called rhetorical criticism, and it is the foundation of rhetorical and textual approaches to communication. Rhetorical critics analyze texts to learn more about how the process of communication works. Critics are interested in why some messages are compelling, but others fall flat, or why some movies, books, or television shows resonate with audiences, while others never seem to catch on. Rhetorical scholars, also called rhetorical critics, engage in systematic and sustained examination of texts. This sets them apart from popular critics who review books or movies and make determinations about

whether or not they liked it but who do not seek to understand how the text is working from a communication perspective.

In this chapter, the meaning of rhetoric is explored along with its characteristics. This is followed by an examination of rhetorical criticism, and finally the value of rhetorical and textual approaches to communication is discussed.

Rhetoric

The term *rhetoric* is often used in contemporary society to refer to meaningless talk or empty words. Politicians accuse their opponents of using rhetoric to persuade their audience. This implies that rhetoric is merely linguistic and has no force to shape social change. This perspective on rhetoric assumes that actions are more important than words and that actions can be understood apart from language.

This understanding of rhetoric is shortsighted and misinterprets the meaning of the term. Rhetoric has been an important part of civic life since the 5th century BCE (Foss et al., 2002) and has long been considered one of the most important liberal arts. Plato, the ancient Greek philosopher, believed that the art of persuading audiences should be reserved for the intellectual elite since this ability was too powerful for ordinary people. Aristotle, on the other hand, saw rhetoric as an important part of a democracy.

His book *Rhetoric* reads like a public speaking handbook instructing students on the best way to persuade audiences in myriad ways. Aristotle's definition of rhetoric, the ability to discern all the available means of persuasion in any given situation, is illuminating because it is focused on the critical skill of seeing the ways to persuade as opposed to actually making the most persuasive argument. Quintilian, an ancient Roman philosopher, defined rhetoric as the good man speaking well. This definition suggests that speaking skills are directly tied to particular individuals. Additionally, Quintilian believed that for persons to be "good," it was necessary that they have a well-rounded education as well as good intentions for their audience.

While most of the definitions of rhetoric are from ancient times, contemporary rhetorical theorists continue to study this form of communication. Kenneth Burke, one of the most prolific theorists of the 20th century, understood rhetoric as a process of creating identification with an audience. As speakers share their perspectives, audiences identify points of commonality that bring the two closer to agreement. An interesting aspect of Burke's definition is that he is not concerned with persuasion, or the ability of a speaker to change the mind of the audience. Instead, he focuses on the nature of communication as a vehicle for helping humans understand one another.

While there are a wide range of definitions for rhetoric, contemporary scholars tend to share the idea that rhetoric has some basic characteristics. Some scholars argue that for communication to be considered rhetoric, it must be intended to reach a particular outcome, while others have a wider definition that includes all kinds of communication, be it expressive or persuasive. Regardless of these differences, scholars agree that a great deal of communication is rhetorical in nature. The basic characteristics that tend to be shared across definitions are that rhetoric is the intentional or strategic use of symbols by humans in order to communicate. There are also a number of key terms that stem from the word rhetoric. *Rhetor* is the word used to refer to the creator of the rhetoric, while a *rhetorician* is a person who studies rhetoric, and *rhetorical criticism* is the process of making evaluations of rhetoric based on a systematic analysis of a rhetorical artifact.

The study of rhetoric is a study of human communication. Many scholars argue that one of the things that make humans unique is their ability to communicate. Although animals communicate, that communication falls outside the purview of rhetorical critics. Critics are interested in human-constructed intentional messages communicated through symbols.

Rhetoric is symbolic, meaning that symbols are the vehicle that humans use to communicate. Perhaps the most important symbol system that humans use is language, but there are many other forms of symbolic behavior that are also used to communicate, including nonverbal behavior, art, music, clothing, and architecture. A symbol is something that represents something else by virtue of a relationship or

association (Foss, 2004). Symbols are human constructions and have arbitrary meanings. The relationship between a symbol and what it describes are not based on some inherent quality. The relationship itself is arbitrary, and the relationship between a word and what it represents is something that individuals come to understand by means of communication. Another aspect of symbol use is that symbols are ambiguous. Because there is not an intrinsic relationship between the symbol and what it describes, there is often the need for the audiences of the message to interpret what the symbols mean. Language is not inherently clear and concise. This ambiguity allows for both the rhetor and the audience to participate in the creation of meaning. This is interesting to critics because no matter how clear a rhetor attempts to be, there is always the chance that an audience will interpret the message differently. While the intention of the rhetor is important, it is more important to the critic how the message itself can be read as a text. So, for example, a person may say something offensive without meaning to offend. The intent to offend is not as important as the fact that offense took place. It is not enough to say that the offensive language was unintentional, because the meaning of language is not the possession of the rhetor. Instead, the meaning of symbols is a product of both the rhetor and the audience.

Rhetoric is communication that is intentional. Thus, rhetoric is always a deliberate attempt to communicate. It is important to recognize that it is the attempt to communicate that is central to this idea, not whether or not that attempt was successful. A text can be considered rhetorical even if no one pays attention to it, and it can be considered rhetorical even if the audience interprets the rhetoric differently than the rhetor intended. The intention of the rhetor is relatively unimportant. Rhetoric is strategic because it is both intentionally created and deployed with intent. Rhetoric is usually aimed at a particular goal of persuading an audience or sharing something significant with an audience. Rhetoric does not just happen; it is the result of a deliberate process. Although the process is deliberate, it may not involve much thought. For example, someone may offer an opinion that has not been considered thoroughly, but it was still offered purposefully.

For critics, the strategic nature of rhetoric is intriguing because it reveals important information about how rhetors have chosen to construct messages. A critic may explore why one person may prefer confrontation and another uses a passive-aggressive communication style. A critic may choose to understand why individuals choose certain modes of communication. Many people may not think of these sorts of decisions as deliberate. They are just being themselves, and this is how they communicate. However, just because something has become a habit does not mean that it is not also a choice. Habits are the result of deliberate behavior and can be changed with other kinds of deliberate behaviors.

Individuals usually communicate with an end in mind. The goal may be to change someone's mind, it may be to have an audience buy a particular product, or the rhetor

may just want to get feelings about an issue out in the open for others to hear. Regardless of the goal, it is clear that rhetoric is designed with a particular goal in mind. For example, a person may talk to himself or herself in order to help him or her remember to do something or maybe to help figure out the parts of a problem. A person may communicate with someone else to share information or gain a new perspective. Even casual conversations have a goal and are, thus, often rhetorical.

Rhetorical Criticism

The process of carefully examining a text to discover how it works communicatively is called rhetorical criticism. Although a piece of criticism is centered on a particular rhetorical artifact, the goal of criticism more generally is to generate knowledge about how rhetoric works in order to persuade or to create some sort of identification with its audience. Thus, the careful examination of a text is used to generate more general knowledge of communication inductively.

Rhetorical Artifacts

Critics choose particular instances of rhetoric as the focus for their study. The rhetorical act itself is fleeting and can never be re-created in its entirety. Consequently, critics study rhetorical artifacts instead of the rhetorical acts themselves. An artifact is the tangible evidence of rhetoric. For example, when the president gives a speech, it is a rhetorical act. The artifact of that act would be a transcript and/or a recording of the speech. So while the speech itself has ended, the artifact is a tangible text that can be scrutinized over and over again. Rhetorical artifacts can take many forms, including written texts, books, video, paintings, recorded music, and films.

There are countless rhetorical artifacts available in our culture, so critics must choose their objects of study wisely. Critics usually look for some artifact that evokes a strong response. A book that has become a worldwide best seller and inspires millions of people might be an interesting object of study to discover what is so compelling about that text. Or a critic may choose to look at an artifact that has incited anger or disagreement. Critics might choose artifacts that were particularly effective or notably ineffective. There are myriad choices, but in general, critics are looking for something that is notable, important, influential, or unusual. Critics are also interested in satisfying their own curiosity, so they tend to select artifacts that are particularly interesting to them.

All rhetorical artifacts are a product of the particular time and place in which they were created. Rhetoric is often a response to some sort of problem that the rhetor seeks to redress with words. The term *exigencies* refers to the prevailing cultural conditions and constraints on the

particular rhetorical act. Critics must examine the exigencies that surround and constrain a rhetorical act to understand the choices the rhetor made. Bitzer (1968) describes the rhetorical situation as the sum of the exigencies surrounding any rhetorical act and urges critics to carefully consider the ways in which a particular situation demands a rhetorical response.

Rhetorical criticism seeks to understand the way rhetoric works, how messages are created, and why they have the impact that they do. Critics seek to reveal what the average person may not have noticed. A critic peels back the layers of a rhetorical artifact to discover and expose information about the rhetor, the intended audience, the rhetorical situation, the cultural assumptions of the rhetor and the audience, and how the rhetoric functions as a whole. Rhetorical critics formulate research questions concerned with how rhetoric works, why it works the way it does, and what kinds of rhetorical elements allow it to work in that way. Critics accomplish this by looking closely at rhetorical artifacts and researching the rhetorical situation that surrounds the artifact. Critics do not usually engage in interviewing or other forms of qualitative data collection. Instead, rhetoric critics focus their study on a particular text and seek to reveal what it can tell us about the communication.

Method

In rhetorical criticism, the method of inquiry is tied to a particular critical perspective. Critics make arguments about rhetoric based on the particular rhetorical perspective that is being employed. Instead of an established set of procedures that are used in some other forms of communication research, rhetorical criticism is a product of the application of a particular critical perspective to an artifact. There are countless critical perspectives that a critic can use, and increasingly, critics must develop a unique critical perspective to understand the artifact being studied.

A critical perspective acts as a lens. The critic looks at the artifact through the lens of the perspective. A perspective is informed by theory, and this in turn helps the critic develop a critical vocabulary. This critical vocabulary will help the critic discuss the artifact with a greater degree of precision. For example, if a critic was using a critical perspective that is based on the importance of metaphor, the critic would first research theories of metaphor to better understand what a metaphor is and how to identify its parts and effects within a text. Research into metaphor would reveal that metaphors have constituent parts called the vehicle and the tenor (Foss, 2004). So this critical vocabulary can now be used to better describe the metaphors in a particular text.

A critical perspective will allow the critic to better see some parts of the artifact but will obscure others. If critics are looking for metaphors, for example, they may not

notice gender-exclusive language or narrative elements. Different critical perspectives direct the critic's attention in different ways. Thus, the critic should endeavor to choose a critical perspective that will highlight what the critic finds most intriguing about the artifact. In contemporary criticism, critics often combine two or three critical perspectives to articulate their arguments more fully. It may not be enough to isolate and describe the metaphors in an artifact, so a critic may also add the critical perspective of ideology to discuss the ways the metaphors perpetuate a hegemonic ideological structure that supports, rather than challenges, the current societal power structure.

The choice of a critical perspective, much like the choice of an artifact, is an individual decision. Consequently, rhetorical criticism tends to be highly personal. Furthermore, two different critics could examine the same artifact from two different perspectives and make entirely different determinations about it. Different critical perspectives will yield different conclusions, but their evaluations can be equally valid. This means that there is little agreement about what kinds of criticism are best or which critical perspectives are the most illuminating. Rhetorical criticism should be supported by good arguments and based in the artifact being studied, but what makes one critical perspective better than the other is often a case of personal preference. Ultimately, rhetorical criticism should reveal new information about the rhetoric and contribute new understandings of rhetoric to the field of communication.

Examples of Critical Perspectives

There are some critical perspectives that have become common among critics. These critical perspectives provide a systematic approach to analyzing a rhetorical artifact in order to answer specific questions generated by that perspective. An artifact's form, pattern, assumptions, language uses, or structures may also direct a critic to a particular established critical perspective. Ideological criticism, feminist criticism, and narrative criticism are some examples of established critical perspectives. These traditional critical perspectives will be discussed to demonstrate the assumptions about the world and the qualities of a particular artifact that can be discerned with different perspectives. Established critical perspectives are a good place to begin to peel back the layers of an artifact.

Narrative Criticism

Narrative criticism begins with the assumption that humans are storytellers. Narratives are meant to give order to human experiences in order to establish common ways of living and common ways of explaining how to make choices and take action in society. Likewise, humans rely on narratives to explain the choices and actions of others (MacIntyre, 1981). Critics can better understand motive if

they can describe all the factors that led to a particular choice. There is a logic to storytelling, and critics seek to unpack and illuminate this logic.

Narration is a type of human interaction and the product of that interaction, the narrative, is something that is interactively created, understood, and shared with others. Narration is part of being human because it has become an ingrained method of reasoning on the personal and social levels. This perspective assumes that stories are used to explain and rationalize events, cultures, conduct, or character (Fisher, 1984). Indeed, humans rationalize their conduct through narratives. The narrative critical perspective recognizes a rhetor as a storyteller and, therefore, recognizes each rhetor's tendency to deliver a message through the use of a personal narrative or through aligning the message with a larger, widely accepted social narrative. These larger, widely accepted narratives are often called master narratives. The function of the narrative critical perspective is to understand the purpose of a rhetorical act. A narrative provides the structure for understanding the creation, adaptation, and reception of rhetoric. By understanding rhetoric as telling a story or aligning with a previously told story, a critic can begin to work inductively to understand how the larger narrative explains the logic behind the decisions made prior to, during, and following a rhetorical act.

Although narratives may not argue explicitly, narratives are intended to be persuasive. When a rhetor chooses to embed the message in a narrative, that message becomes persuasive because of the very nature of stories and of human's natural fondness for them. Narratives have the ability to disarm audiences because of the desire to hear an entertaining story. Narratives have the ability to awaken memories, experiences, and feelings in an audience that can become powerful motivators. And narratives tempt their audience with a sense of closure in two ways: First, audiences will want to stick around to hear the end of the story (the actual message), and second, audiences are prepared to receive a story's lesson that explains how a certain behavior will lead to a certain outcome. Each of these characteristics of narrative identifies the way rhetors structure their messages in persuasive ways.

The presence of a narrative in a rhetorical artifact assumes that each part of a message is functioning within a larger persuasive construct. In recognizing its presence, a critic can begin to evaluate the overall "lesson of the story" in order to understand the persuasive power behind a message. Critics can evaluate a message based on *narrative probability* and *narrative fidelity* (Fisher, 1984). Narrative probability refers to evaluating the actual qualities of the story being told in terms of a coherent story line, suspense, concern for the protagonist, a climax, a dramatic twist, vivid detail, and closure. Narrative fidelity refers to how well that story reflects the reality of a situation. In other words, narrative fidelity measures the reliability and truthfulness. A critic can measure the fidelity of a narrative by determining what information was available to the rhetor and how well the narrative represents that knowledge (Hart & Daughton, 2005).

Critics can also evaluate a particular message based on the narrative's origin and the narrative's intent. If a narrative is derived from a master narrative, a well-established overarching story that is recognized and respected across a culture, then that narrative taps into certain established set of rules. These established standards of conduct may persuade audience members to abide by a rhetor's message due to inherent loyalties to the overall master narrative. A critic can evaluate this rhetorical strategy in terms of narrative fidelity. Critics can also seek to uncover and evaluate a rhetor's intentions by observing what a given narrative is intended to reveal and what a given narrative is intended to conceal. These decisions reiterate traditional rhetorical decisions involved with the delivery of facts, definitions, and ideas. A narrative provides a vehicle to translate the parts of a message into a meaningful experience, and a narrative critic asks questions about that process of translation and the implications of simple stories.

Ideological Criticism

Ideological criticism is an umbrella term for any criticism that is primarily motivated by ethical or political concerns. As such, an ideology is a pattern of beliefs used to interpret some aspect of a society in order to evaluate that issue or topic and encourage a particular attitude or action toward it (Foss, 2004). The primary goal of the ideological critic becomes discovering and analyzing the dominant ideology or ideologies embedded in an artifact and those ideologies either negated or underrepresented. Understanding ideologies helps illuminate the motivations of the rhetor and the strategies used to persuade the audience. Ideological criticism not only acts as a lens to focus on the specific rhetorical strategies used by rhetors to persuade their audiences but also specifies the social or political goals of the rhetor. Ideological critics are concerned with exposing the power dimensions of rhetorical artifacts to expose and evaluate the purpose of rhetoric.

The purpose of ideological criticism is unique in that an ideological critic works to develop a standard to judge a particular rhetorical act or artifact (Hart & Daughton, 2005). Although other critical perspectives draw conclusions about the implications of their findings, often ideological critics make these judgments more explicitly. For example, Marxist criticism also seeks to undermine certain taken-for-granted power structures in society. However, Marxist criticism extends beyond an evaluation of linguistic strategies by situating and illuminating how a particular strategy relates to a larger context. Specifically, Marxist critics seek to undermine exploitive economic systems. Although economic exploitation may seem like a narrow goal, this specific standard of evaluation inspires critics to question how rhetorical acts and artifacts relate to societal structures that continually exploit the powerless members of society. Marxist criticism becomes activism because it identifies the specific strategies used to perpetually rationalize the exploitation and then publicly criticizes these

structures. Marxists view ideological criticism as a socially responsible activity whereby ideological evaluations need to extend beyond the artifact itself and draw conclusions about the political and social goals of larger systems of exploitation by exposing their spokespeople. To a Marxist, rhetors represent the ideologies of larger organizations, and these connections need to be exposed in order to hold these organizations accountable to higher moral standards.

Like Marxist criticism, postcolonialist critics believe in exposing systems of oppression; however, a postcolonialist critic also aims to resist these systems of oppression by actively privileging the voices of the oppressed. The term *postcolonialist* is derived from the term *colonialism*, which emphasizes a historical tendency for those in power to conquer and control another person's land (Sim, 1999). Here, a postcolonialist likens this definition to the contemporary conquest and control of a person's rights, ideas, freedoms, choices, and voices through the use of rhetorical acts and artifacts. Postcolonialist critics seek to expose the remnants of a seemingly dated method of control. This exposure seeks to evaluate the assumptions of rhetorical acts and artifacts against the assumptions of postcolonialist critics, which seek to respect *alterity* (the quality of the "other") through recovering the voices and perspectives of the *sub-altern* (those people who are oppressed due to gender, race, class, religion, or culture). Postcolonialist critics specify the strategies used in rhetorical acts and artifacts that naturalize, or make things seem normal, to expose how these strategies become embedded in larger ideologies and are then taken for granted. This taken-for-granted approach toward a rhetor's assumptions perpetuates systems of oppression. It becomes the work of the ideological critic to identify and evaluate these assumptions in order to expose their arbitrary relationship.

Feminist Criticism

Feminist criticism can be considered a form of ideological criticism in that many feminist critics also engage in rhetorical criticism to illuminate power inequities in everyday life (Hart & Daughton, 2005). Specifically, feminist critics focus on gender as a source of inequity and ask how rhetoric defines and promotes gendered behavior. Feminist critics focus on gender to evaluate larger structures that promote power at the expense of oppression and equality.

The terms power, oppression, and equality are central to understanding the motivation behind the critical feminist perspective. Feminism is a theory that advocates equal space for all voices in a society; thus, feminists strive to acknowledge the voices of the voiceless that have traditionally been silenced due to socially constructed power structures. Not all feminists are women, and not all women are feminists; instead, these key terms articulate the interests of a particular type of critic. Critics who consider the feminist perspective are usually asking questions about how a particular rhetorical act or artifact relates to the concepts of equality, oppression, and power.

Feminist critics assume that certain power structures perpetuate the marginalization of certain members in society. Ultimately, the function of these structures has been linked to the promotion of patriarchy—the rule of men in society—and a masculine view of the world (Hart & Daughton, 2005). Patriarchy is inherently oppressive because it ignores the unique experiences of people who lie outside the white, privileged male demographic. Feminists explore how factors such as gender, race, discourse, power, and organizing intersect to produce relations of dominance and resistance that work to perpetuate hierarchies of oppression (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004). Feminist interpretations of hegemony emphasize the plurality of positions, identities, and interests and promote communication as a way to create, sustain, and challenge current social order (Clair, 1998).

Feminist critics expose the political nature of texts to actively engage in the political process. The feminist critical perspective identifies strategies that are implicit in rhetorical artifacts to actively challenge current social and political order. This political activism can be achieved through different methods of critique (Hart & Daughton, 2005). For example, policy critique seeks to illuminate how public policy has traditionally reflected a masculine worldview. This is achieved through the systematic observation and analysis of language and images used to define and promote certain public policy agendas within a given text. Similarly, performative critique assumes that gender is a socially constructed concept. This critique looks at how gender is enacted in a given text and then draws conclusions about how this enactment is related to things such as race and class. This approach assumes that rhetorical performances, occurring on stage or in everyday interactions, determine and inform the gender of a person (Hart & Daughton, 2005). This perspective is empowering because it uses rhetorical criticism to demonstrate the ways in which gender is socially constructed in order to counter historically patriarchal conceptions of what make a woman a woman or a man a man. Within the feminist critical perspective, there is an array of ways to approach rhetoric. However, most feminist approaches seek to promote the central feminist values of respect, equality, self-determination, and interconnection (Foss, Foss, & Griffin, 1999).

The trend in rhetorical criticism now is to develop individual methods that are suited to a particular artifact rather than applying one of the methods that have become standard in communication studies. This approach illuminates the understanding that a critic can only understand the significance of an artifact through personal interpretation and that meaning is derived from understanding the independent and unique ways texts stand in relation to one another.

The Critical Essay

Sharing rhetorical criticism via the critical essay is essential because it shows others how rhetoric is being deployed and how it functions in certain circumstances. Showing,

not telling, is an important part of what rhetorical critics accomplish. While analyzing a text and uncovering strategies, a critic inevitably reaches a “eureka” moment—a moment where the function of the artifact in a larger context becomes clear. The final step in the process of conducting rhetorical criticism is to share that “eureka” experience about communication with others.

A critical essay should include a description and context of the rhetoric/artifact, an explanation of the critical perspective that was applied to that artifact, an analysis of that artifact, and the conclusions and evaluations about rhetoric based on the analysis. Remember, although criticism focuses on a particular artifact, the goal of rhetorical criticism is to understand better how rhetoric works. Rhetorical criticism is an ongoing process, not a product. In other words, the exploration of an individual artifact functions as a case study. Its purpose is to reveal how a particular artifact means something in a larger context and how this new perspective can contribute to, extend, or modify current rhetorical theory.

The first step in sharing rhetorical criticism with others is to orient the reader and generate interest. This orientation is accomplished by providing a brief overview or summary of the actual artifact and a brief description of the context in which the artifact occurs. The critic then needs to provide the reader with enough information about a particular artifact to help a reader understand its historical, cultural, or social context, as well as its significance. Finally, the critic must explain why this critical perspective matters on a larger scale by illuminating what past studies have discovered and how this particular essay will change, improve, or modify our current understanding of the world.

The second step in sharing rhetorical criticism is an explanation of the critical method(s) used to analyze an artifact. A rhetorical essay needs to be self-sufficient. In other words, readers should not have to go elsewhere to understand the key concepts that are needed to understand the following analysis; however, they are not reading the essay to learn everything there is to know about the critical method that was used. Instead, readers need to understand just enough information about the critical method in order to follow connections made throughout the essay.

The third step in sharing rhetorical criticism is the analysis of the artifact itself. This is where critics get to tell the audience what was observed and then provide proof of their arguments by supporting each claim with direct evidence from the text. So instead of simply stating that a particular rhetor uses a particular kind of language, a critic must demonstrate this claim using direct quotes from the artifact in question. The primary standard of judging the validity of a given rhetorical essay is how well the arguments are justified with examples from the text. Because rhetorical critics examine artifacts through critical perspectives that are highly individual, there is no sense that the research is “right” or “wrong.” Instead, good criticism is interesting and well argued, while inferior research is

not supported with evidence from the text. Due to the personal nature of rhetorical criticism, it is important for rhetorical critics to showcase their own ideas and theoretical conclusions because their interpretation of the text is unique. In the analysis, other theories or concepts can be included to support or extend the critic's unique perspective, but the purpose of reading a rhetorical essay is to gain a new understanding of communication processes.

The final step in sharing rhetorical criticism is a clarification of the conclusions drawn from the analysis and the evaluation of these conclusions on a larger scale. Conclusions help juxtapose important findings that were previously explained in the analysis portion but were so compelling that they deserve another mention. An evaluation of these findings can be either implicit or explicit but must accomplish the goal of explaining the implications of this particular case study in terms of a larger scale. This is the portion of the essay dedicated to articulating how this particular case study contributes to current rhetorical theory.

Value of Rhetorical Criticism

Early rhetorical scholarship tended to be prescriptive. The authors were intent on providing tools for creating persuasion communication and using rhetoric most effectively. Conversely, contemporary rhetorical scholars tend to focus on analyzing rhetoric. This shift has much to do with understanding that words and symbols construct the social world and act as a filter for how an individual understands reality. While rhetoric has been seen historically as a skill to be mastered, contemporary rhetorical scholarship understands the personal nature of creating, receiving, and sharing messages with others and seeks to explore these unique sources of meaning. Rhetorical criticism assumes that the variation in perspectives reveals certain qualities about how the world operates on a larger scale and how people interact with each other in that world. This pursuit becomes significant because rhetorical criticism aims to produce better communicators and a more informed critical audience.

Rhetorical criticism is also valuable because it encourages people to be more thoughtful rhetors. Rhetorical criticism demonstrates ways to better communicate on a personal, professional, and political level by revealing how symbols are effectively used in the construction of meaning. Rhetorical criticism equips people with an understanding of successful and unsuccessful strategies for constructing messages and then encourages them to implement these strategies in their own lives. As a proactive tool for understanding how people communicate needs and motivations, rhetorical criticism enables the audience to hone their own communication skills.

Rhetorical criticism is also valuable because it encourages people to be more critical consumers of rhetoric. Rhetorical criticism creates a more sophisticated understanding of messages, which helps the audience to become more critical of the rhetoric they encounter. The level of

sophistication in published rhetorical criticism encourages audiences to recognize the persuasive strategies used to shape their behaviors and then encourages the audience to uncover the implicit strategies that may also be framing their options. Rhetorical criticism encourages society to always question simplicity by articulating how and why the world is not simple. A demonstration of how messages are more complex than what is initially perceived encourages audience members to question the intentions of every message. This critical posture enables audiences to attain a level of sophistication that can help them become more critically aware of the messages they encounter.

Rhetorical critics work to reveal information about how meaning is created to make visible information that was previously unnoticed. Along with encouraging people to become their own critical consumers, rhetorical critics demonstrate how this is done and the benefits of engaging in this type of questioning. Rhetorical criticism often exposes insidious structures in society that have worked to maintain the status quo or normalize certain practices or attitudes. By revealing these strategies, rhetorical criticism reveals the manufactured nature of these power structures or practices, and in doing so, it may expose their weakness. By providing information about how oppressive structures function, rhetorical critics may delineate ways to transcend entrenched structures, and in doing so, it may empower people to explore different options.

Rhetorical criticism promotes activism and is a valuable tool for improving our current situation. Some rhetorical critical perspectives develop standards by which certain rhetorical goals can be evaluated. Rhetorical criticism, then, can explicitly suggest ways in which current structures oppress or fail members of society. These evaluations often raise awareness about a particular situation and in doing so motivate people to change that reality. Similar to activism, rhetorical criticism offers insights into emotion and then identifies sites of possible improvement.

Rhetorical criticism is valuable because it illustrates the interconnectedness of our experience. Rhetorical criticism demonstrates the intertextuality of our existence by connecting disparate texts and juxtaposing them to reveal a new perspective. Likewise, rhetorical criticism demonstrates the interconnectedness of people by drawing conclusions and evaluations across time, borders, cultures, and societies. This perspective promotes tolerance of alternative methods of constructing meaning in order to encourage individuals to seek to understand why someone behaves in a certain way. This level of tolerance prevents immediate negative reactions to unfamiliar situations or ideas. Broad-minded citizens listen to and incorporate different perspectives to more fully understand and appreciate their shared experience with others. Rhetorical criticism teaches people how to listen to and look for different perspectives in order to ensure that this level of tolerance and appreciation is met.

Finally, rhetorical criticism is a valuable method for appreciating an art. Humans are users of symbols, and this quality sets us apart from all other creatures. Rhetorical

criticism becomes a valuable way to pay homage to this ability and to also highlight the responsibility assumed with this status. The more rhetoric is understood as an art, the more its role in everyday life can be appreciated and the more it will be respected as a powerful facet in the rhetorical construction of reality.

Conclusion

Rhetoric is one of the oldest and most revered areas of communication. Its roots can be traced back to ancient Greece, but it remains an important contemporary area of study. Communication scholars look critically at rhetorical texts to discover how rhetoric functions. This process, known as rhetorical criticism, is continually adding new information about the process of persuasion and identification to the discipline of communication. This chapter discussed the definition of rhetoric and the process of rhetorical criticism, provided examples of established rhetorical methods, and explained the importance of conducting criticism. As contemporary society continues to grow and evolve, new forms of rhetoric are constantly being generated. So while scholars in the early 20th century tended to focus on speeches, contemporary scholars may study emerging genres of artifacts such as Web sites or text messages. Rhetorical criticism will remain a vibrant method of inquiry because it is so closely tied to the artifacts that are produced by a culture. Indeed, critics are especially valuable in contemporary times because they have the ability to reveal the inner workings of the communicative messages that saturate our society.

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QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

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Quantitative, social scientific communication research involves the application of a set of social scientific methods for testing defensible knowledge claims about human communication based on empirical data, statistical description, and statistical inference. As the name implies, quantitative approaches to communication research use numbers—more specifically, quantitative data—to draw conclusions about communicative phenomena. Various aspects of communication are quantified to assess their prevalence or to show systematic relationships between variables.

Common examples of quantitative communication research include survey research, content analysis, and experimental research. Quantitative methods are used to investigate all types and aspects of communication, and they are widely used in research on interpersonal communication, mass media, new technology, cross-cultural communication, and organization communication research, to name a few areas.

The term *quantitative approach* implies a contrast between quantitative research and qualitative research. The former seeks to quantify constructs of interest, whereas the latter does not. Qualitative research is sometimes portrayed as more exploratory, being useful in generating new ideas and understandings, while quantitative research is often seen as involving more formal hypothesis testing. Both quantitative and qualitative research, however, can serve either function. Generally, quantitative research is useful when the phenomena of interest can be classified either as present or absent or when the phenomena have measurable attributes that vary in degrees or amounts. If something can be measured or counted, a quantitative

approach can be used. A primary advantage of quantitative research is that statistical evidence can be used to enhance confidence in a knowledge claim. A second advantage is that many quantitative methodologies offer mechanisms to control nuisance variables, ruling out rival explanations and enhancing confidence in knowledge claims.

More useful than the quantitative/qualitative distinction, however, is a broader one between social scientific approaches and nonscience approaches such as rhetorical criticism, postmodern analysis, feminist scholarship, and critical scholarship. What makes an approach social scientific or not rests on issues other than whether or not numbers are involved. Science-based and nonscientific modes of research reflect very different understandings about the nature of knowledge, how knowledge is generated, what is useful to know, and how we can have confidence in what we know. The quantitative-qualitative distinction need not involve these deeper philosophical differences about the nature of knowledge and knowledge generation. Nevertheless, most social scientists find it useful to use quantitative methods at least some of the time, and the use of quantitative methods usually implies a social scientific approach to knowledge generation, whereas qualitative research may or may not be social scientific in character.

Philosophical Underpinnings

Most quantitative social scientific research adopts the philosophical approach of scientific realism (Pavitt, 2001, chap. 1). The presumption is that there is a real world that

exists beyond our perceptions that is potentially, and at least partially, knowable. The goal of research is to get our understanding more closely aligned with this objective reality. The word *verisimilitude* describes this idea of closeness to reality. In quantitative research, we want our theories and findings to have verisimilitude, and the extent to which we can make a case that our theories and findings have verisimilitude is the bottom line in quantitative communication science.

Sometimes quantitative social science approaches are mistakenly equated with logical positivism or operationalism, but these problematic philosophical perspectives have long been out of favor (Meehl, 1986) and never held much sway in quantitative communication research anyway (Miller & Berger, 1999). Logical positivism was a philosophical view that held that the only meaningful knowledge is what we prove either by objective observation or by logical proof. Operationalism is a view of measurement that equates attributes of things with their measures. For example, to an operationalist, communication apprehension is a score on a communication apprehension scale. The idea from Karl Popper (1959, chap. 1) that hypotheses and theories need to be falsifiable, however, is both useful and widely accepted. That is, for ideas to be scientifically useful, they must be testable.

Quantitative social scientific research is usually empirical, meaning that knowledge claims are based on data and the data stem from observation. Quantitative social scientific research also strives for objectivity. Complete objectivity is impossible to obtain, but methods are designed and evaluated by the extent to which the data are likely free from bias and the personal idiosyncrasies of the researcher. Finally, quantitative social scientific research strives to be self-correcting. Confidence in a finding or conclusion is enhanced through replication, and it is presumed that incorrect conclusions will ultimately be rejected because they fail to replicate. A replication is essentially a retest. If a finding has verisimilitude, other researchers should be able to produce the finding under conditions similar to the original research. For the social scientist, objective empirical observation, coupled with replication, provides the best path to verisimilitude over time.

Research predictions and knowledge claims in quantitative communication research are usually probabilistic in nature, general within some specified conditions, and contextualized to within those specified conditions. Knowledge claims are usually probabilistic in that they are often based on statistic inferences that provide estimates of how likely or unlikely the data are given some set of assumptions. Findings and conclusions are general in that they tell us what is usual or typical within a situation or context. For example, a finding might tell us that people tend to be truth biased and are more likely to believe other people whether or not the other people are actually honest (see Chapter 52, “Deception,” for a review of research on deception). Such a finding does not imply that people believe everything they hear or that they never think others

are lying; it is just that this tends to be the case on average. Finally, knowledge claims are contextualized in that they have boundary conditions—that is, conditions (specified or unknown) under which they apply and do apply. For example, truth bias is not expected to hold in situations where the person whose message is being judged has a strong motive to lie and that motive is known to the person doing the judging.

Types of Quantitative Research

Quantitative communication research can take many forms, and there are many ways to distinguish between different types of research. One common distinction is between basic and applied research. The main purpose of basic research is to advance knowledge and understanding. This knowledge may have practical implications, but that is of secondary concern. Rather, the primary purpose of basic research is to develop or test some theory or theories or to answer some question suggested by informed curiosity. The bottom line in basic research is learning something new and enhancing understanding. Applied research, in contrast, seeks to solve some real-world problems or test the utility of some real-world solutions. Applied research is often divided into formative research and evaluation research. Formative research is used to generate knowledge that will aid in developing an application, and evaluation research seeks to test the effectiveness of something. For example, in health communication campaigns, one might do formative research in developing the campaign and evaluation research after the campaign has been implemented to assess its impact in terms of effectiveness and unintended consequences.

Another distinction that is often made is between theoretical research and exploratory research. Truly theoretical research seeks to pit different theories against one another in order to test which one applies in some context, test hypotheses that are deduced from a theory, test the boundary conditions of a theory, or develop a theory. The primary advantages of theory include helping a researcher prioritize among variables and hypotheses and providing an avenue for generalization that cannot be achieved empirically.

Exploratory research, in contrast, is guided by informed curiosity rather than formal theory. Exploratory research simply tries to assess if there are reliable differences or associations. Although exploratory work is sometimes devalued relative to theoretical research, many important discoveries are stumbled on by accident.

Other ways to classify types of quantitative research rest on the type of methodology used. Typology formation studies and content analysis seek to classify communication phenomena and study frequency and prevalence. Mass survey research investigates public opinions using surveys given to random or representative samples. Paper-and-pencil questionnaire research often seeks to assess the correlations among communication concepts. Both experimental and quasi-experimental studies are common in

communication journals. Communication research sometimes involves physiological measurement, such as brain scans. Archival data can be analyzed with quantitative methods. In short, quantitative communication research is topically and methodologically diverse and can be applied to anything that can be quantified.

The Basic Elements of Quantitative Research

In this section, the basic elements of quantitative research are summarized. The basic elements include constructs, variables, variance, and how variables are related to one another.

Constructs and Variables

Quantitative research involves variables. Variables are symbols to which numerals or numbers are assigned. Variables are also observable things that vary or that can take on different values. In this sense, variables are contrasted with both constants and constructs. Constants are things whose values are fixed; they do not vary. Constructs are conceptual or theoretical entities that exist in the mind of researchers, whereas variables are observable. For example, the idea of communication apprehension is a construct, while the score on a communication apprehension scale is a variable.

Quantitative researchers are interested in constructs, usually how two or more constructs are related to each other. Constructs are ideas that are the topic of study. To research constructs, they must be measured and values must be assigned. The resulting values comprise variables, and relationships among variables can be tested, often with statistical analyses. When the variables are found to be statistically related in some manner, then it is inferred that the constructs are likewise related in a similar manner. Thus, constructs are (albeit imperfectly) measured, and when values are assigned to represent these constructs, we call the resulting collection of values a variable. Variables are tested for statistical association or relationship, and inferences are made about how constructs are related based on observed relationships among the corresponding variables.

When statistical analyses are used to test the relationships among variables and some variables are conceived of as predictors or causes of other variables, the variables that are the predictor or cause variables are called independent variables, while the variables that are predicted effects or outcomes are called dependent variables. Often, the notation x is used to refer to the independent variable and y to the dependent. When graphing the relationship between x and y , x is plotted on the horizontal axis and y on the vertical.

Independent variables can be further classified as active or measured variables. The values of an active independent variable are set by the researcher. That is, they are induced

or manipulated. This is not true for measured variables where the values are not under research control. Dependent variables are always measured and never active.

Variance

The extent to which a variable varies is called variance. The more scores differ from one another, the more they vary, and hence the greater the variance. Statistically, variance has a more precise meaning. Variance refers to the average squared amount by which scores differ from the average score.

Variance may be the single most important concept in quantitative research. Obviously, not all people are the same. Situations, too, differ from one another. And messages too vary. Quantitative research wants to know why, when, and how much things vary. This is often done by seeing if and how the variable we are interested in varies systematically with something else. That is, much, if not most, quantitative communication research seeks to predict and/or explain how some variable of interest is related to another variable or variables of interest. This involves demonstrating that the variance in a variable is systematically related to the variance in another variable. When variables are related, that is, one predicts, causes, or is associated with another according to some specified function, the variables are said to covary. If x is an independent variable and y a dependent variable, we can say that y is a function of x . Symbolically, $y = f(x)$. The trick, of course, is to know the function. Nevertheless, regardless of the specific function, it is a fundamental law of quantitative research that variance is required for covariance. That which does not vary cannot covary. In short, most quantitative research is about understanding variance (e.g., why people are different from other people in some way), and understanding variance requires having variance to observe.

The flip side of variance is constancy. Constants are also extremely important in quantitative research because they are central to the idea of control. Because that which does not vary cannot covary, constants cannot be related to anything. Hence, holding something constant is a surefire way to control its impact. What researchers try to do is to assess the variance and covariance of the variables of interest while holding constant as much else as possible. Because constants never affect other things, they provide the best mechanism for the “control” of nuisance variance in research. This is the best way to rule out rival explanations so we can understand what really leads to what.

These principles of constancy and covariance provide the conceptual basis for experimentation. If some variable x has a causal impact on some other variable y , then changes in x will systematically produce changes in y . In an experiment, the researcher systematically alters the values of x and observes values of y . If values of y systematically change when x is changed but y stays constant when x is constant, then evidence that x leads to y is obtained. Other potential causes of y are held constant so that they

cannot have an impact on y and so that the impact of x can be isolated. The tighter the control over nuisance variables, the stronger the inference that is obtained from observing y vary as a function of induced or created variance in x .

Constancy, variance, and covariance are also central in nonexperimental quantitative research. In nonexperimental research, variance is observed rather than created, and statistical analyses are used to document differences or association. Again, variance is essential because variance is required for covariance. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) offer a nice basic introduction to variables and variance in quantitative social science.

Relationships Among Variables

Variables can be related to each other in a variety of different ways. Given that the goal of quantitative communication research is usually to document and explain how variables are related, knowing about different types of relationships between variables is essential.

One possibility is that no relationship exists. That is, the variables are completely unrelated, and there is no covariance. Statistics cannot be used to prove the lack of a relationship, but statistical techniques such as meta-analysis or equivalence tests can show that a relationship is not strong or substantial (Levine, Weber, Park, & Hullett, 2008).

If variables are related, the simplest possibility is that variance in one variable causes variance in the other. This situation is called a direct causal relationship. Documenting a direct causal relationship requires showing that (a) the variables covary, (b) the cause variable precedes the effect variable in time, and (c) the effect is not explainable by some other variable called a spurious cause. If some other variable causes both the independent and dependent variables, then it will look like there is a direct relationship when there is not. The relationship is said to be spurious. A well-known example is that towns with more churches tend to have more bars. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that churchgoing and alcohol consumption are causally related based on such an association. Obviously, both are related to population size. Larger towns tend to have more of everything. Cook and Campbell (1979) offer an excellent discussion of the concept of causation.

Sometimes direct causal relationships are strung together. So variable x may lead to variable y , and y , in turn, leads to z . This is called a mediated relationship, and y is said to mediate the relationship between x and z . Mediated relationships are sometimes confused with moderated relationships. A moderated relationship exists when the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable varies as a function of a third variable. That is, the focal relationship of interest is variable. For example, if the relationship between self-disclosure and liking is stronger for women than men, then sex moderates the effects of self-disclosure and liking. Evidence for moderators is reflected to be a statistical interaction effect. In the example, there is a two-way interaction between self-disclosure

and liking on liking. Baron and Kelly (1986) is the most cited reference on mediated and moderated relationships.

Quantitative Research Design and Measurement

Research Design

Good research requires planning, and the research plan is called the research design or the method. Research designs can be classified into experimental, quasi-experimental, and nonexperimental designs. Experiments require (a) at least one active independent variable, (b) at least one comparison or control group, and (c) that participants are randomly assigned to experimental conditions. Designs that meet the first two conditions but lack random assignment are called quasi-experiments. Nonexperimental research includes only measured variables. A primary advantage of experimental designs is that they tend to provide better evidence of causal relationships. Because experiments and quasi-experiments involve active independent variables, time ordering is known. Also, the use of comparison and control groups helps control and rule out spurious nuisance variables. Finally, the random assignment that is required for true experiments offers an additional degree of control over nuisance variables.

The quality of a research design is typically assessed in terms of internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to how much confidence we have that variation in the dependent variable is really attributable to the independent variable and not some spurious, nuisance variable. External validity refers to the extent to which findings can be generalized to other people, situations, and times. Obviously, without internal validity, external validity is moot. Also, theory-based quantitative research is often aimed at testing generalizations rather than making generalizations (Mook, 1983). Campbell and Stanley (1963) is the classic work on design validity, and an updated treatment is offered by Cook and Campbell (1979). (See also Brewer, 2000; Smith, 2000.)

Measurement

To quantify a construct and enable observation, constructs must be measured. Measurement is the act of assigning numbers or numerals to represent attributes of people, objects, or events.

Measurement can be either categorical or continuous. The distinction between categorical and continuous measurements is important for determining both what type of statistical analyses make sense and how to interpret results. Sometimes measurement is discussed as forming four levels: nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio.

Categorical measurement can be either binary, that is, present or absent, or involve placing things in categories. Content analysis often involves categorical measurement.

Categorical measurement is also called nominal measurement. In nominal measurement, everything that is the same gets the same value, and things that are different must get a different value, with each different category getting a different value. In nominal measurement, the values assigned to represent categories do not have number meaning, and the values do imply quantity or ordering.

In continuous measurement, scores reflect at least rank ordering. That is, values reflect more or less of something. Self-report scales are a common type of continuous measure.

Regardless of the type of measure, reliable and valid measurement is essential for good quantitative research. Measurement reliability has several meanings in quantitative research. Perhaps the most common is the extent to which a measure is free from random response error. When researchers report Chronbach's alpha, for example, the higher the value, the less random the response error. Researchers want random response error to be as small as possible because random errors create variance that cannot be explained by other variables, making the findings artificially small. This type of reliability is most often encountered when researchers are using multiple-item scales to measure a construct, and it is sometimes called internal consistency reliability.

Reliability also sometimes refers to repeatability. In this sense, a measurement is reliable to the extent to which it is stable over time. This is sometimes called test-retest reliability. Finally, there is intercoder reliability.

Intercoder reliability assesses the extent to which two or more coders or judges agree in rating or classifying something, adjusted for chance agreement. Cohen's kappa, Scott's pi, and Krippendorff's alpha are common measures of intercoding reliability. Intercoder reliability is often encountered in content analysis and observational research.

Measurement validity refers to how closely the values produced by a measure reflect the thing being measured. That is, a measure is valid to the extent that there is fidelity between scores and that which the scores are meant to represent. There are many subtypes of measurement validity. Researchers talk of face validity, content validity, construct validity, structural validity, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Each of these reflects different ways of getting at the question "Are we really measuring what we think we are measuring?" Obviously, the results of research cannot be any more valid than the measures used to generate the findings. Thus, measurement validity is essential.

Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) and Pedhazur and Schelkin (1991) offer especially good treatments of measurement in social science research.

Statistical Analysis

Statistics play an essential role in quantitative communication research, and virtually all quantitative communication research uses some form of statistical analyses to help understand data. Statistical analyses can be divided into

descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The goal of descriptive statistics is to characterize and summarize some existing data. Inferential statistics, on the other hand, is used to move beyond the results of a specific study and makes more general claims. Abelson (1995) offers a well-written and accessible treatment of statistical analysis in social science.

Descriptive Statistics

Common uses of descriptive statistics fall under at least five different categories. The first is raw counts and percentages, which are often used in conjunction with nominal data. These tell us about the frequency or prevalence of something and are very common in content analysis or public opinion survey work. For example, we might want to know about how much violence there is on television. This type of analysis can also be used to show relative frequency by breaking down percentages within different categories. For example, a researcher might report separate frequencies for children's shows and prime-time dramas.

A second common category of descriptive statistics conveys information about central tendency. Central tendency measures include the mean, the median, and the mode. The mean is an average obtained by summing scores and dividing by the number the scores. The median is the middle score when scores are ranked from highest to lowest. The mode is simply the most frequently occurring score(s). In highly skewed distributions, the median is usually preferred over the mean because the mean is sensitive to extreme scores. A skewed distribution is asymmetrical where extreme scores tend to be in one direction. An example is how often people lie per day. According to an unpublished national survey, the average lies told per day is about 1.6. Sixty percent of people, however, reported telling no lies at all. Because 4% of the people surveyed reported telling more than 10 lies per day, the mean of 1.6 lies per day departs from the median and mode, which were 0. In this case, the median and mode tell us more about the average person.

The third type of descriptive statistics is measures of dispersion. Measures of dispersion tell us about how much variability there is in the data, and the two most common ways to assess variability are the variance and the standard deviation. The variance was described earlier. The standard deviation is the square root of the variance and can be thought of as an approximation of the average amount that scores differ from the mean.

A fourth type of descriptive statistics conveys information about the shapes of distributions. When scores are lumped toward the low or high ends rather than being symmetrical, the data are said to be skewed. Kurtosis refers to the steepness or flatness of a distribution. Frequency distributions, histograms, and stem-and-leaf plots are common ways to show the shape of distributions of single variables. As the example about lying above demonstrated, describing the distribution of scores is often essential to

understanding what is going on with some data. When examining how two variables interrelate, a scatterplot is used to show how two variables covary. In a scatterplot, scores of the dependent variable are graphed on a vertical axis, and scores of the independent variable are plotted on the horizontal axis, and dots are used for each data point.

A final common category of descriptive statistics is called measures of effect size. Measures of effect size tell us how strongly two variables covary. The correlation, the squared correlation, the multiple correlation, d , and eta squared (η^2) are common measures of effect size.

Inferential Statistics

The other major type of statistics is inferential statistics. Inferential statistics are used to make claims that go beyond one's current data. They can be used to make inferences about a population based on sample data or to rule out chance factors as rival explanations for findings. The two most common types of inferential statistics in communication research are null hypothesis significance tests (significance testing for short) and confidence intervals.

By far, the most common use of inferential statistics in the social sciences and communication research is the null hypothesis significance test. The purpose of significance testing is to test a hypothesis against chance. It is called null hypothesis significance testing (NHST) because the researcher's hypothesis is pitted against its negation, called the null hypothesis. If the observed results differ from what is expected under the null hypothesis with some specified degree of confidence (usually 95%), then support for the researcher's hypothesis is inferred.

In conventional significance testing, there are two mutually exclusive and exhaustive statistical hypotheses, the null (H_0) and the alternative (H_1). The alternative hypothesis reflects a researcher's predictions and is usually stated in a research article. The null hypothesis is the negation of the alternative hypothesis. For example, if a researcher predicts a difference between two means, the alternative hypothesis is that the two means are different, and the null is that the means are exactly equal. The null hypothesis is seldom stated in research reports, but its existence is always implied in NHST. Usually, the null hypothesis is simply that there is no difference or no association.

A researcher selects a single arbitrary alpha level up front, usually the conventional $\alpha = .05$. The smaller this alpha level, the more confidence one can have in the result if it is "significant." With $\alpha = .05$, 95% confidence is claimed. Once data are collected, a test statistic (e.g., t , F , χ^2) from whichever type of statistic is used, and its corresponding p value is calculated, most often by computer. The p value indicates the probability of obtaining a value of the test statistic that deviates as extremely (or more extremely) as it does from the null hypothesis prediction if the null hypothesis were true for the population from which the data were sampled. If the p value is less than or equal to the chosen alpha, then the null hypothesis is

rejected on the grounds that the observed pattern of the data is sufficiently unlikely conditional on the null being true. That is, if the data are sufficiently improbable if the null were true, it is inferred that the null is likely false. Because the statistical null hypothesis and the statistical alternative hypothesis are written so that they are mutually exclusive and exhaustive, rejection of the null hypothesis provides the license to accept the alternative hypothesis reflecting the researcher's substantive prediction. If, however, the obtained p value is greater than alpha, the researcher fails to reject the null, and the data are considered inclusive. Null hypotheses are never accepted. Instead, one makes a binary decision to reject or to fail to reject the null hypothesis based on the probability of the test statistic conditional on the null being true.

In short, a statistically significant result is one that is unlikely to be obtained by chance if the null is true. So when research reports a finding that is "significant at $p < .05$," what that means is we can have 95% or better confidence that the finding is not exactly zero presuming that the test was done correctly.

Many people find the logic of significance testing confusing, and critics find much fault with the approach (Levine, Weber, Hullett, Park, & Lindsey, 2008). Nevertheless, significance testing is the statistical approach most often taught in research methods classes; it is the approach used by the major statistical software packages such as SPSS, and it is what most communication researchers use to test their hypotheses.

Statistical hypothesis testing in communication research most often takes one of two basic forms. One form tests for differences between two or more means or percentages, and the other tests for a linear association between two or more variables. Chi-square tests, t tests, and the analysis of variance (ANOVA) test for differences with correlation and regression test association. Which specific type of statistical test is used depends on whether a researcher is interested in documenting differences or association, the number of variables involved, and whether the variables are categorical or continuous. When testing for differences, if the variables are count data or percentages, chi-square can be used. To test the difference between two means, t tests are used. ANOVA is used to look for differences among three or more means or when there is more than one categorical independent variable and a single continuous dependent measure. Correlations test the association between two continuous variables. Multiple regression is used when there are two or more independent variables. When multiple dependent variables are tested, multivariate analyses such as MANOVA or canonical correlation are needed.

The second main approach to inferential statistics is the confidence interval. Confidence intervals are used to make inferences about a population based on sample data. A population is the entire collection of units under consideration, and a sample is some subset of that population. For example, all registered voters in the United States is a population

of interest, and we might study voter's opinions by taking a random sample of voters. Confidence intervals are used to estimate a range of values where the population value might fall given some sample data.

Readers are likely to be familiar with news coverage of opinion polls. In reporting polls, it will be reported that some percentage of people think such and such with some margin of error. For example, 24% ($\pm 2\%$) of Americans surveyed might think that Congress is doing a good job. That plus or minus or margin of error is the confidence interval. What that means is that it is 95% likely that if all Americans were surveyed, the percentage obtained would fall within that range.

The validity of confidence intervals rests directly on the quality of the sampling. Samples need to be representative of the population for good inference. As a consequence, survey research that aims to be informative about populations has developed sophisticated methods of sampling aimed at ensuring the representativeness of the sample. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the accuracy of confidence intervals in this context rests on the quality of sampling.

Other Statistical Analysis

A number of other types of statistical analyses are evident in quantitative communication research, and most researchers have a wide statistical repertoire. Readers of research are likely to encounter factor analysis, path analysis, structural equation modeling, network analysis, meta-analysis to name a few. Factor analysis is used to find patterns in correlations and is most often encountered in measurement validation research. Exploratory factor analysis and principle component analysis are used to see if variables can be collapsed into a more parsimonious set, while confirmatory factor analysis is used to test if items designed to measure a construct intercorrelate in the way intended. Path analysis and structural equation modeling are used to test causal models. Network analysis is used to assess linkages between people or other entities and is therefore very useful in communication research.

Another very useful analysis is meta-analysis. Meta-analysis is essentially a study of studies. It is a set of statistical analyses used to cumulate findings across studies. In meta-analysis, each study in a literature becomes a data point. So meta-analysis is very valuable in summarizing large literatures.

A Research Example

A research study that exemplifies many of the ideas presented here is McCornack and Levine's (1990) investigation of the effects of suspicion on deception detection accuracy among heterosexual dating couples in colleges. A previous study found that as relationship closeness increased, people became less accurate in detecting their

partners' lies because the trust in a relational partner tended to make the people believe their partners more often and, consequently, mistake lies for honest messages (McCornack & Parks, 1986). The McCornack and Levine (1990) experiment tested if induced suspicion might overcome this bias. It was predicted that suspicion would improve accuracy to a point but too much suspicion would be counterproductive. That is, it was anticipated that moderate levels of suspicion would yield higher accuracy than either low or high suspicion. The reasoning provided was that when people lack suspicion, they would miss the lies, but if they were too suspicious, they might mistake honesty for deception. Moderate suspicion might be just right.

The primary independent variable was state suspicion, which was conceptually defined as information from an outside source that another person might not be honest. The dependent variable was deception detection accuracy, which referred to the extent to which people were able to correctly distinguish truths from lies. In all, 107 dating couples were recruited to participate in the experiment. On arriving at the communication interaction lab, the couples were separated from their partners. One partner of each dating couple was interviewed on videotape. They had to answer 12 questions, and they were instructed to lie on 6 questions and give honest answers on the other 6 questions. The questions were about beliefs that the person held. The videotape was then shown to their respective partners, who made truth or lie judgments about each of the 12 answers their partner gave. Accuracy was calculated as the percentage of judgments that were correct. Thus, the actual percent correct score was the operational definition of accuracy.

State suspicion was experimentally varied by the instructions given, with one-third of the participants assigned at random to one of high-, moderate-, or low-suspicion conditions. Participants in the high-suspicion condition were told that their partner was definitely lying on some of the answers and that their job was to guess which ones were lies. In the moderate-suspicion condition, it was casually mentioned that their partner might not be completely honest. In the low-suspicion condition, no mention was made of lying, and the participants did not know that the study was about deception. Thus, the instructions served as the operational definition of state suspicion. Also, this study was a true experiment because state suspicion was an active independent variable under experimenter control; participants were randomly assigned to condition; and the low-, moderate-, and high-suspicion conditions provided a basis for comparison.

The results were tested with ANOVA and were consistent with the hypothesis. The highest accuracy was observed in the moderate-suspicion condition (64.6%), and this value was statistically greater than the accuracy in either the low-suspicion (53.2%) or the high-suspicion (57.2%) conditions. The differences were statistically significant at $p < .05$. However, these findings have not since been replicated, so we can have only limited confidence in these results. A replication of these findings, however, is under way.

Conclusion

Quantitative approaches to communication research use numbers to help us understand how people communicate. Quantitative communication research applies a set of social scientific methods for testing defensible knowledge claims about human communication based on empirical data, statistical description, and statistical inference.

Although quantitative approaches are usually contrasted with qualitative work, a more meaningful distinction is between science-based and nonscientific approaches to communication. Quantitative research almost always implies a scientific approach to understanding communication.

Quantitative research encompasses a diverse collection of topics and methods. Quantitative research can be applied to all topic areas in communication. It can be used in basic and applied research and in theoretical and exploratory research. Any aspect of communication that can be quantified can be studied with a quantitative approach.

The key skills for a quantitative researcher include research design, measurement, and statistical analysis. All three are essential. The goal of scientific research is to get our understanding closer to the truth of how things really are, and the quality of design, measurement, and analysis allow the quantitative communication research to make defensible knowledge claims and increase our collective understanding of how humans communicate.

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8

QUALITATIVE, ETHNOGRAPHIC, AND PERFORMATIVE APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION

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Chi Omega, Alpha Phi, Delta Zeta, Kappa Alpha Theta, Pi Beta Phi. You probably know that these are names of sororities, even if you aren't a member of the Greek world. You may have seen the Greek "letters" adorning sweatshirts on campus. But you may have little understanding of their colors, their secret practices, their risqué songs. Do you know about "bump-and-float groups"?

Researchers of a particular ilk use the terms of the title, *qualitative*, *ethnographic*, and *performative*, to study people and the communication that takes place in various contexts. There are significant areas where the approaches overlap with one another; and there are some differences as well. This chapter uses published studies about sororities to interweave a discussion of the substances of the "qualitative," "ethnographic," and "performative" approaches. This is appropriate in that one of the defining characteristics of the three approaches is to draw insights by closely interweaving the researcher's choice of theories and methods with the phenomena being studied, rather than presenting insights in a removed and distantly abstracted way.

All three of these research approaches embody things that we do every day: participating in relationships, organizations, and the world; making observations while we are engaged in activities, talking with people to find out information; and interpreting what people say and do to make sense of what's going on. By approaching how we do

these activities with more reflexive thought, we may become proficient and more adaptive at what we already do to survive. And all this will, in turn, make our lives more interesting and more meaningful. These approaches, are, as theorist Kenneth Burke says, *equipment for living*. Furthermore, you—*yes, you*—probably already *enjoy* these activities: meeting and talking with new people, learning new things, and being surprised. Sorry to tell you this, but there is a real possibility that you could be *having some fun* while you are doing research.

"Faking Identity in Clubland" and the Qualitative Approach

There is a long line of young women standing outside Edcel's Attic, a club in downtown Tempe, Arizona. The researcher recognizes many of the young women from the class he is teaching at Arizona State University. He knows that the young women are members of various sororities and are often the audience for a rock band named Ritual, which is comprised of four young men who are all members of fraternities. Observing the line of women attempting to enter the club, the researcher jots down notes on a pad, at first standing at a distance but later standing much closer, after making friends with the doormen whose job it is to examine the identification cards the women presented—typically a driver's license—to see if the ID card

is real or fake. Sometimes the doormen quiz a woman about the information on the card, hoping to catch her in a lie. Gradually, the researcher understands that when a doorman starts flirting with a woman, this is usually a signal that the doorman will ultimately let the young woman into the club (Scheibel, 1992). However, sometimes a woman gets caught “faking” her identity. In such cases, the ID card will be confiscated, and the woman will be denied entrance into the club. Such occasions are often accompanied by embarrassment, indignation, even outrage.

The researcher followed up the observations and taking field notes by conducting interviews with the doormen and a number of the young women who were in various sororities. The reason behind using a second technique for gathering data is because making observations and taking field notes are generally not sufficient to interpret the multifaceted and nuanced way individuals and groups do the things they do. Each technique has its own strengths and limitations. Consider the following narrative, in which a sorority woman discusses how she communicates with the doorman, as well as the inner conversation she holds with herself:

“You just try to remain calm. You watch your actions a lot, I think. You talk about other subjects . . . You keep talking, that’s what I do. I keep talking. I talk about it [the club] if I’ve been there before. ‘Oh, remember last time we were here.’ Usually in the . . . earshot of the person. I’ve noticed myself doing that . . . You try to remain focused on something other than what’s gonna happen right there. The conversation taking place. You initiate conversation, I think. And you get really nervous. I’m getting nervous right now, just talking about it . . . And you just tell yourself to remain calm. That you’ll get in. It’s not a problem. You’ve been here before. It’s hard. It’s so emotional just trying to go to a bar.” (Transcript 71, Lines 249–284; Scheibel, 1992, p. 168)

We might conclude from the transcript above that the qualitative approach adheres to some “basic assumptions” with which many scholars who use this approach would agree (see Van Maanen, Dabbs, & Faulkner, 1982).

First, the qualitative approach is interested in ordinary, *everyday behaviors* and communication phenomena, such as how underage sorority women strategically communicate to enter a bar. Most generically, qualitative approaches to the study of communication seek to describe, interpret, and understand what’s going on and how people are doing what they are doing.

Second, qualitative approaches typically conduct research as it occurs in *natural settings*—such as bars—in which the people are engaged in the activities that are important to the people being studied. The researcher enters the setting to directly observe and even participate in what he or she seeks to understand. Of course, the presence of the researcher may be dependent on negotiating *access* to the scene. In the setting above, the researcher was able to observe sorority women in a public place; thus, “getting

permission” was not a particularly problematic issue. Even here, however, the researcher needed permission to achieve even greater proximity to the scene. Thus, the researcher needed to *get along with* the doormen in order to observe the communication more closely. However, many places are not open but might be closed. For example, it is unlikely that the researcher—a middle-aged male—would be allowed to observe the sorority women in their cars as they “rehearsed” what they would say before going into the bar. The degree that a researcher is an “observer” or a “participant” may vary tremendously. If you are a 19-year-old member of a sorority and are doing a research project on sorority “rush,” you will be an observer but you will also be very much a participant, experiencing the very things you are researching and trying to understand.

Third, despite the use of specific techniques, it is the human researcher who is guiding this research, and it is through the interaction between the researcher and those the research seeks to understand that the data gathered are cocreated and negotiated. In other words, *you are the research instrument*.

Fourth, such research is based on inductive analysis, in which the researcher’s identification of patterns is based on the up-close-and-personal observations and the local understandings of individuals engaged in the scene. Thus, the researcher would not assume that what he found out about how sorority women did things in Tempe, Arizona, at a club called Edcel’s Attic would hold true for how women in Los Angeles did things at the Temple Bar. That is, research generalizations would only be tentatively offered.

Fifth, qualitative approaches make use of specific techniques such as participant observation and interviewing. Numerous discussions of the methodological issues inherent in the techniques attest to the complexities of doing such research and the often problematic things a researcher encounters when observing, interacting with, and interviewing people. Here are some considerations, questions, and issues related to the researcher making observations on the scene:

1. What are field notes? Are there different types? When might each type be used?
2. What should the researcher be trying to write down?
3. How are field notes written? How much detail should be written down?
4. How does the researcher know if the field notes are accurate?
5. For what duration (hours, days, weeks, months) should the researcher take field notes?
6. What happens if people observe the researcher taking field notes and get upset?
7. How is it possible for the researcher to write down conversations?

8. Is eavesdropping on conversations ethical?
9. Should the researcher write down his or her emotions to what is observed?
10. What does the researcher do with the field notes once they have been written?

These sorts of questions—and there are many more—are the types of questions about which a researcher may be concerned. Much has also been written on observation and also on interviewing.

1. Who should the researcher interview?
2. What types of interview questions are there?
3. How long should the interview last?
4. Should the interviewer take notes during the interview?
5. How many interviews should be conducted for the research project?
6. What kinds of information does the researcher want to get in the interview?
7. How does the researcher know if the interviewee is telling the truth?
8. What kinds of problems arise during interviews?
9. What sorts of problems are encountered when transcribing the interview?
10. What does the researcher do with the finished transcript?

All these questions are important, will concern the researcher, and may even be a source of some initial anxiety. However, such concerns typically fade away rather quickly, particularly when confronted with interesting—even *cool*—data. It is worth revisiting the piece of interview transcript presented above. The sorority woman elegantly discusses her outer strategies for dealing with the doorman while also pointing out her inner talk to control her nervousness and to present a calm exterior. The content of such data could not be directly observed, but it could be gathered through interviews.

However, there really isn't much about sororities in the study. In fact, sororities are largely absent. While the study focuses on sorority women, it does not deeply examine the things that go on within sororities. Rather, sororities serve largely as a *context* for studying the face-to-face behaviors of underage sorority women confronting the doormen while trying to enter the bar. There's nothing wrong with that; it is important in research to acknowledge the contextual factors that frame the central interest.

A qualitative approach to communication views phenomena as texts, apprehended through qualitative methods and ripe for interpretation. We are able to discover and isolate discrete communicative interactions, which we can study. Embedded in well-established gendered contexts, phenomena such as the construction and performance of

alternate identities become problems of interest. Teasing and flirting are strategies for establishing temporary identities that simultaneously reproduce the contexts in which such performances are embedded.

Despite commonalities, there are some differences between the *qualitative* and *ethnographic* approaches. One difference is that qualitative approaches often focus on a very small phenomenon in a particular setting, and they often do not even use participant observation. In contrast, ethnographic approaches are often concerned with interpreting the more comprehensive *culture* of a people, a group, or an organization (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Participant observation is a defining characteristic of the ethnographic approach. The emphasis on culture in the ethnographic approach comes from its disciplinary origins in anthropology. Conversely, the qualitative approach draws strongly from the discipline of sociology. In our discipline, a consistent area for research using the ethnographic approach is found in the area of organizational culture, which examines all sorts of symbolic activity, including rituals, storytelling, metaphors, and all manner of cultural practices (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982).

“Practicing Sorority Rush” and the Ethnographic Approach

Sorority rush—the process by which sororities recruit new members (aka “rushees”) to replace those who have graduated—is arguably the single most important cultural event for sororities. A sorority's status is largely dependent on how well the sorority recruits potential new members. So important is “rush” considered that officers are appointed and subcommittees are formed to regulate the learning of songs, for decorating rooms, and for escorting the rushees in and out of the parties. And weeks of rush rehearsal are conducted, during which sorority members are trained and retrained on things such as how to talk with rushees.

The researcher and roughly 135 sorority women sat in a large room in the campus. Sorority rush was still a week away, but the researcher was allowed to go “backstage” to observe and collect data at eight “rush rehearsals.” As many as 10 of the sorority women were carrying small audiotape recorders that the researcher had provided, so that the sorority women could record what was being said in different points of the room and also record the conversations they would soon be practicing.

Unlike the previous study, in which access was not very difficult, managing to get access to the backstage of sorority rush took, literally, years. Prior to the time this research project started, the researcher had served as a sorority's campus advisor for almost 8 years, during which time he had received a number of Greek awards. He had also supervised roughly 200 undergraduate thesis projects

dealing with various aspects of sorority life, most often sorority rush. Because the researcher had established some credibility and had developed good relationships, a number of sorority women in leadership positions were more than willing to allow the researcher access to the scene.

Here are some central ideas of the ethnographic approach:

- It incorporates qualitative research techniques, particularly participant observation and interviewing.
- It interprets how the meanings of things are socially constructed.
- It focuses not only on symbolic processes such as storytelling, metaphors, practices, rituals, as well as things such as values, ideology, power, but also on artifacts such as food, art, and dress.
- It situates research studies within contexts (e.g., historical, economic, political, legal) that are relevant to the research being undertaken.
- It expands and acknowledges the diversity of conceptual frameworks that might guide studies: interpretive, critical, feminist, postmodern.
- It provides greater reflexivity on the part of researchers in terms of their own ethical conduct while on the scene.
- It develops other areas for ethnographic research in addition to interpretive studies of organization and culture.
- It establishes the recent merging of ethnographic and performative approaches.
- It helps the growth of autoethnographic approaches that are literary, poetic, and artistic and shows the importance of the narrative “voices” created by researchers.

Rehearsing for the “Bad Rushee”

Sorority members know that during “rush” they will encounter “rushees” who, for any number of reasons, may not be interested in their particular sorority. Perhaps, the rushee has friends in a different sorority. Or the rushee, being aware of the preexisting reputations of the various sororities, wants to be a member of a “higher-status” sorority. What sororities dislike most is being confronted at rush party by a “bad rushee,” who is rude and disrespects the sorority. But sorority etiquette prohibits sorority members from responding in kind; rather, sorority members must maintain civility, which requires *restraint*, which is a form of mortification in the sense that the sorority is “punishing [it]self” (Brummett, 1981, p. 258). Thus, sororities develop strategies for addressing such situations.

In the large room, 135 sorority women are gathered to watch a demonstration or “skit” presented by two prominent Alpha Chi Theta sorority leaders, which mockingly depicts an encounter between a sorority member and a bad rushee. The researcher decided to focus on the rehearsing of organizational conversations as an important symbolic process as something of interest. In the skit, the sorority women use “mockery,” a form of *not serious impersonation*

of another person, to address a situation they know that they will confront during sorority rush:

Nicole: Krissy, you start with [being] the [rushee]. She’s [i.e., the rushee] not happy to be at an Alpha Chi Theta party, which *does* happen, and she says to you—I’ll be the rushee—and, say something. You pick me up.

Krissy: Hi, thanks for coming. Um, so good to see you. What year are you?

Nicole: (sullenly) I’m a freshman.

Krissy: So how did your first semester go? Did you like [our university]?

Nicole: (rolls eyes) Yeah. *Whatever*.

Audience laughs.

Nicole: (impatiently) So, um, how long does this party [go] for?

Krissy: I think this party is 30, 45 minutes.

Nicole: Okay.

Krissy: So, um, did you live in Desmond [a dormitory] or did you get a coed dorm?

Nicole: No. I live in Desmond and it’s a *shithole*.

Audience laughs.

Krissy: (quickly) Well I live in Doheny so I wouldn’t know anything about that. What’s your major?

Audience laughs. (Tape 21B, Counter 313–326; Scheibel, Gibson, & Anderson, 2002, p. 223)

The reasons the sorority performs the skit is twofold. First, the sorority understands that rush rehearsals *should be fun* in order to keep the entire sorority in an upbeat and positive frame of mind before they enter the intensity and frenzy of actually conducting rush, during a time when members are pulled between the demands of their courses as students while simultaneously conducting the work of sorority rush. Thus, the mockery of the rushee in the skit is consistent with the sorority’s *ideology of fun*, in the sense that the bad rushee is portrayed to be much worse than the sorority might expect to encounter. In an interview later, Krissy stated that “we were kind of making *fun of a really bad rushee*. And we knew that we would never have someone *that* horrible, but we do have really, obnoxious and annoying [rushees]” (Scheibel et al., 2002, p. 224). Less obviously, the skit is a cultural practice that lets the sorority acknowledge the situation while also allowing the sorority to think that they might be able to *overcome* the situation. Thus, an ethnographic approach to the sorority’s organizational culture looked at symbolic processes such as rehearsing rush conversations and the use of mockery as ways that create and maintain the sorority’s meanings of rush rehearsals and rushees.

In presenting the transcript of the skit, the researcher allowed *you, the reader*, to “hear” the two sorority women’s *performance* of the skit. And you may have felt some small glow of recognition, some sense of warmth that you were able to *imagine yourself* in the situation, listening in on the private backstage culture of sorority rush rehearsals. And yet, following the transcript of the skit and a bit of interview text, the researcher theoretically dissected the texts. Here is a segment of that dissection:

The “making *fun* of” is mockery that is also scapegoating, reflecting the various hierarchic divisions between sorority member and rushee. Thus, the guilt over judging those who, if accepted, would be their “sisters,” is put onto the rushee, who, by virtue of being “*that horrible*,” is deemed unworthy and may be dramatically denigrated. On two instances, Nicole’s conversation responses (“Whatever” and “shithole”) are outrageously inappropriate, and both are recognized as such and are met with audience laughter. The latter response (“shithole”) is particularly interesting, suggesting a “*consubstantial*” relationship between the rushee and her residence: the rushee is a “shithole” (Burke, 1969). For Burke, bodily analogies of pollution are necessary for catharsis and redemption; that is, “transcendence is not complete until the fecal motive has in some way been expressed and ‘redeemed’” (Burke, 1969, p. 309). Redemption occurs in the reestablishment of civility, the “*still moment following the fusion and release of a symbol-induced catharsis*” (Rueckert, 1982, p. 137; Scheibel et al., 2002, p. 224).

The dissection of the skit is part of a somewhat more *traditional* ethnographic approach, in which the interweaving of “data” with explanations using “theory” is guiding the research, and demonstrates not only the researcher’s interpretive skills but also his or her ability to apply and, it is hoped, *generate theory*. One of the most important assumptions about research is that it is being done to further the development of theory. One of the unfortunate byproducts of this assumption is that the actual thing being studied is of marginal consequence. There is a sense that it is not sororities that are important but, rather, the theory, and the researcher’s ability to apply and generate more theory, which is the “*really*” important objective. *The sorority could just as well have been an accountant’s office or an ice cream parlor*. But the odd thing is that many researchers are as interested in the context as they are in the theory; and it is the real world to which we bring our theories.

An ethnographic approach to communication provides a lens for glimpsing the performance of culture. The production and performance of dramatic “skits” create and maintain cultural meanings and expectations that guide sorority members’ interactions with “rushees.” Organizational phenomena, including rehearsing and mockery, allow organizational members to acknowledge and transcend the social tensions that are understood as potential problems for the

sorority. Thus, an ethnographic approach to the study of the performance of culture serves to extend our understanding of organizational maintenance.

The qualitative and ethnographic approaches are both increasingly identified as interpretive. Both are consistently—although not exclusively—identified with a theoretical orientation that believes that reality is a social construction. However, the limitations of the social construction orientation have led many to turn to a performative approach (see also Chapter 17, “Performance and Storytelling,” and Chapter 41, “Gender”). Again, the approaches not only have differences but also have many things in common.

“Sorority Rush as Lust” and the Performative Approach

In both of the studies previously discussed, *performance* has been a central feature. In the study “Faking Identity in Clubland,” sorority women’s identities were, in fact, *performed*. The “fake ID” cards were merely “props.” Their friends *rehearsed* the performance with them *backstage* before doing their *front-stage* performances. Likewise, in “Practicing Sorority Rush,” the sorority’s use of a “skit” is a performance of culture that both teaches and enculturates new members to the ways of sorority rush. The performance that scapegoats the “bad rushee” creates and maintains cultural meanings and expectations for behavior during rush.

Clearly, viewing the world as a *drama* has much in common with viewing culture as *performance*. Performance theorists have extended the ethnographic approach by shifting the emphasis from the “performance of culture” to “culture as performance” (Conquergood, 1989, p. 82). Moreover, the idea of performance is extended not only to those people or organizations being studied but to the researcher or ethnographer as well. Thus, performance becomes the method as well as the focus. Beyond this, however, ethnographic approaches have grown considerably, moving far beyond the traditional ethnographic models to those embracing the political and aesthetic nature of research (see Conquergood, 1991) while also expanding beyond the kinds of “realist tales” that ethnographers have traditionally told (Van Maanen, 1988); many ethnographers now use types of writing conventions that are typically found in literature and fiction and that could be thought of as being both performative and ethnographic. Thus, an organizational ethnographer such as Bud Goodall can write in the persona of a detective who is *on the case, finding clues, and living in the rock ‘n’ roll mystery*.

The “performative approach” is multifaceted, and research may include the literal oral performance of cultural scripts before an actual audience. Such research also often includes elements of the qualitative and ethnographic approaches. In one sense, however, the performance approach is a critique to the idea that culture is reducible

to texts that require the researcher to be there to turn observations into field notes or interviews into transcripts. The sorority women who were competent performers in faking their identities did not require the researcher's presence before they performed; thus, the performance approach seeks a more equitable balance, in which researchers and the people being studied may be viewed as coproducers.

However, the performative approach does not seek to do away with written texts, such as field notes or interview transcripts. Rather, the performative approach seeks to redefine and expand the nature of what it means to do ethnography. We see this in much ethnographic work on organizational cultural performances, such as the two previously discussed sorority studies.

The critiques of traditional research and their claims of "objectivity" became more problematic, and the "crisis" about how "reality" was represented became a voice with growing insistency within the communication studies discipline. The performative approach acknowledges the subjectivity of the researcher and examines the political and ethical choices of the researcher in the construction of both written and oral performances (Conquergood, 1991). In fact, some research projects in the performative approach might be categorized as "autoethnography," in the sense that the researcher is a member of the very culture being studied.

Some basic themes of the performative approach are as follows:

- Moving beyond a conception of the world as a socially constructed text
- A commitment to collaborative work *with* those being studied
- Recognition of critical and emancipatory possibilities in the work
- The politics of academic publishing
- The author's increased reflexivity and positionality within the work
- Consideration of the ethical implications of all aspects of performative work
- Greater legitimacy given to autoethnographic performances (even if written)
- Integration of artistic forms within the work produced, such as photographs and poems (e.g., Picart, 2002)

Consider the following, in which the middle-aged, male researcher has created a narrator voice that belongs to a 20-year-old sorority woman:

"A five-star girl, a major hottie named Dani Hunter, walks into a class I'm taking. She is tall and blond, with almond-shaped eyes, and bright even teeth. Her face is flawless, every pore and freckle perfectly placed. She's wearing an emerald-colored dress that fits her like the skin on a peach. She moves like a dancer, which we later find out she is. I love her and hate her all in the same moment. Along with the fifty other mortals sitting in the room, I am shocked silent listening to the sound of our collective sighs of resignation. Everyone

watches Dani as she snakes through the class, down an aisle, and sits in the second row. I'm watching as girls from Omega Zeta, Delta Phi, Theta Gamma, and the other sororities covet Dani and talk with their eyes. This is fever. This is lust." (Scheibel & Desmond, 2007, pp. 1–2)

This opening description, acknowledging the physical presence of a woman desired by the sorority, is in keeping with the new ethnography, which legitimates *the body* as a site of concern for ethnographers. To *show* lust, rather than *tell* about it, the sorority narrator waxes poetically about Dani Hunter, who is the object of her desire, discussing her eyes, her hair, her "flawless" face, the tightness of her dress, which "fits her like the skin on a peach," and how she moves. To the extent that lust prizes the body and physical beauty, describing the sorority woman in such a way is legitimate, particularly if we keep the idea in mind that what is being read—the text—is now possessed by *you, the reader*, not the researcher (Goodall, 2000, p. 134). And it is certainly more reasonable to have the narrator's voice being that of a sorority woman, since it is the *sorority's lust* that is being shown. Conversely, using the researcher's middle-aged white male voice as that of the narrator only suggests the metaphor of the researcher as organizational voyeur.

And yet old habits are hard to break. Consider the following footnote, which *tells* about lust in a traditional academic voice, suggesting that the researcher—historically produced from a long line of academic researchers—feels compelled to make his case in a way that is true to his own research roots:

The present Greek world of sororities is not so far removed from the ancient Greek world, where Epicurus linked death and lust. The "blind lust" with which "people pursue an immortality of reputation" is also an attempt to secure a "continued existence" and is an instantiation of the denial of death, which is linked to the fear of death. See Martha A. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (1994, p. 198). The "death of sororities is real; the sorority's membership dwindles, and the campus chapter of a sorority ceases to exist." Conversely, the fear of death in the Greek world is "also mixed with a sure and certain hope, the hope of reincarnation." See Jane Ellen Harrison, *Epilogomena to the Study of Greek Religion and Themis* (1962, p. 290). In this sense, each year of rush may be viewed as a reproductive reincarnation in which new members replace those who have left (Scheibel & Desmond, 2007, p. 5).

One might argue that the researcher's compulsion to cite sources and to incessantly document might also be considered a lust of sorts, for the fear of death in universities stalks not only sororities but also untenured professors. There is a political reality here, expressed in the axiom "*publish or perish*." Thus, there is a political dimension to the performative approach. What counts as knowledge, and who makes that decision? Who gets to perform the culture? What types of writing are valued in

university Communication departments? What types of writing will get a new professor tenured? These can be life-and-death questions in a new professor's career (see Conquergood, 1991).

By the time Dani Hunter was invented, the researcher had been researching sororities for almost 15 years, had observed rush backstage for hours at a time, had felt the boredom of the sorority women who were seniors and had been through rush several times, and could feel the anxiety and excitement of the sorority women who were new to "this side of rush." The backstage boredom of sorority rush had also been experienced by the researcher's tired body.

The article "Sorority Rush as Lust" was published in the journal *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies*, a progressive electronic journal open to an array of styles of performative research and specializing in publishing manuscripts that would be difficult, if not impossible, to get published in the more traditional journals. While traditional communication journals periodically choose to publish scholarship that pushes the boundaries, such occurrences are few and far between.

The researcher's choice to use the "voice" of a sorority woman was based on several considerations. First, the researcher's knowledge of sororities and sorority rush was comprehensive. Second, the researcher was *not* portraying sorority rush in a way that sororities would consider negative. Consider the following two texts, the first of which is from the main body of the article and which is using the sorority narrator's voice:

"During all these parties, we engage the rushees in conversations, and try to get to know them, and also try to get them to know us. Obviously, the conversations we have with the rushees are *way* superficial. I mean, it's hard to get to know somebody on the basis of a few short conversations. 'Hi, what's your name?' 'What's your major, Dani?' 'What year are you?' 'Where do you live?' We're not talking deep here, but we do get a sense of the girl's character. Are the rushees just asking questions about drinking and guys? *Not a good sign.*"[†]

The following text is the corresponding footnote referred to by the "[†]" in the above text:

[†]Sororities often explicitly use these questions—often in a cluster—to characterize the superficiality of conversations between rushees and current members. However, sororities are very concerned about the nature of rush party conversations, and their respective "rush manuals" often include sections listing "conversational do's and don't's" (e.g., "DO listen not only with your ears, but with your eyes, heart and mind" and "DO NOT interrupt, gossip, lie, argue." (*Omega Zeta Rush Manual*, 2002, p. 12)

In reading these two texts, you might notice that in the first text, the voice of a first-person narrator's "character" strives for a candidness so that the reader might accept what "she" is saying, acknowledging the superficial nature of sorority members' typical conversations with rushees.

The narrator's use of "we" and "us" attempts to create the impression that the narrator is a woman among other women. The reader might notice that the narrator's emphasis on the word "*way*" is an attempt—albeit superficial—to give the narrator a smidgen of linguistic cool. In contrast, the second text—a footnote to the first text—reverts to traditional third-person voice, elaborating on the main text and providing and citing data (a sorority's rush manual), which is the standard way of supporting claims.

Sororities often explicitly use these questions—often in a cluster—to characterize the superficiality of conversations between rushees and current members. However, sororities are very concerned about the nature of rush party conversations, and their respective "rush manuals" often include sections listing "conversational do's and don't's" (e.g., "DO listen not only with your ears, but with your eyes, heart, and mind" and "DO NOT interrupt, gossip, lie, argue").

And in the discussion of these two texts, *this* researcher, that is, *me*, Dean Scheibel, is acknowledging the choices implicitly made while writing the original article. And it is this sort of thing, this arguably somewhat narcissistic (Taylor & Trujillo, 2001, p. 179) placing of *me, me, me* within what is being written, as it is being written, reflecting on the rhetorical choices that *I'm* making, that is one of the variants of the performance approach, and it becomes one of the writing conventions one may find within the newest autoethnographic trends.

The researcher—notice that "the researcher" has reverted to the traditional narrative voice—chose to work with a female coauthor on the manuscript, a young woman who had been instrumental in helping the researcher conduct research on sororities. Beyond the researcher feeling that he "owed" Megan for providing some editorial assistance (an "acknowledgment" in a footnote would have sufficed), the idea that the researcher is performing this research stuff *together and with members of the culture* suggests a debt of sorts. But even more, the researcher wanted her voice or, more specifically, wanted access to her knowledge of a sorority woman's voice. As it was noted in the original published manuscript, "In using this voice, I collaborated with a former student, Megan Desmond, who had been a member of a campus sorority; in editing my work, Megan provided a number of phrases, which I used *verbatim*" (Scheibel & Desmond, 2007). The researcher believed that Megan, as a woman, might be able to provide valuable suggestions and advice in creating a female voice; thus, the researcher and a former sorority member worked together to cocreate a narrating voice.

A performative approach to communication, informed by a heightened process of authorial reflexivity along with political and poetic enactments, allows for a widening of what may be considered scholarship and knowledge. Appropriating a sorority voice for a narrator creates an appreciative immediacy and a connection between author, reader, and "other," allowing the reader to experience the performance of the sorority in a manner typically not found

in traditional scholarship; thus, the reader was able to “lust” and “covet” Dani Hunter through the eyes and voice of a narrator that was not the voice of the authors. However, the performative approach’s use of literary conventions is not widely accepted in the discipline’s “important” journals but is more likely to be found in edited collections (e.g., Banks & Banks, 1998; Bochner & Ellis, 2002). Not surprisingly, the performative approach’s ability to inform scholarship is politically motivated not only to create a friendly context for studying relatively discrete communicative phenomena but also to transform the political allegiances of the communication discipline itself, with a particular interest in widening what is understood as “scholarship.”

In concluding this section on the performative approach, there seems to be some sort of expectation that the researcher acknowledges his or her *own* positionality with regard to these three approaches: My methods are generally qualitative and sometimes ethnographic. I favor doing analysis of naturally occurring conversations and of texts derived from ethnographic interviews. I often use the dramatic theories of Erving Goffman and Kenneth Burke, who view reality as drama, so maybe I have at least a big toe in the performative approach. But these acknowledgments are generally about as autoethnographic as I can get.

Conclusion

Qualitative, ethnographic, and performative approaches to communication are interrelated yet distinctive. The three approaches each have their own history, disciplinary origins, values and ways of doing things, revered texts, and practitioners. As a student who may have the opportunity to study something out in the world, the secret is to find a context that interests *you*—bars, museums, tattoo parlors, surf shops—and jump in and begin. You won’t be able to write about *everything*, but you’ll probably find something that holds your interest. Then you will find out what works for you and what you enjoy doing. Even more important, however, is that people are researchers, and the methods discussed in this chapter are the same things you do every day of your life: You participate in life; observe things around you; talk with people; and, if you’re lucky, get to write about—and perhaps perform—those things.

Qualitative, ethnographic, and performative approaches to communication, while having areas of convergence, can also be wildly dissimilar. My reading of these three areas narrowed the range among the approaches. A different reading likely would have made the areas of divergence among the approaches more noticeable, say, for example, by discussing a “conversation analysis” study under the heading of the qualitative approach. But even here, the “poetics of conversation” have been noted in speech errors (Hopper, 1992).

So it is worth dwelling on the areas of commonality among the approaches. Although the title of this article, “Qualitative, Ethnographic, and Performative Approaches to Communication” calls the three areas “approaches,” each can legitimately be called a “method” (see Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). And each of the three “approaches” *is* a method, a manner, of studying communication phenomena; likely, it was in that sense that you interpreted the title when you read it. However, there is another definition of the word *approaches*, one that I prefer and that better summarizes the similarities among the three approaches. Thus, *approaches* suggests a drawing closer to or a coming nearer to. And I think it is this idea that the three approaches embody. Each allows us to get closer to and nearer to what we wish to understand: communication. And yet we are always approaching, never fully arriving, which, of course, provides us with humility and a good motive to continue doing what we are doing.

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9

CRITICAL/CULTURAL APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION

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Fueled by technological innovations in media such as the Internet (with staging formats such as YouTube, Facebook, and MySpace), e-mail, wi-fi, cell phones, Blackberries and I-phones, DVRs,¹ and the much larger digital revolution (of which they are all a part)—as well as a rapidly increasing interest in social identities such as race, gender, sexuality, nationality, and ability—critical cultural communication (hereafter CCC) has become a central part of the contemporary field of communication.²

Given the recent focus of much CCC scholarship on new media and identity, newcomers to the field might imagine that because these concerns have been responsible for igniting interest in the field, they are definitive of this area of work. Certainly, recently published scholarship does suggest that research on the digital revolution and cultural identities is the main part of CCC. However, more significant to CCC are broader theoretical issues of discourse; social power relations; social inequities; political resistance; modern thought, politics, and institutions; social and political organizations, logics, and frameworks; and cultural difference. Furthermore, the study of CCC not only has strong historical roots but also aims to historicize social life and, therefore, while interested in social change and technology, is not interested only in the “new.”

This chapter is a brief introduction to CCC as a subfield of communication.³ The chapter begins by further defining CCC and then, by historicizing this important subfield,⁴ discussing how the terms—*critical* and *cultural*—are

interconnected. The chapter then addresses contemporary issues in the field before concluding with a gesture toward its future.

Defining CCC

Four approaches to defining CCC include defining CCC by its history, by its domain of study, by its interdisciplinarity, and by its transdisciplinarity. In thinking about the history of CCC studies, one might begin with Marxism. Arguably, the broader study of critical theory inside and outside the field of communication began with Karl Marx, with many of Marx’s central ideas continuing to resonate in critical scholarship. However, the modern emergence of critical and cultural studies more aptly begins with the Annales School in France and the Frankfurt School in Germany (some would also include the Chicago School of Sociology), beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, moving forward to the work of those associated with British cultural studies in the late 1950s and after, and then primarily after the 1960s to scholarship in the general areas of critical theory, postcolonial studies, poststructuralism, feminist studies, critical race studies, queer theory, and transnational and diaspora studies, each of which will be defined more fully later in the chapter.

Another way to define this area of research is by identifying its domain and by describing what CCC scholarship does. Among other things, CCC scholars tend to investigate discourses of power and knowledge; relationships

between global and local communities; cultural dominance and resistance; theory and its relationship to criticism; communication and its corresponding intersections with culture, performance, economics, social organizations, ethnography, the media (cyberspace, digital, and visual culture), and even academic disciplines themselves; as well as the broad issues of everyday life.

Yet another way to define CCC is by describing it as a discipline. But while CCC certainly sometimes looks and sounds like a discipline, because so many of its most important scholarly luminaries eschew disciplinarity or critique the modern 21st-century organization of knowledge and power of the academy into disciplines, it is more apt to describe CCC as interdisciplinary or, as I will suggest below, “transdisciplinary.” CCC is interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary because it cuts across fields and subfields such as performance studies, critical intercultural communication, critical organizational studies, critical rhetoric, and media studies. Critical cultural work includes both historical and contemporary topics that emphasize careful and creative theorization, interpretation, and evaluation of the communication phenomena of “everyday life.” Furthermore, CCC scholarship goes to great pains to engage and sometimes challenge and attempt to transform disciplinary questions in multiple fields. Indeed, one could further demarcate CCC as concerned with politics, historical context, theory, textual analysis, and self-reflexivity of methodology/purpose/approach, all issues that cut across wide-ranging fields such as political science, history, sociology, literature, and the humanities and social sciences more broadly.

However, while CCC functions interdisciplinarily by cutting across fields (e.g., studying sexuality or race may require studying genetics while at the same time studying gender and women’s studies and ethnic studies), it is important to argue that CCC is also transdisciplinary, meaning it creates its own set of questions both by asking questions that are not and cannot be answered within a given discipline and by forming its own, unique questions and answers germane to its study. Thus, CCC is very similar to the field of communication, itself, in that it borrows questions and findings from other fields while simultaneously setting its own scholarly agenda. CCC has its own unique scholarly approaches, positions, perspectives, and insights; breaks down boundaries among disciplines; and attends to theoretical and everyday life concerns. Additionally, it is defined more by the questions that are posed than by a specific theory or methodology.

“Critical” Versus “Cultural”

The combination of the terms *critical* and *cultural* into “critical cultural communication” is often a convenience, since they share many dimensions. However, there are also political and intellectual stakes, for both tend to

challenge political and intellectual orthodoxies; both challenge systems of governmentality; and both are interested, to some degree, in the social. Thus, the two terms *critical* and *cultural* come together in important ways—for example, in the name of the Critical and Cultural Studies Division of the National Communication Association and in the title of the journal *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*. The move to unite the critical and cultural might be described as an attempt to work across both areas, to call attention to their similarities versus their differences: In a sense, bringing the terms together is a linguistic and political “double gesture” to promote both and to imply their similarities rather than their differences.

Having defined CCC, it is now useful to draw distinctions between its two key terms *critical* and *cultural*, for while it makes sense for the two terms to be paired, at times there are crucial differences that require further explanation. Briefly, *critical* often conjures up for people critical theory and a Marxist intellectual tradition; whereas *cultural* brings to mind “cultural studies” and the British cultural studies tradition, as well as interdisciplinarity, identity politics, and literary and humanistic approaches to the study of popular culture, broadly defined. In its crudest, perhaps most stereotypical, way, the distinction between *critical* and *cultural* would boil down to critical theory versus cultural studies. In this way, one could conceive of critical theory as political economic work and cultural studies as identity politics. But this kind of distinction is far too crude to address adequately or accurately the complexity of critical and cultural studies and their relationship. Thus, next, I work to explicate some of the history of critical theory and cultural studies with an eye to how they are brought into a relationship in CCC.

In providing a history of critical theory, particularly as it pertains to communication, one might begin with the Frankfurt School, starting with the members who formed the original Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt in the 1930s, such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Walter Benjamin. Key works that are often referenced during this early period include Adorno and Horkheimer’s (1972) *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and Benjamin’s famous essay (1992) “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.” Building on their scholarship, Herbert Marcuse, in his *One Dimensional Man* (1972), suggested that the freedoms promised by capitalism were a ruse and that commodity capitalism in fact limits desire and possibilities for agency rather than expands them. Another key Frankfurt School figure was Jürgen Habermas (1989), known primarily for his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, first published in 1962, who theorized a public sphere as an ideal space in which communication can construct community and democracy. In it, Habermas, critical of bourgeois control of the mass media by private interests, laments the loss of space for public communication that

makes possible unencumbered public deliberation of democratic ideals. Until that point, CCC was, if not explicitly Marxist in orientation, then at least neo-Marxist, presupposing the significance and centrality of class and class critique, with an emphasis on political change and a critique of material inequality.⁵

While one definition of critical theory work is based in a Marxist tradition, another definition of critical theory is broader and has the potential to liaise well across both critical and cultural work. Such a definition of critical theory tends to be in opposition to, or to resist, hegemonic political and ideological formations. By hegemonic political and ideological formations, I mean the broad set of beliefs, forces, and attitudes that become ingrained within a society that make people, for example, immediately rise and put hand over heart before the national anthem is played, unquestioningly use gender-segregated bathrooms, or accept a link between biological identity markers and intelligence. Indeed, one of the principal ideologies against which many members of the Frankfurt School railed was fascism. The theories, critical methodologies, and even topics they examined were chosen so as to critique fascism and to imagine better ways of living. Thus, critical in this way is both the philosophical and the political stance taken in opposition to the reproduction of power relations in a multiplicity of forms.

Much work using this more expansive concept of critical theory includes Foucauldian and poststructural approaches that use theory as a tool for analysis. A Foucauldian position is one that draws on the work of the late Michel Foucault, a French scholar who thought carefully about shifts in public discourse around issues such as mental health, prisons, universities, and sexuality. Poststructural approaches have a tendency to seek explanations for how things are rather than assume that phenomena are easily explainable by already known methods and ways of viewing the world. Foundational scholars associated with a concept of critical theory that includes but builds beyond a Marxist foundation are Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, Hélène Cixous, Michel DeCerteau, Gilles Deleuze, and François Lyotard. The work of Mikhail Bakhtin and Fredric Jameson have also figured prominently, as has the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, especially their book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985), and Judith Butler, Jacques Lacan, Roland Barthes, and more recently Slavoj Žižek.

Whereas critical work often traces its historical genealogy to Marxism and to critical theory, cultural studies has a different genealogical tradition. Early cultural studies work was associated with scholars who founded and then were part of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, England. Early figures such as E. P. Thompson, Richard Hoggart, and Raymond Williams brought a class dimension to the study of culture and challenged the basic elitism of the academy and its relationship to society. However, such scholars typically found the Marxist scholarship that saw the political economy

as foundational, to which all questions of marginality must return, as too narrow. These early cultural studies scholars opened up possibilities for understanding marginality, oppression, and class discrimination from a multiplicity of sites; thus, critiques of dominance, which are critiques of the dominant social institutions and ideologies, could begin from points other than class alone. In a broad sense, these early cultural studies scholars took a Marxist argument about class and retheorized it in a way that allowed others to cross-apply an analysis of class to other social phenomena (not only economic ones), such as sexuality, race, gender, nation, age, and ability.

Following earlier cultural studies scholars, key figures such as Stuart Hall, Angela McRobbie, Meaghan Morris, Richard Dyer, Paul Gilroy, and Coco Fusco emerged, foregrounding an interest in youth activism, black British politics, queer studies, whiteness studies, feminism, transnationalism, cinema, visual, music, and performance studies.

Also important in the historical evolution of the field of cultural studies was the publication of two key volumes produced by University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) faculty members, which created tremendous reverberations in the United States and abroad. The first, *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (1988), affectionately known as the “big red book,” edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, emerged out of a conference at Illinois and contained many key pieces that remain important touchstones in CCC work today. Following that volume was Grossberg, Nelson, and Paula Treichler’s *Cultural Studies*, an even weightier volume developing out of another conference on the UIUC campus. This volume included multiple-media formats and also focused on audience studies. Scholars in this book embraced cultural studies more than did those in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, where class critique figured much more pivotally. Important to the importation of a version of British cultural studies to the United States are Lawrence Grossberg and James Carey. The UIUC, in particular, was one site, the University of Iowa, where Carey also taught for a time, another, where a relationship between Marxist critical theory and British cultural studies took shape.

Those taking a cultural studies approach often define their practice based on the kinds of questions they ask. For instance, while many cultural studies scholars, especially in literary studies, conduct textual analyses, others emphasize ethnographic and audience reception research. While some focus primarily on resistance, others are more interested in cultural identity and activism. Still others emphasize critical analyses of, for instance, governmentality, the given governing structure that allows societies to be regulated and controlled. Governmentality is one emphasis of Foucault’s work that people such as Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri, and Nikolas Rose build on and discuss. Such scholars are interested not only in a given governmentality, which they might object to or oppose, but also

in plural governmentalities, which offer the possibility of having alternative rules and regulations within a society and emerge as a result of broad coalitions of social and political actors rather than, for instance, a narrower professional and bureaucratic group of leaders (such as U.S. senators, the World Trade Organization, or prime ministers or presidents).

As a whole, most cultural studies scholars examine multiple axes of power and oppression; emphasize interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity explicitly and seek knowledge produced out of transdisciplinarity rather than a hodgepodge combination of approaches from different disciplines; and consider culture to be a starting point for theory and analysis. Cultural studies emphasizes theories and methods that are relevant and useful to the research questions posed and studies designed, which often means using a multimethodological approach—that is, using more than one methodology at a time in combination. Cultural studies also tends to emphasize art, music, and theater as much as literature and film; and new media and visual culture, while foci in and of themselves, are often addressed transdisciplinarily.

It is important to suggest that, while Marxism, the Frankfurt School, critical theory, and cultural studies are all important aspects of CCC studies as practiced in the United States, many feel that the word *critical* is often used as a way to marginalize particular scholars and their brands of scholarship. Thus, *critical* is a contested term, one that can imply that one abides by a certain set of theoretical assumptions and obligations, such as a commitment to doing theory versus doing action. The use of *critical* as an exclusive term often is defended because those doing critical theory have struggled to gain hard-won positions in academia. However, *critical* is not “owned” by a given intellectual community; hence, varied and diverse communities describe their own work as critical. Thus, critical work not only exists within a Marxist framework or a European one (French and German, in particular) but also has bases within feminist, Third World (in film studies “third cinema”), and ethnic studies frameworks (see, e.g., Chabram-Dernersesian, 2006). In this vein, critical work also emerges out of the lived experiences of women, people of color, and LGBTQ (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer) communities, and it takes class seriously but not necessarily as the overarching, determining framework.

Understandably, at times, scholars of race, ethnicity, and culture have bristled when the word *critical* is used as a code for European critical (high) theory tradition. Such scholars challenge the word *critical* to refer to work done by white Europeans and Americans, especially work that uses a lot of theoretical jargon and is, if not exclusivist, elitist. In contrast, work done by people of color, LGBTQ scholars, and women is relegated, contra critical theory, to the dustbin of the cultural.

Perhaps the best exemplar of someone whose work often traverses across both critical and cultural dimensions and whose work is centrally focused on communication is

Stuart Hall, one of the significant leaders in Birmingham School history. Much of Hall’s work is used in scholarship on media and cultural studies. And some of his work (sometimes the very same work) is used in scholarship on race, ethnicity, transnationalism, postcolonialism, and diaspora. For instance, many read Stuart Hall’s (1980) essay about the dominant, negotiated, resistant reading positions available to consumers of media texts, while others draw more on his critical race essay about racial representations, “Whites of Their Eyes” (1985), and his work in Black diaspora studies. Thus, Hall traverses both more standard cultural studies and media studies, and race, ethnic, critical race studies realms, and his work gets taken up in both.

CCC work focusing on race, ethnicity, and critical race studies draws from numerous scholars, such as Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Angela Davis, Cherrie Moraga, the Combahee River Collective, Asian Women United of California, Homi Bhabha, Abdul JanMohamed, Henry Louis Gates, Nestor Canclini, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Michelle Wallace, Gayatri Spivak, Manuel Castells, Kuan-Hsing Chen, Rey Chow, Herman Gray, Chandra Mohanty, Lisa Lowe, Edward Said, Lauren Berlant, Michael Warner, Inderpal Grewal, Caren Kaplan, Wendy Brown, Patricia Hill Collins, Gloria Anzaldúa, Rosa Linda Fregoso, and the like. These scholars often study race, nation, ethnicity, transnationalism, and postcolonialism and are often simultaneously engaged in understanding multiple, overlapping, and intersectional aspects of social and cultural life, such as sexuality, gender, and class.

While all work in critical theory and cultural studies is interdisciplinary, at least to a degree, some of it has been more and some of it less useful to scholars in the field of communication, or at least with a foot in that field. Currently, because of the early work of Richard Dyer, David Roediger, Ruth Frankenberg, and George Lipsitz, scholarship exists that critically interrogates the concept of whiteness, which refers to the way representations of race have functioned, on the one hand, to render racial minorities hypervisible and, on the other hand, to render those identified as white as having either no racial identity at all or an identity that functions in unmarked ways. Such scholarship has blossomed within communication studies. Thomas Nakayama and Judith Martin’s (1999) edited book *Whiteness: The Communication of Social Identity* as well as an essay by Raka Shome, “Race and Popular Cinema: The Rhetorical Strategies of Whiteness in *City of Joy*” (1996), are good examples, as is the work of Lisa Flores, Dreama Moon, and Carrie Crenshaw, among others.

Traditions of feminist critical cultural work have long histories within a cultural studies framework. Scholars in this area assume that gender is socially constructed and explore its impact on women’s everyday lives. Most notable among the early scholars in this area are Meaghan Morris, Angela McRobbie, Paula Treichler, and Angharad Valdivia,

and more recent work, such as that by Barbara Biesecker, Carol Stabile, Raka Shome, Radha Hegde, and Aimee Carillo-Rowe, has also emerged. Perhaps because many of these scholars were trained by an earlier era of critical theory and cultural studies scholars, their work tends to be, from the outset, premised on multimethodological and multiple-identity research, as well as to cut clearly across critical and cultural divides. Queer studies work not only draws attention to the multiplicity of sexualities and genders that exist (well beyond heterosexuals and homosexuals and women and men) but also asks how a “queer perspective,” one that works outside the traditional social norms of societies traditionally dominated by heterosexual and patriarchal figures in power, can invigorate scholarship on all topics. Examples of key figures in communication include John Sloop, Katherine Sender, Larry Gross, Charles Morris, E. Patrick Johnson, Thomas Nakayama, and Fred Corey, who have been instrumental in moving critical questions of sexuality forward in the field. (See John Sloop, “Queer Approaches to Communication,” this volume, for a more detailed discussion of these issues.)

Work in transnational and postcolonial studies that draws on the work of Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Ella Shohat, Robert Stam, and Edward Said, for instance, and within communication, the work of scholars such as Raka Shome, Radha Hegde, Marouf Hasian, and others have also been important. Much of this work gives not only new insight into the everyday but also new insights into the questions posed by scholars studying the everyday.

The Future of CCC

It is clear that CCC studies will continue to be a significant part of the field of communication for quite some time. Indeed, given the rapid centralization of this area in the field and change in globalization and media technologies, one can imagine vibrant new subareas within CCC work emerging for years to come. Exciting newer areas such as cyberspace and digital studies, new technologies, reality television, biotechnology and surveillance studies, cyber-cultural studies, and transnational globalization studies continue to reframe the field and require new methodologies and theories as well as new conceptualizations of communication. As new media technologies emerge and new international, social, and political stakes are discussed, new approaches using critical and cultural perspectives will be required.

The area of “neoliberalization” studies, which is the study of the way globalization and transnational capitalism work to eliminate constraints on markets (e.g., North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement or NAFTA) and expand inexpensive labor pools and material resources, while very much a part of CCC work, is in its early stages of development. Perhaps, there is some way to both make the study

of neoliberalism much more of a scholarly area or focus of CCC work and to deepen its theoretical significance. Moreover, perhaps there is a way to study neoliberalism in a way that specifically addresses issues of communication scholarship, hence rendering it useful for those rooted in the field.

An attempt to bring political economists together with cultural studies scholars rather than have a divide between them, emphasizing areas of common agreement and backgrounding the, at times rather minor, disagreements, would help strengthen scholarly work and allow future scholars to work across these two areas with more flexibility without the fear of reprisal. Bringing the critical and cultural together in studies of communication ultimately promises a much more fulfilling project, one that can enliven, excite, and stimulate the next generation of CCC scholarship to come.

Notes

1. Digital video recorders, such as TiVo.
2. Within the institutional and organizational framework of the field of communication, there has been a significant period of growth for CCC studies over the past 20 years or so. For example, one might think of the older Philosophy of Communication in the International Communication Association (which many recognize as an inaugural site for the development of cultural studies), the newer Critical and Cultural Studies Division in the National Communication Association, the *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* journal, and most recently in 2008 the International Communication Association journal *Communication, Culture, and Critique*. Nevertheless, job seekers still will not find many ads for academic jobs listing “critical theory” or “cultural studies” as preferred specialties, at least not in the United States.
3. Because of my particular focus and due to space limitations, while I draw on international scholarship, I center my discussion primarily on CCC as it has developed and is developing in the United States.
4. Throughout the essay, except when discussing particular works, when referencing scholars I list representative examples of their works in the bibliography.
5. One direction some critical scholars took was toward a political economic and public policy approach. Perhaps in the 1970s or 1980s, critical work in this more pragmatic vein stressed institutional analysis and policy change with less emphasis on theoretical questions of power, socialization, cultural conditions, and knowledge production.

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FEMINIST APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION

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Feminist approaches to communication constitute a broad area of study that has developed over the past 30-plus years. We can trace the origin of feminist work in communication to the influence of the late-20th-century feminist movement, what historians have termed the *second wave* of U.S. feminism. Although the second wave of feminism, generally dated to a period between the late 1960s and the early 1980s (with the end date linked to the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment ratification campaign) was a movement with a variety of goals, factions, and ideologies, it brought issues such as gender discrimination, equal opportunity for women in education and employment, and the cultural influence of what were then called “sex role stereotypes” to the forefront of U.S. public consciousness.

Such issues were quickly taken up in academic work across fields of study, and communication researchers began to study what were then called “sex differences” in communication. Early research on sex differences promoted a deficiency model, within which characteristics of speech typical of men set the standard for competent interpersonal communication and characteristics of speech typical of women were judged negatively as a result. So, for instance, such research would report on women’s lack of assertiveness rather than men’s aggression and would note women’s lack of confidence rather than men’s overconfidence or arrogance in conversation. Importantly, such research stimulated by second-wave feminism had an implicit (and sometimes explicit) political dimension not only because of its origins in a movement dedicated to social and political change but because of its recognition that sex differences were linked to power; for example,

men’s communication style was perceived as more powerful and was thus more desirable.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, feminist researchers were questioning the simplistic rooting of such differences in biology. Rather than understanding communication patterns as a “natural” outgrowth of biological sex, they began to ask questions about sex role socialization, about the relationship between power and gender in communication, and about the problems of using men’s behavior as the standard for “good” communication. They argued that different styles of communication had different strengths and weaknesses in different contexts (e.g., a less assertive style promoted empathy and turn taking) and should not be placed within a hierarchy. Moreover, they also contended that different communication styles were more linked to power and status in particular contexts (often themselves linked to gender roles) than to sex. Importantly, these developments heralded a move toward a perspective in which “gender,” a set of cultural constructions about expectations for men and women, replaced “sex,” a biological category, as a variable in understanding communication. Feminist researchers began to conceptualize gender as socially constituted through communication and performance and not reducible to biological sex. Some recent research in interpersonal communication has taken a more sophisticated approach to measuring gender identity independently of sex rather than simply assuming that biological sex equals gender (for more discussion of the research on gender and interpersonal communication, see Julia Wood, “Gender” this volume).¹

At the same time that interpersonal communication scholars were turning their attention to issues raised by the cultural

influence of the contemporary feminist movement, rhetorical scholars were doing so in an even more specific way: by studying feminism itself. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's path-breaking essay, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," published in 1973, not only drew attention to the rhetoric produced by second-wave feminists but also argued that such discourse deserved attention because of its differences from traditional (men's) public discourse. She explicated the rhetorical strategy of consciousness raising, which relied on personal examples, a peer tone, and an inductive structure, and she argued that it was a response to the unique situation in which women/feminist rhetors operated. Campbell's claim that such a context produced a kind of rhetoric that could not be understood using traditional rhetorical theories was a powerful feminist intervention into the study of public discourse, as it called into question the standards used to designate what was worthy of rhetorical study and why. Other studies of women's liberation rhetoric, as well as studies of specific feminist issues, such as the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion rights, continued to appear in the 1970s and early 1980s. Although this work did not necessarily announce itself as specifically feminist in perspective, it was an important foundation for the feminist work that would follow. First, it established that feminist rhetors and rhetoric were worthy of study, which was not an inconsequential thing in a field in which rhetoric produced by women had, to that point, rarely been studied because of its ostensible inferiority, a state of affairs that shows linkage to the deficiency model that prevailed in interpersonal communication scholarship. Second, scholarship about feminism circulated and analyzed feminist ideas and did so sympathetically. Finally, most evident in the case of Campbell's essay, this early work provided critical frameworks, such as the explication of consciousness raising, that would be useful to later feminist scholars.

The discourse of and around feminist social movements has continued to be a focus for feminist work. For example, the study of second-wave feminism has continued since the 1970s, although it is not as well developed an area of rhetorical study as is the rhetoric produced by women in 19th- and early-20th-century reform movements (commonly called the "first wave"), which I will discuss in the next section of this chapter. More recent studies of second-wave feminism have examined not only the rhetorical discourse of feminists but also the representations and rhetorical practices of second-wave feminism in the mass media. Moreover, feminist communication scholars also have recently turned their attention to the study of third-wave feminism, a movement that generally dates to the 1990s.

The Development of Feminist Approaches to Communication

Understanding the roots of feminist scholarship in relationship to the late-20th-century rebirth of feminism helps us understand that feminist approaches to communication are simply one manifestation of a larger and continuing social

and political movement targeted toward gender justice, which, as Celeste Condit and I have observed, "may include but can also go beyond the seeking of equality between men and women, to include understanding of the concept of gender itself as politically constructed" (Dow & Condit, 2005, p. 449). Despite differences in the varieties of feminism that I will discuss below, this broad definition recognizes that feminist work always understands gender as a political concept—that is, a concept that functions within, as well as functions to create, maintain, and challenge, power relations.

Much of the early work by feminist researchers in communication enacts an impulse toward equality in that it works toward righting an imbalance in the attention given to (and value ascribed to) men's communicative practices rather than women's. This impulse is characteristic of liberal feminism, a powerful strain of feminist thought since the first stirrings of feminist movement in the 19th century. Liberal feminism prizes equality of opportunity between men and women, although it tends to use men's experiences as the standard to which women aspire. For example, 19th-century feminist demands for opportunity in education and employment, at a time when women were denied access to higher education and the professions, assumed that equality would result when women had the same prospects in the public sphere as men. Liberal feminism, because it is the basis of visible feminist issues such as the Equal Rights Amendment, is often held to be the only, unitary, meaning of feminism.

Yet even within the liberal feminist project in communication, gestures toward other understandings of feminism have emerged, understandings that lead to the latter half of Condit's and my formulation of gender justice: an understanding of gender itself as politically constructed. For example, as I discuss in the following section on the "recovery project" in feminist rhetorical study, feminists' attention to women's rhetoric challenges the historical imbalance in the study of public discourse produced by men and also challenges the traditional ways of understanding rhetorical excellence that have worked to create that imbalance (Campbell's work on the rhetoric of women's liberation is an example of this dual effect). The latter challenges are consonant with a radical feminist orientation, which, following a meaning of radical as "going to the root," seeks not just to level the playing field but to question the layout of the field and the rules of the game as well. Thus, it is a liberal feminist impulse to insist that women's communication is as worthy of study as men's, but it is a radical feminist impulse to argue that we need to revise our standards for what makes some communication practices more worthy of study than others.

During the second wave, radical feminists went beyond decrying discrimination to interrogate the origins of cultural notions of sex differences and sex role stereotypes. They argued that public, legal remedies for sex/gender discrimination would not be enough and that a total transformation of social structures and practices

around gender—from sexuality to reproduction, to child rearing, to education, to work, to politics, and so on—would be necessary to achieve true freedom from sex/gender constraints for both men and women. In its insistence on challenging taken-for-granted assumptions around sex and gender, the radical feminism of the 1970s forecast the development of poststructuralist feminism in the 1980s, an academic theoretical movement that has deeply influenced the development of third-wave feminism outside the academy. Poststructuralist gender theory (which Wood discusses as “gender performativity” theory in “Gender,” this volume) holds that neither sex nor gender are natural categories but that the categories themselves, and their meaning in any given context, are created and sustained by discourse—speech, behavior, and social practices—of all kinds. In the simplest terms, then, working from a poststructuralist orientation means to move one’s focus from “How does this communicative practice *reflect* (an already assumed, preexisting) gender difference?” to “How does this communicative practice *create or constitute* a particular understanding of what gender difference means in a particular context?”

In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss three kinds, or phases, of feminist work in communication: recovery, representation, and reconceptualization. These are not entirely discrete categories, and they do not follow one another in a neat timeline—they simply constitute one schema (among many possible ones) for organizing feminist approaches to communication. They also do not neatly align with the varieties of feminist theory discussed above but, as I will note, show the influence of all of them at different times and in different ways. What I hope to demonstrate is that feminist approaches to communication have evolved incrementally over the past several decades and are driven by a variety of factors, including but not limited to sociopolitical changes outside the academy, theoretical developments within the academy, and changes in communication technologies and practices. However, they all share a commitment to the basic question that, implicitly or explicitly, motivates feminist approaches to communication: “How do understandings of gender, and their relationship to power, affect (and effect) communication practices?”

Feminist Approaches to Recovery

The recovery project in feminist communication studies has taken different forms, but it is generally characterized by a focus on asserting the importance of “recovering” communication practices that have been ignored or incompletely studied because previous scholarship has not accounted for the role of gender within them. Thus, a central concern of recovery scholarship is “correcting” or fleshing out the historical record so that it accounts more completely for the role of gender in understanding communication practices.

In feminist communication studies, the most visible recovery efforts have been in the area of public address; that is, the study of persuasive public discourse, traditionally oratory, in American history. Feminist scholars have argued that the rhetorical tradition has focused on the discourse of white men with national political power and/or status, such as presidents and social movement leaders, but that a complete understanding of American public address necessitates the study of women’s rhetoric. This is not simply because history has produced talented women orators worth studying, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton or Sojourner Truth, but also because women rhetors have faced different rhetorical obstacles than have their male counterparts, making their discourse uniquely strategic and inventive. Studies of women’s historical rhetorical practices vary in the materials on which they focus and the degree to which they are presented as specifically feminist analyses. In general, recovery scholarship is understood as feminist because it grows from a commitment to recognizing the contributions of women to rhetorical history and because it operates from the premise that past scholarship has, wittingly or unwittingly, been sexist in its definitions of what counts as public discourse worth studying.

Although a few studies of women orators have existed since the mid-20th century, the publication of Karlyn Kohrs Campbell’s *Man Cannot Speak for Her: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric* in 1989 rejuvenated this area of scholarship in contemporary rhetorical studies, serving as a foundational text and leading to a surge of research that continues today. *Man Cannot Speak for Her* appeared in two volumes: one that analyzed important rhetorical acts produced by women (such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Angelina Grimké, Sojourner Truth, and Susan B. Anthony) between the early 19th and early 20th centuries and another that included a collection of speeches by women during this same period. As Campbell’s work exemplifies, much of the work in the recovery project has focused not simply on women rhetors but on women rhetors who have argued for women’s rights. Women’s exclusion from the political system, because they were not granted suffrage (the right to vote) until 1920, means that, until the 20th century, women’s rhetoric tended to emerge from social movements challenging the status quo. Many of the rhetorical analyses of women’s rhetorical activities deal with their involvement in 19th- and early-20th-century reform movements focused on issues such as abolition of slavery, civil rights for African Americans, temperance (the prohibition of alcohol), woman suffrage, labor, and birth control.

In addition, such work has contributed new ways of understanding public discourse by arguing that the unique obstacles faced by women rhetors necessitated the development and deployment of specific strategies that addressed these obstacles. For example, in her 1989 book,

Campbell describes the concept of “feminine style” (similar in some ways to consciousness raising)—characterized by identification, inductive reasoning, personal tone, and treatment of the audience as peers, which, she argues, was effective in empowering traditionally passive 19th-century female audiences. Yet feminine style also has been usefully employed to illuminate contemporary women’s (and men’s) rhetoric, demonstrating its utility as a critical tool beyond a 19th-century context.

The influence of the recovery project has been wide-ranging. From the initial efforts to understand and elucidate the contributions of women’s oratory to rhetorical history, it has led to a range of scholarship that treats women’s rhetorical practices in a variety of time periods, social and political contexts, and discursive forms, as well as uses an array of rhetorical and feminist theories to elucidate them. So, for instance, there is a stream of scholarship focusing on the rhetorical strategies of women as participants in 20th- and 21st-century electoral politics, including as First Ladies. Moreover, feminist scholars have moved beyond a focus on oratory to study the rhetorical practices of women and feminists (and sometimes antifeminists) in other discursive forms such as books, newspapers, manifestos, letters, and petitions, as well as in nondiscursive forms including cartoons, postcards, and parades.

The work that has grown from the recovery project in women’s rhetoric and public address has used various theories and methods to analyze the rhetorical practices that it examines, and in many cases, these theories and methods cannot be categorized as specifically feminist. The primary difference that this scholarship presents is its emphasis on the role that gender plays in constituting the rhetorical situation and in influencing the form and function of the rhetorical strategies used by women rhetors. Importantly, gender has tended to be operationally defined as “women” in this stream of scholarship, leading to two problems: First, it treats gender as stable and as an unproblematic outgrowth of sex; second, it creates the impression that only women are gendered, just as uses of the term *race* often leave the impression that only those who are not white are “raced.” However, in recent years, scholars have begun to examine the role of masculinity in the discourse of and around male political candidates (and particularly U.S. presidents). For example, in an essay examining Elizabeth Dole’s truncated campaign for the Republican nomination for the U.S. presidency in 2000, Karrin Vasby Anderson concludes that the “ceremonial and symbolic role of the U.S. president is tied up with traditional masculinity,” but her study is one of only a few in public address that study masculinity from a feminist perspective. The feminist study of men and masculinity in public address is an area that needs growth, but other areas of critical scholarship, most notably media study and queer studies, have recently begun to emphasize the role of masculinity in their analyses. I discuss such work in

feminist media studies below, and John Sloop discusses the study of masculinity in queer studies of communication in the following chapter.

In much of the past work on women’s rhetoric, then, gender is understood as a stable identity rather than as something that is performed and constituted through rhetoric itself. However, recent work has demonstrated that “the import of feminist rhetorical study goes beyond the evaluation of the efficacy of rhetorical strategies in particular situations and provides insight into how gender and symbol use constitute, challenge, and constrain our identities and possibilities as political actors” (Dow & Condit, 2005, p. 451). Susan Zaeske’s (2003) book, *Signatures of Citizenship*, which studies the rhetoric of white women’s antislavery petitions in the early 19th century, is one example. It studies important nonoratorical texts produced over a number of years, offering a complex analysis of the ways in which the language of the petitions, and women’s choices to sign them, offers an insight into the development of a gendered, raced, and classed political identity, or citizenship, for a group of women who had no political power beyond the right to petition.

More recently, Angela Ray’s (2007) essay on women’s collective voting rituals between 1868 and 1875, “The Rhetorical Ritual of Citizenship,” is another example of the study of nonoratorical forms that emphasizes how rhetorical activities constitute particular gender identities rather than simply reflecting the assumed preexisting gender identity of a specific rhetor. As Ray explains, in the years after the Civil War, woman suffragists became energized by a new set of arguments that held that the Constitution should be interpreted as allowing women to vote simply because they were citizens. Across the country, dedicated suffragists attempted to assert their citizenship rights by going to the polls and demanding to be allowed to register and to vote at election time. Few were successful, but Ray’s central point is not about the efficacy of the strategy; rather, it is about how the performance of their attempts to do so, and the contemporaneous accounts of those attempts, highlights the ways citizenship was inescapably defined through gender (and race and class), despite the suffragists’ reliance on universalist arguments for the franchise. In work such as Zaeske’s and Ray’s, the use of poststructuralist feminist theory demonstrates the growing sophistication of research within the recovery project, as scholars investigate historical women’s rhetoric for its role in the constitution of gendered identities.

Thus, the recovery project, initially (and still) driven by a liberal feminist impulse to correct for the omission of women rhetors from the study of public address, has traveled in directions that focus on how public discourse functions as a grounding for the very meaning of gender. In this movement, from the study of women to the study of gender, the feminist recovery project in communication is aligned with the trajectory of feminist work across the academy.

Feminist Approaches to Representation

Early feminist studies of mass media representation were stimulated by the same liberal feminist motivations that characterize feminist work in other areas of communication research. In the late 1970s, quantitative researchers studied “sex roles” in mass media, which usually meant that they measured the level and types of representation of women on, for instance, television, arguing that women were represented less than men and that their roles (primarily as housewives, mothers, teachers, and nurses) were limited and stereotypical in comparison with men’s. A central concern of such early work was how well mass-mediated representation of gender reflected “real-world” conditions; for example, did the percentage of women characters on television match the percentage of women in the actual population? Thus, initial research in this area was driven by a belief that mass media were important forces of socialization, particularly for children, and that a critique of sex role stereotypes in mass media could lead to improvements in mass media representations and thus a lessening of the power of stereotypes in the larger culture.

As I will detail in this section, feminist analyses of media representation have grown and developed in many directions, but they are united by a concern with how mass media communicate ideology about women, gender, and feminism. In this work, ideology is generally understood as “common sense” or naturalized understandings of how the world works; for example, traditional gender ideology maintains that men are masculine and women are feminine and should be expected to perform as such. Over time, as the examples I discuss below will illustrate, feminist analysis of mass media has gone beyond the initial questions about how well mass media reflect conditions in the real world. Instead, akin to current work in the feminist recovery project, current feminist media research asks questions about how mass media work to create, challenge, and maintain cultural meanings of gender.

Contemporary studies of representation use a variety of methodological approaches. One strain of research uses quantitative (usually content analytical) measures of the amount, type, and effects of representations in media such as television entertainment, news, and advertising. Such work is feminist in that it often argues that the low level of female representation, as well as the quality of that representation (e.g., portraying women in music videos as highly sexualized), works against feminist goals of representing women as self-determining, competent, and multifaceted individuals. For example, in a study that treats the representation of feminism itself, Lind and Salo’s (2002) examination of 35,000 hours of television and radio news and public affairs programming between 1993 and 1996, reveals, among other findings, that feminists are rarely represented in the news, that

when they are they are likely to be demonized, and that they are depicted as different from ordinary women.

A second methodological approach in studies of representation, generally referred to as audience reception studies, uses ethnography, interviews, and sometimes online fan discourse to investigate how audiences process and interpret media messages. This work is feminist not only in its use of feminist theory but also in its emphasis on the ways women audience members use media products to understand—and sometimes to challenge—their place within patriarchal cultures. Such research has addressed a variety of media forms, including television, popular films, toys, and advertising. For example, in a 2003 essay, Yeidy Rivero interviews both Latin American and Puerto Rican women viewers of the popular Colombian *telenovela*, *Yo soy Betty la fea* (of which an American version, *Ugly Betty*, was produced in 2006 by NBC). She reports that the study’s participants did not take the program at face value, instead understanding the “ideologies of gendered ‘beauty’” (p. 78) in the *telenovela*’s narrative as social constructions that were constituted in relationship to dominant notions of femininity, class, and race and that were strongly influenced by beauty standards promoted by mass media.

Rivero’s essay is an example of a welcome trend in this research: the study of international media products and their interpretation by international audiences. It appeared in *Feminist Media Studies*, an academic journal founded in 2001 (indeed, the existence of such a specific journal demonstrates the maturation of this area of scholarship), which has become an especially rich outlet for international work. Although feminist research in communication studies, especially in rhetoric, tends to be overwhelmingly Americanist, feminist media studies are becoming more global in orientation, a shift no doubt influenced by the increasing globalization of mass media itself.

The third, and largest, area of feminist study of representation is critical/textual analyses, which includes much of the work with an international focus discussed above. In such studies, scholars use a variety of analytical techniques to examine the communication of gender ideology in a variety of media texts. Such work has become quite explicit in its feminist commitments since the 1990s and demonstrates growing theoretical sophistication by attending to the ways in which dominant notions of gender are constituted by media discourse.

Because feminist work on media representation represents such an enormous area of scholarship, it is difficult to characterize completely. In recent years, it has included work on a staggering array of media forms, including television entertainment, news, films, advertising, magazines, new media and the Internet, books, cartoons, and music, and this list is certainly not exhaustive. Generally, feminist studies of representation tend to emphasize the conservative function of media texts—that is, the ways they tend to

discipline “improper” gender performances (by, e.g., punishing and/or marginalizing assertive female characters), but there is also a strain of research that analyzes the ways in which some media texts can be read as offering progressive gender performances—that is, representing gender as fluid and foregrounding gender-transgressive characters in positive ways. Moreover, although studies of mass media reflect a dominant focus on whiteness that mass media itself perpetuates, a growing body of work examines representations of race and ethnicity in an American context.

In general, feminist research on mass media takes note of the polysemous nature of media texts—that is, their capacity for offering multiple meanings that can be “read” or understood in disparate ways by both media critics and media audiences. Some of the most interesting feminist work on media texts offers complex readings of the mixed messages that popular media present: messages that account for the ways feminism has changed cultural meanings and practices (by, e.g., including feminist issues in storylines or including powerful female characters) and yet undermine that progressive content at the same time. A recent example of such research is Lisa Cuklanz and Sujata Moorti’s (2006) analysis of television’s “new” feminism in the popular crime drama *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit (SVU)*. Cuklanz and Moorti argue that *SVU*, while generally relying on feminist understandings of violence against women in its narratives (e.g., by insisting that women do not bear responsibility for rape), simultaneously offers plotlines in which femininity is denigrated through characterizations of the program’s police officer protagonists as well as in its frequent use of female villains who represent the “monstrous maternal”—that is, women who fail in their maternal roles so grievously as to cause serious harm or even death to their children or others (p. 314).

In recent years, feminist media scholars have widened their purview beyond representations of women, femininity, and feminism, the traditional focus of earlier work, and have begun to produce feminist analyses of the role of masculinity in media texts. Recent noteworthy examples include Fahey’s (2007) analysis of the ways in which the 2004 presidential campaign coverage “emasculated” the Democratic candidate John Kerry by depicting him as “French and feminine,” and thus lacking the masculinity necessary to serve as president, and Johnson’s (2007) essay “The Subtleties of Blatant Sexism,” an analysis of the ways in which the overt sexism of *The Man Show* relies on accepting its constructs of masculinity as imperiled by an “imagined dominant female authority” (p. 166).

Current feminist work on mass media representation is diverse and wide-ranging, and it is by far the most eclectic body of work in feminist studies of communication. It is particularly noteworthy for its attention to the intersections of gender, race, class, nationality, and sexuality in media texts, as well as for its growing attention to the constitution of masculinity.

Feminist Approaches to Reconceptualization

In the sense that I use it here, reconceptualization refers to the ways in which feminist approaches to communication have functioned to question and revise received knowledge about how communication works as well as about how we produce knowledge about communication. At a basic level, the simple existence of feminist approaches to communication is a reconceptualization, because such approaches did not exist 30 years ago and because their presence asserts that the absence of attention to gender in the past rendered our understanding of communication incomplete.

One of the central ways in which feminist approaches have reconceptualized research in communication studies is through the demand for inclusivity. Initially, as I discussed in the recovery section, inclusivity took the form of arguing that women rhetors must be included in our understandings of rhetorical history, with the implication that such inclusion would fundamentally reconceptualize that history. At the same time, some feminist scholars have argued that the inclusion of women also requires that we revise our limits on what “counts” as communication and that we recognize nontraditional forms of communication, such as sewing, gardening, or fashion.

Over time, calls for inclusivity have expanded to include not just gender but also the ways in which gender intersects with other identity constructs, such as race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and nationality. Just as men have too often been treated as though they represent all humans, feminist scholars have too often presented the experiences and behaviors of white women as though they represent those of all women, and feminist scholars continue to grapple with this issue. I noted in my section on representation that media studies is an arena of feminist study that has been especially attentive to issues of difference among women and feminisms, but the developing area of feminist intercultural and cross-cultural study of communication is an important source for this kind of work as well. Continued awareness about issues of difference across feminist work should lead to further reconceptualization of the feminist project in communication.

Feminist approaches to communication also have spurred reconceptualization in the area of theory. Although it is the case that feminist studies in communication have not produced a body of theory that can be specifically labeled as “feminist communication theory,” feminist scholars in different areas of the field have made various attempts to integrate theories from across the academy into frameworks compatible with the study of, for example, rhetoric, organizations, and communication practices across contexts, as is the case with feminist communication scholars’ engagement with standpoint theory. One of the central issues in feminist communication scholars’ engagement with feminist theories from elsewhere in the

academy has been the issue of essentialism—that is, the degree to which a particular theory or approach relies on an assumption of women’s or gender’s “essence” and implies that all women, or men, possess certain characteristics or behave in certain ways. Such assumptions are often labeled as “cultural feminism,” a variety of feminist thought that emerged in the 1970s and whose proponents argued that women were more likely to hold values such as pacifism, cooperation, and nurturance, which should be seen as superior to traditionally masculine values such as aggressiveness, competitiveness, and individualism. The debate over essentialism, however, has largely evaporated since the 1990s, as feminists have generally rejected the notion of a stable, universal gender identity that is unaffected by the issues of difference that we discussed above. In addition, the recent integration of feminist poststructuralist theory, especially work on gender performativity, into feminist work in communication has, as I have discussed at various points above, led to a profound reconceptualization of how we think about gender. Cutting-edge feminist work now tends to ask questions about how communication constitutes, maintains, and challenges gender identities rather than how communication reflects a preexisting, stable gender identity. As is evident from Sloop’s discussion of queer reconceptualizations in the following chapter, this poststructuralist emphasis on the instability of gender is a central theme that unites recent developments in the feminist and queer projects in communication.

As feminist approaches to communication continue to grow and develop, they will continue the process of reconceptualization, because it is generally the case that new insights arise from case studies of particular communication practices, a characteristic that feminist and queer studies in communication share, as John Sloop discusses in the following chapter on queer approaches to communication.

Conclusion

Feminist approaches to communication are somewhat unique because they developed from a political movement that began outside the academic realm (as Sloop discusses in the next chapter, the same is true for queer approaches), and the connection of feminist research to feminist politics continues to be important for communication scholars. Ultimately, feminism’s relationship to communication studies can be broadly understood in three overlapping ways. First, feminism itself, and the communicative practices emerging from its various manifestations, has been a focus of study for communication researchers. Second, feminism has produced a variety of theoretical perspectives for understanding the relationship of gender and power that have been influential in the study of all kinds of communicative practices, not just those emanating from feminist politics. Finally, feminist goals continue to operate in various ways across the

broad field of communication studies, such as through an insistence on the importance of studying gender in our research and in our classrooms, through continuing attempts to ensure gender parity among communication faculty, and through attention to feminist issues that are of concern to all academics, such as sexual harassment.

Note

1. Although I primarily discuss feminist work in rhetorical and media studies in the remainder of this chapter, largely because these are my areas of expertise, feminist work in organizational communication studies deserves mention as well. Much like interpersonal communication studies, the study of gender in organizations began in the 1970s with the “problem” of the entry of women managers into corporate life and emphasized strategies for assimilating women into male-dominated organizational cultures. However, as Ashcraft and Mumby’s (2003) *Reworking Gender: A Feminist Communicology of Organizations* exemplifies, the study of gender in organizations has evolved into a complex and dynamic area of study that understands gender as constitutive of organizations and that employs feminist and critical theory in sophisticated ways.

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QUEER APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION

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Queer approaches to communication share a common commitment to exploring the role(s) that gender and sexuality play in communication practices, theories, and analyses. While they certainly have some overlap with other areas of communication—notably feminist approaches—their political origins, their focus on sexuality, and their emphasis on nonnormative identities and behaviors make them distinct.

To begin, studies of gender and studies of sexuality are inextricably linked; contemporary feminist and queer scholars work from a perspective that holds that the socially “proper” performance of gender is tied strongly to the proper performance of sexuality and vice versa. In short, in a culture in which heterosexuality is seen as the norm and heterosexuality presumes binary notions of gender, the proper performance of both men and women is tied to stable forms of sexuality. This is why, for instance, a common stereotype of gay men is that they are feminine (“abnormal” sexuality is culturally linked to “abnormal” gender identity). As a result, any study of gender implies a study of sexuality, and any study of sexuality implies an investigation of gender.

In addition, it is important that I stress that queer approaches have a political dimension; that is, they are academic enterprises that grew from political movements and that support political goals derived from those movements. Beyond their origins in public, political movements, queer scholars see gender and sexuality as always inherently political because of their relationship to power; that is, struggles over gender and sexuality are always struggles over the power that accompanies (or is limited by) the “proper” or “improper” performance of gender and/or sexuality. Below, I discuss the origins of queer approaches to communication and then describe three broad themes—recovery, representation, and reconceptualization—that

characterize contemporary research using queer approaches to communication.

The Development of Queer Approaches to Communication

Queer approaches to communication can be traced to their roots in scholarship about gays and lesbians that developed in response to the public visibility of gay/lesbian social movements. From the 1970s to the early 1980s, a time period when the term *queer scholarship* would have sounded like a pejorative, a number of scholars were studying discourse about “gay rights” or discourse produced by gay and lesbian groups. For example, in 1979, Barry Brummett provided a Burkean analysis of the discourse of gay rights controversies, and in 1973, Chesebro, Cragan, and McCullough analyzed the discursive patterns of gay rights activism and gay consciousness raising. Other rhetorical analyses of the language of gay activism and the “gay community” include Joseph Hayes’s (1976) critique of the language employed by gays in community conversations; Bonnie Dow’s (1994) reading of the gay activist Larry Kramer’s important 1983 essay on AIDS, “1,112 and Counting”; and James Darsey’s (1991) “From ‘Gay Is Good’ to the Scourge of AIDS,” a summary of the changing language of the gay liberation movement. Although there was a simultaneous body of scholarship emerging that concerned the ways in which gays and lesbians were being represented in mass-mediated texts (which I will discuss below), much of this early work focused directly on political movements emerging from the political activism of gays and lesbians.

Beginning in 1995 with the publication of Anthony Slagle’s essay “In Defense of Queer Nation” (1995), a similar growth of scholarship emerged from (or studied) the

discourse of queer politics and queer social movements. If we take gay and lesbian social movement discourse broadly to assume that gays, lesbians, and bisexuals are stable identities and that gays, lesbians, and bisexuals deserve access to the social order based on their overall similarity to heterosexuals, then queer activism built political identity around differences and partial and fluid identities. Slagle's subtitle, "From Identity Politics to a Politics of Difference," laid out this transition rather directly.

While the terms *queer* and *queer theory* are wildly contested in academic literature and political discourse, I attempt here to provide some assumptions that are broadly shared. First, queer criticism operates on a logic that deconstructs the "gender/sex" binary discussed above. Growing in part from the work of Judith Butler's now classic 1990 book *Gender Trouble*, queer theory assumes that bodies are understood as sexed or gendered through the filter of cultural meanings that preexist in those bodies. Our understandings of gender and sexuality are maintained and challenged through performance, but the performance of gender or sexuality does not have a natural or necessary relationship to a particular kind of body. In short, queer criticism assumes that our ideas about the proper performance of masculinity and femininity are maintained by the expectations of heteronormative culture—including our behaviors toward each other in daily life and the representation of proper behavior in public discourse. Thus, the role of queer critique is not only understanding how dominant meanings attached to gender and sexuality are continually reproduced but also the "queering" (i.e., destabilizing) of such meanings and norms. Queer research is thus committed to opening up the possibility for resisting dominant meanings of gender and sexuality through performances that operate outside normative gender and sexuality "boxes."

Since Slagle's 1995 venture into queer activist logic, a number of scholars have used the tactics of activist queer groups to highlight the rhetoric of queer politics or general political lessons that can be drawn from queer tactics. For example, Charles Morris's and my essay (Morris & Sloop, 2006) used images produced by the queer activist group Gran Fury to think through the politics of queer male kissing in public spaces. Additionally, in a number of essays, the rhetorical critic Daniel Brouwer has looked at the ways in which people with AIDS have constituted counterpublics (i.e., marginalized individuals who form a group identity and group logic separate from mainstream or dominant logic) that have queered public understandings of the queer body. In "The Precarious Visibility Politics of Self-Stigmatization" (1998), for example, Brouwer investigates the use of HIV/AIDS tattoos as "self-stigmatization" and in "Counterpublicity and Corporeality in HIV/AIDS Zines" (2005), he focuses on the discourse of two zines produced by gay men with HIV/AIDS to investigate the rethinking of the "diseased" body in discourses that created counterpublics and new cultural logics.

From gay liberation to queer nation, then, the politics and discourse of the social movements themselves have been important resources for communication scholars. I want to stress, however, that the relation between social movements and criticism has been a complicated and robust one. While the discourse of social movements at times has served as a text for analysis by communication scholars, the unique politics emerging from these movements also have been used to help critics understand discourse and politics in other movements. And while rhetorical and cultural critics have used theory to illuminate gay/lesbian and queer movements, the politics of the movements also have altered the ways critics theorize discourse.

Queer Approaches to Recovery

As the result of a large number of factors, the queer "recovery" project is more abbreviated than the feminist one described in the previous chapter. First, because many historical gay/lesbian/queer speakers either did not identify themselves as such or did not speak out on gay/lesbian issues, they are somewhat invisible to any recovery process. Second, and this may be the more forceful reason, institutional/academic homophobia discouraged rhetorical critics from choosing to highlight gay/lesbian/queer speakers. As a result, just as early gay and lesbian research focused on gay/lesbian discourse or discourse about gays and lesbians often at an arm's length (i.e., without an obvious political agenda around gay and lesbian communities), it took even longer for queer recovery to emerge in communication studies.

While there were more overt recovery projects ongoing elsewhere in the academy, such as Jonathan Katz's (1992) *Gay American History*, communication studies as a discipline has moved somewhat slower in this regard. Nonetheless, the combination of the closeted nature of many historical queer orators and queer topics has set the stage for recent interesting queer scholarship. In "Keeping a Good Wo/man Down," for example, Robert Brookey (1998) provided a rereading of the female Revolutionary War soldier Deborah Sampson Gannett as transgendered, hence forcing a rereading of Gannett's feminist statements that had been studied by others. By providing a queered understanding of Gannett, Brookey not only "recovers" Gannett but also transforms the meaning of Gannett's feminist statements. Along these lines, in Charles Morris's recent edited volume, *Queering Public Address* (2007), I reread the story of Lucy Lobdell, a 19th-century woman who lived as a man, as a transgendered story, a case I will discuss more completely below. Such a reading forces a rethinking of the medical and psychiatric linguistic constraints that discouraged queered understandings.

Those who wish to see a stronger urge to rethink historical subjects in communication studies certainly owe a debt to Charles Morris. Not only has he offered fascinating

readings around the closeted queer stories of figures such as the 20th-century FBI director J. Edgar Hoover in “Pink Herring and the Fourth Persona” (Morris, 2002), but, in an essay in his edited collection *Queering Public Address*, he also has investigated the queer panic that occurred in academic journals over the very possibility of Abraham Lincoln’s recovery as a queer subject (Morris, 2007). In most of these cases, the “actual” sexuality of the subject is less important than a critique of the historical discourses that attempted to hold them in place as straight. *Queering Public Address* includes a number of essays that re-read historical figures in productive ways that force critics to understand the constraints on our historical understandings of gays and lesbians. Of particular note are Dana Cloud’s (2007) reading of the discourse concerning First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Lisbeth Lipari’s (2007) reading of the African American playwright Lorraine Hansberry, and Eric Watt’s (2007) critique of the queer facets of the Harlem Renaissance.

In short, while “queer recovery” work in communication studies has been slow coming and is certainly dwarfed by work on queer media representations, as I will discuss below, it is an area that is proving ripe for those interested in the history of gay/lesbian/queer orators as well as those interested in the constraints and possibilities allowed by shifting cultural meanings of gender and sexuality.

Queer Approaches to Representation

Like feminist studies of media representation, queer approaches to media representation assume that mass-mediated texts are powerful disseminators of ideology about sexuality. The intersection of media studies and gay/lesbian/queer representation has proven to be a highly productive area. If one traces out its path over time, one sees changes in popular culture as well as changes in the methods and perspectives of queer criticism. For instance, looking at work in the mid-1980s to early 1990s, we find a focus on either the invisibility of homosexual characters or the problematic ways in which homosexuality is made visible. Good examples of this type of research include Larry Gross’s (1991) “The Contested Closet,” a discussion of the ethics of mediated outing of public figures; Alfred Kielwasser’s and Michelle Wolf’s (1992) powerful critique of the symbolic annihilation of gay and lesbian adolescents; and Fred Fejes’s and Kevin Petrich’s (1993) overview of gay representation, “Invisibility, Homophobia, and Heterosexism.” In short, the criticism of this era focused on the lack of mainstream gay representation, offering insights into the reasons for this lack.

However, as gay, lesbian, and queer characters became more visible and more durable as characters throughout the tenure of different series (even becoming the lead characters in shows such as *Ellen* and *Will & Grace*), the focus slowly turned from critiques of invisibility to critiques of visibility. A great deal of such work is reviewed in my earlier essay “Critical Studies in Gender/Sexuality and

Media” (2006) in Bonnie Dow and Julia Wood’s edited volume *The SAGE Handbook of Gender and Communication*. In these critiques, we also find a tension at work between critics who focused on the ways gay and lesbian characters were disciplined into stereotypical “gay” behaviors and critics who found cause for celebration of gay/lesbian possibilities. In short, this body of work displays a tension between highlighting “progressive” changes and highlighting ideological constraint.

While the impulse toward the celebration of possibility or the critique of constraint remains at work, the number of texts to work with in mainstream media outlets—and hence the number of publications about them—continues to grow. Hence, while Katherine Sender (1999) was writing about the dual purpose of “gay window dressing” advertisements in the late 1990s in “Selling Sexual Subjectivities,” what Gust Yep (2003) refers to as “queer readings of the media” in his coedited volume *Queer Theory and Communication* are in full force in the first decade of the 21st century.

Most of these readings in the early part of the decade focused primarily on a discussion of the problematic ways in which gay/lesbian/queer characters were conformed to the gender/sexual ideology of mainstream culture. From Kathleen Battles and Windy Hilton-Morrow’s (2002) discussion of *Will & Grace* to Robert Brookey and Robert Westerfaulhaus’s (2002) critique of the disciplining of the homoeroticism of the film *Fight Club*, to my own (Sloop, 2000) and Brenda Cooper’s (2002) alternative readings of the story of the murdered transgendered teen Brandon Teena in “Disciplining the Transgendered” and “*Boys Don’t Cry* and Female Masculinity,” respectively, to, finally, Bonnie Dow’s (2001) essay “*Ellen*, Television, and the Politics of Gay and Lesbian Visibility,” communication critics have provided numerous accounts of the ways in which these representations constrained gay/lesbian subjectivity, with minor focus on the ways such representations encouraged a queered set of possibilities. Importantly, some of this work is noteworthy for its attention to masculinity and male privilege and its simultaneous engagement with feminist perspectives. For example, in Helene Shugart’s (2003) reading of gay man/straight woman pairings in popular film and television in an essay titled “Reinventing Privilege,” she argues that such couplings reinforce heteronormative norms as well as reinscribe male privilege for gay male characters.

There are relatively fewer recent discussions of representations of lesbians in mass-mediated discourse. The ones that have been written, however, generally take a more optimistic tone. For example, Jennifer Reed (2005) offers a critique of the discourse about Ellen DeGeneres and argues that DeGeneres’s outing has opened up positive representational spaces for other queer performers. Additionally, C. Lee Harrington (2003) offers a somewhat celebratory reading of audience reactions to the lesbian narrative line on *All My Children* in an essay titled “Lesbian(s) on Daytime Television,” and Didi Herman’s

(2003) “*Bad Girls Changed My Life*”—an analysis of a British drama set in a women’s prison—suggests that the show did not offer the expected read of lesbianism through the male gaze but rather presented lesbianism as normal, desirable, and possible.

Overall, attention to masculinity and male privilege in studies of these representations also sensitizes us to the imbalance—in both media representation and scholarship about it—between representations of gay men and representations of lesbians. Indeed, feminist scholars have repeatedly critiqued the ways in which queer scholarship often uses gay male experience as its foundation, ignoring the differing experiences and situations of lesbians and failing to account for the ways in which queer theory elides or runs counter to feminist concerns. Susan Fraiman’s (2003) *Cool Men and the Second Sex* is a strong example of work of this nature. Finally, two notable book-length projects emerged during this era—Larry Gross’s (2001) *Up From Invisibility* and Suzanna Danuta Walters’s (2001) *All the Rage*; each asks readers to be cautious before celebrating the recent growth of gay visibility, and each questions the particular contours of gay/lesbian/queer representations.

More recently, the critical readings have become richer as they have intersected with other forms of critical analysis, such as those interested in the political economy, media studies, and democratic theory. For example, emerging amidst the multiple academic readings of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* that focused on the heteronormative disciplining of the show’s titular queers, including E. Michelle Ramsey and G. Santiago’s (2004) “The Conflation of Homosexuality and Femininity” and Robert Westerfelhaus and Celeste Lacroix’s (2006) “Seeing Straight Through *Queer Eye*,” Katherine Sender’s (2006) “Queens for a Day” read the show through the lens of neoliberalism. She argued that the “queer men” on the show act in ways that reinforce neoliberal economic ideology while simultaneously offering a campy aesthetic that potentially undermines certain aspects of heteronormative sexual equations. In “Riding in Cars Between Men” (Sloop, 2005), I combine queer critique with media ecology, offering a reading of “gender trouble” in automobile sports that questions some of the oft-suggested liberating “effects” of technology. Jeffrey Bennett’s (2006b) essay “Seriality and Multicultural Dissent in the Same-Sex Marriage Debate” investigates the rhetorical dispute over same-sex marriage to understand how the value of difference in democratic politics—including differences in sexuality—can be productively understood as taking place in a process of “seriality” rather than being either essential or fluid. While sexuality is a strong focus of his work, it also serves to help the reader understand arguments over democratic processes.

Although there are other ways of mapping out the trajectory of the history of analyses of “queer” representation, the one I have drawn here highlights changes in mainstream representation of gays and lesbians and accompanying

changes in the critical project around representation. Hence, when there was a lack of viable queer representation in mainstream media (or solely negative representations), critics focused on this lack and its political outcomes. When queer representation and visibility proliferate, critics urge caution in the particular ways in which this representation takes shape, warning readers about the perils of too easily equating visibility with progress. Finally, as the representations have taken on a wider variety of hues, queer critics have been able to spend more energy articulating their concerns with a variety of other critical projects.

Queer Approaches to Reconceptualization

In many ways, attempting to identify a “reconceptualization” element of queer criticism is an impossible task. That is, if we take the move from gay/lesbian criticism to queer criticism to be a move that undermines the stability of both gay and straight identities, contesting any solid categories on the grounds of gender or sexuality/desire, then all queer criticism acts as a model of ongoing and permanent reconceptualization. That is, regardless of where we pinpoint the origins of “queer criticism,” it grew out of (and separates itself from) lesbian and gay projects and politics, working in part to undermine clear categories and reasons for holding onto systems and structures that maintain these categories. Hence, queer criticism always already functions as a tool for reconfiguring identity categories, with an ongoing expectation of these temporarily stable identities being undermined again.

In his summary of academic work in queer theory in *Queer Theory and Communication*, Gust Yep, Lovaas, and Elia (2003) noted the difficulty of talking about the purpose or overall project of “queer theory.” Given that it does not aspire to attain theoretical hegemony, given that it is an open system without a *telos*, or end goal, and given its refusal to be fixed to solid “reconceptualizations,” it is difficult to point to specific models. While gay and lesbian scholarship may have pointed to very particular politics or goals (e.g., the inclusion of homosexuals within particular social orders), queer theory to some degree is always troubling categories and meanings before they begin to solidify.

As a result, a queer take on reconceptualization has to queer “reconceptualization” itself, understanding that the reconceptualization is a temporary alignment to solve a particular problem while simultaneously acknowledging that this temporary solution conflicts with other shared political goals and all the while knowing that the new conceptualization itself must be destabilized. Hence, when Jeff Bennett (2006a) recently critiqued two television shows—*Boy Meets Boy* and *Playing It Straight*—in his “In Defense of Gaydar” essay, he is critical of the way in which “gaydar” was ultimately shown to work on the show, unearthing the “true” queers. In place of the reading provided by the show, Bennett offers us the opportunity to

confuse the sexuality of the characters on the show, hoping to undermine—without allowing a stopping point—the sexual and gender “boxes” of these characters.

A better example in terms of its effect on the reader may be Charles Morris’s (2002) “Pink Herring and the Fourth Persona,” a reading of the discourse surrounding J. Edgar Hoover and the way in which Hoover behaved publicly. Drawing on relatively recent claims that Hoover was a closeted gay man with a lifelong partner, Morris traces out the public actions taken by Hoover to close down the ways he was “publicly read” throughout his lifetime. Moreover, Morris illustrates the ways in which other biographers have argued over the meaning of Hoover’s sexuality—some refusing to consider him as homosexual, others opening the door to more fluid interpretations. However, by refusing to take a particular stance on Hoover’s sexuality, but instead illustrating discursive maneuvers to stabilize it, Morris ultimately leaves the reader with a stable understanding of how culture attempts to stabilize sexuality but an unstable understanding of sexuality itself.

While I see Morris’s entire *Queering Public Address* volume (2007) as a project intended to destabilize both the ways in which public address scholarship is carried out, as well as the categories we inherit from history, my chapter in that volume provides another example. In “Lucy Lobdell’s Queer Circumstances” (Sloop, 2007), I investigate the case of the first person to be named a “lesbian” in psychiatric discourse. By drawing on Lobdell’s case history, medical/psychiatric claims about her, and more contemporary readings of Lobdell, I strive to illustrate the ways in which Lobdell’s attempts to “live as a man” were ultimately read through a semiotic lens that could only read her as “homosexual.” By then employing language from queer and transgendered scholarship, I offer other ways in which Lobdell could be read and categorized now. The purpose in such an offering is not to come to a “final” conclusion about Lobdell’s identity but instead to point out the ways in which such an identity—in Lobdell’s lifetime and in the course of subsequent history—is always stabilized by existing discursive frames. A result of reading the chapter, it is hoped, is to recognize these constraints and to rethink the categories of the present based on a destabilizing of the past.

Ultimately, then, while it might be difficult to point to a unified project around which there is one ending point or goal, we can understand that current queer scholarship in communication studies has a task of revealing the fluidity of what seemed to be stable ideas and categories. Moreover, and as I pointed out in the section on representation, as such scholarship progresses, individual scholars are tying the queer project on sexuality into queer projects concerning media theory, political economy, neoliberalism, and so forth. Importantly, however, queer studies, especially in communication studies, have been very slow to take on questions of transglobalism or intersections with race. While there are a couple of remarkable explorations in the area of race and queerness—I would point to E. Patrick Johnson’s (2003)

Appropriating Blackness and Jennifer Brody’s (2003) “Queering Racial Reproduction,” for the most part, this remains an area that demands more focus. While opening attempts at transglobal queer studies have been made outside communication studies—Dennis Altman’s (2001) *Global Sex* is a good example, searches in our journals come up fairly empty. Seeing repeated calls for such work without a response should give us all cause for reflection.

Conclusion

Like the public arguments that parallel queer scholarship, the work in this area went from an era of relatively rare publications, most of which had an observational or “objective” tone, to a proliferation of work, much of it with a personal and political tone. Relatedly, the three themes I point to in this chapter—recovery, representation, and reconceptualization—have each seen strong growth in terms of the quantity, if not quality, of publication. Finally, one of the most exciting aspects of this area of work is that it is persistently reflexive about its own assumptions, its own project. As a result, the field of communication can expect to continue to see strong and complicated offerings in queer scholarship in the years to come.

References and Further Readings

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PART III

KEY PROCESSES OF COMMUNICATION

MESSAGE CONSTRUCTION AND EDITING

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Individuals communicate to achieve a number of gratifications, including pleasure, affection, inclusion, escape, relaxation, and control (Rubin, Perse, & Barbato, 1988). Research examining the message features that most effectively produce these benefits has produced well-established literatures on communication effects such as persuasion (Dillard & Pfau, 2002), conflict management (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2006), and group decision making (Hirokawa & Poole, 1996). Although the aforementioned scholarship provides useful insights, researchers have also studied the processes by which individuals construct messages intended to achieve these ends. These studies have focused on skills that might facilitate or hinder the construction of effective messages (e.g., Greene & Burlison, 2003). This chapter defines message construction and then examines the theory, methods, applications, and future directions associated with this important research area.

Defining Message Construction

Message construction is the process by which individuals compose and revise messages intended to accomplish their interaction goals. Although messages are enacted with nonverbal cues, message construction theory and research primarily focus on how the linguistic features of a message are produced. Hence, for much of the research conducted

in this area, a message constitutes linguistic elements (i.e., words) organized in some fashion (e.g., phrases, sentences, paragraphs) to achieve objectives. The length of a message may vary considerably, ranging from a single word to an elaborated tome, and may be presented via a variety of channels (i.e., face-to-face, written, electronic).

Although messages are composed of linguistic cues, not all researchers are interested in studying the specific elements in the message (e.g., verbs, nouns) but instead focus their attention on the features attributed to them. Hence, researchers may analyze the linguistic elements in a message so as to identify how they reflect ideas, topics, strategies, and arguments. Additionally, scholars may analyze these elements to examine how they embody stylistic features, such as the degree to which the message is listener adapted, direct, or face supportive/threatening.

Construction implies that individuals assemble linguistic elements into a message. In some cases, individuals create alternative message versions of which some may call for the revision, enactment, or even rejection of the message (Meyer, 1997). For example, individuals who want to tell a lie in response to a question may consider a truthful response as well as various forms of lies (Walczyk, Roper, Seemann, & Humphrey, 2003). In such cases, individuals may be quite strategic and mindful of how they are constructing the message and may even rehearse it mentally or out loud before delivery (Stutman & Newell, 1990). However, when a communication exchange begins, the

message construction process may be very short and occurs when individuals pause before responding to another's statement. During these nonresponsive periods, the ability to process information can be taxed as individuals attempt to make sense of what was just said, control their emotional reaction to it, reconsider and perhaps revise their interaction goals, and formulate an appropriate response. In effect, they monitor their own actions and make adjustments while listening to their partners to assess reactions (Clark & Krych, 2004).

Theory

Early research on message construction was primarily concerned with cataloging message types (e.g., Miller, Boster, Roloff, & Seibold, 1977; Shenck-Hamlin, Wiseman, & Georgacarakos, 1982) and refining methods to study them (e.g., Burleson et al., 1988). Limited theorizing occurred, with most research focused on the degree to which message features were related to individual-difference variables such as Machiavellianism (Roloff & Barnicott, 1978), cognitive complexity (Delia & Clark, 1977), and situational features (Cody & McLaughlin, 1980). With time, researchers started focusing more broadly on the cognitive processes associated with message construction.

Although there are many theories focused on aspects of message construction and each has its nuances, they share several principles. First, messages are constructed to achieve interaction goals. The objective is to induce some state in another (e.g., helpfulness, guilt, liking, respect, compliance). Interaction goals serve broader functions. For example, interpersonal influence is often motivated by a need to provide lifestyle advice, gain assistance, share activities, change another's political stance, give health advice, and change a relationship (Dillard, 1989). Social confrontations allow individuals to exert influence, reach catharsis, maintain their relationships, create understanding, and gain retribution (Stutman & Newell, 1990). Disclosing personal information to another may arise from a need for self-expression, self-clarification, social validation, relational development, or social control (Derlega & Grzelak, 1979).

Goals can be arranged hierarchically, and hence, to achieve a primary goal such as persuasion an individual may need to achieve subgoals, such as overcoming obstacles to compliance (Francik & Clark, 1985; Roloff & Janiszewski, 1989). Often individuals have a primary goal in mind that commits them to engaging another person. For example, a decision disclosure model developed by Omarzu (2000) posits that individuals go through several steps before deciding to self-disclose. These steps can include assessing whether their need to disclose requires action, whether an appropriate person is present to whom one might disclose, and whether disclosure would be appropriate in the situation and balancing the possible risks and benefits that may result from disclosure.

Furthermore, individual characteristics and situational features may prompt secondary goals to emerge that can affect the form of the message. When preparing for an argument, these secondary goals can be reflected in editing standards such as effectiveness, truth/honesty, self-image, other-image, and relational concerns (Hample, 2000; Hample & Dallinger, 1990). Influence messages can also be intended to reflect a person's true identity, create a positive conversation, maintain a valued relationship, and control arousal (Dillard, Segrin, & Harden, 1989). When planning for a confrontation, individuals report performance goals that include the desire to be argumentatively complete and to remain on the offensive (Stutman & Newell, 1990). On a basic level, these goals may reflect general conversational restraints (Kellermann, 2004) that require individuals to communicate in an efficient manner (e.g., express as few words as necessary) and to do so in a socially appropriate manner (e.g., do not impose on another's decision-making autonomy).

Although researchers have uncovered a variety of interaction goals, not all of them may be activated in a given encounter. Something must make them salient. However, activation does not necessarily mean that a person is aware of the goal. There is evidence that interpersonal goals can be nonconsciously activated by exposure to linguistic terms such as *family* or *friends* (Fitzsimons & Bargh, 2003). Furthermore, a secondary goal may be activated when the current situation is similar to other situations in which it has been previously pursued (Meyer, 2007).

Second, because messages are often designed to achieve multiple goals, individuals often find ways to incorporate several objectives into their message features. Hence, when rejecting a request from someone they like, individuals may include linguistic softeners such as apologies or explanations with their rejection and thereby preserve a positive relationship and maintain desirable social images. In some cases, multiple goals may promote sequences of messages that increase the likelihood of achieving a primary goal. So if uncertain about whether a person has the time to provide assistance, a communicator may first ask if the person is busy and, if the answer is no, then proceed to ask for help (Jordan & Roloff, 1990).

Third, message construction is influenced by information contained in memory. Several theories have been used to examine the role of memory in message construction. Kellermann (1997) focused on how conversational knowledge is organized in memory. She posits that individuals have conversation memory organization packets (MOPs) that are composed of scenes that contain generalized actions that lead to certain goals (e.g., complimenting someone stimulates liking). MOPs may focus on culturally shared information, such as physical settings in which a type of conversation takes place (e.g., it is more appropriate to confront someone about their negative behavior in private than in front of others) and the conversational elements that typically occur (e.g., when confronting someone, it is best to offer solutions for the problem). MOPs

may also reflect an individual's own personal experiences with this type of conversation (e.g., the last time I confronted my partner, she became angry). More than one type of MOP may be activated at the same time, and therefore, a person's message may be a composite of both cultural expectations and personal experience. Also, individuals may have a universal scene that indicates how individuals in communication roles should act in most situations (e.g., when talking to someone, one should establish rapport before turning to other topics). Hence, it is possible that individuals have a general understanding of how they should go about acquiring information and choose to follow this routine in most conversations, sometimes repeating these routines as new issues emerge within a given conversation.

Greene's action assembly theory (1984, 1997) provides another account of how memory influences a message. He argues that action assembly is guided by three types of information contained in memory. First, procedural records contain a symbolic representation of an action, outcomes associated with the action, and situations that are related to the action and outcome (e.g., polite requests typically gain compliance from strangers). Although procedural records are often independent, if they are frequently activated together, they may combine into a second type of informational structure called a unit assembly. Unit assemblies contain portions of more than one procedural record (e.g., complimenting others makes them feel good, and people are more likely to comply with a request when they are in a good mood). Finally, individuals possess outcome representations that specify the typical features of an action, the sequence in which the features are enacted, and their timing (e.g., when making a request of a stranger, one should wait until the person is not too busy, apologize for interrupting the person, and then make a request rather than a demand).

According to Greene, when formulating messages, individuals draw on information contained in memory about similar encounters. In doing so, they momentarily consider alternative conceptions of the event and the messages associated with them. After choosing one conception, the others may no longer be activated. The activated conception of the event will guide how the message features are organized (i.e., the grammar used), its content (i.e., the words), and how it will be spoken (i.e., paralinguistic cues). Moreover, the features of the conception are hierarchically organized such that those that are most abstract constrain the more concrete forms (e.g., in this situation, I must be polite, hence I should say, "I hate to interrupt, but I would be grateful if you could help me."). In situations in which a particular record has been frequently or recently activated and practiced, message construction may be quick, perhaps nonconscious, and the resulting behavior becomes a routine way of acting. When individuals encounter a situation of which they have no prior experience or knowledge, they often create plans that combine or adapt actions that they have used in the past.

Berger (1997, 2007) has proposed a theory of communication plans that has implications for message construction. Plans constitute mental representations of action sequences aimed at achieving goals. After deciding to pursue goals, individuals initially search their long-term memory for plans that have been effective in the past. On failing to find one, they create a new one that is a composite of older plans and information from the current situation. When strongly desiring to fulfill a goal, individuals create plans that are complex (i.e., they often have a number of specific steps, and they may include alternative sequences that may be enacted should an obstacle be encountered). In addition, to create complex plans, individuals must have a high degree of strategic knowledge about how to achieve a goal as well as knowledge about how to do so in the current situation.

Fourth, individuals construct messages that anticipate the goals, needs, and reactions of those with whom they communicate. To accomplish one's interaction goals, it is often useful to incorporate the views of another into one's message, or, in effect, engage in listener-adapted or person-centered communication. Hence, individuals take into consideration another's needs when constructing messages that comfort others (Burlison, 2003) and requests that overcome obstacles to compliance (Roloff & Janiszewski, 1989).

To facilitate understanding, speakers are thought to engage in audience design. In audience design, individuals access from memory the shared information they have with their intended target(s) and reference that information in their message (Clark & Marshall, 1981). The ability to access common ground varies with the prior history between a speaker and his or her partner (Horton & Gerrig, 2005). For example, when communicating with someone with whom they have a history, individuals may have a detailed set of experiences from which to access common ground, and their communications can be highly efficient (i.e., they do not have to fully explain details). However, when interacting with someone with whom they have little history, individuals have to create more detailed initial messages (Lau & Chiu, 2001), or they have to monitor and adapt their messages as they establish commonality during the interaction (Horton & Gerrig, 2005). In addition, time pressure to prepare a message may limit the ability to access common ground, and consequently, individuals have to correct for errors during the conversation (Horton & Keysar, 1996).

Fifth, when encountering resistance, individuals adapt their messages to overcome problems (e.g., Ifert & Roloff, 1996), and when unsuccessful, they disengage. Messages sometimes fail to accomplish the goals for which they were designed. Hence, individuals monitor and adapt their messages so as to accommodate the responses of others. For example, individuals who are trying to deceive another are sensitive to the degree to which the person is acting skeptical and then adjust their messages so as to increase their believability (Buller & Burgoon, 1996).

Berger (1997) posits that when encountering failure, individuals initially repeat their message but on further failure they alter their message elements without altering the higher-level interaction goal. For example, instead of abandoning a persuasive attempt, the person tries to clarify the basis for influence or uses a different argument. Regardless, failure can result in negative affect (e.g., frustration), which may cause individuals to choose to disengage from the conversation.

Sixth, messages that effectively achieve interaction goals are retained in memory and repeated. When such messages are shared within a community of speakers, they become conventionalized ways of speaking (Gibbs, 1986). Conventional speech allows people to recognize the intent of speech acts without having to understand the literal meaning of the words. Hence, conventional speech is a highly efficient way of communicating and can be used in a manner that is socially appropriate. For example, when making requests, individuals may be conversationally indirect (Blum-Kulka, 1989). Instead of using directives (e.g., "Pass the salt."), which can be impolite, they use hints (e.g., "This food needs salt."), indirect requests (e.g., "Could you pass the salt?"), or need statements (e.g., "I need the salt."), which are conventionally recognized as requests.

Method

Although ethnographic and conversational analytic methods have provided useful descriptions of discourse features and patterns, most researchers interested in message construction use variable analytic techniques. This approach requires them to measure their variables and to assess the degree to which they are correlated. To do so, they must measure message characteristics, assess the process by which messages are created, and observe variation.

Assessing Message Characteristics

Message characteristics are the final product of message construction. Although messages can have a variety of characteristics (e.g., length, organization, content), most researchers focus on only a few at a time. Several different methods have been used to measure these characters.

One of the earlier methods employed was labeled strategy selection (Burlinson et al., 1988). Typically, researchers provide research participants a hypothetical scenario and ask them how likely it is that they would use each strategy contained in a preselected list (e.g., Roloff & Barnicott, 1978). In some cases, the listed strategies were deduced from existing theories, and in other cases, they were inductively derived from actual descriptions of compliance-gaining attempts. The latter approach had the advantage of allowing researchers to test theories but, at the same time, overlooked some frequently used strategies unrecognized

by current theory. In some studies, the listed strategies were stated in broad terms (e.g., "I would threaten the person."), and in other studies, they were phrased in a specific manner (e.g., "I would tell the person that if he doesn't lend me the class notes I will never again talk to him."). The former allowed researchers to investigate categories of influence strategies but overlooked their linguistic nuances. The latter approach could not inform as to whether any results generalize to alternative ways of phrasing the same strategy. Perhaps the greatest weakness of the strategy selection approach stemmed from an item desirability bias. Individuals overreport the likelihood that they would use socially appropriate strategies while underreporting the likelihood they would use inappropriate ones (Burlinson et al., 1988).

As an alternative to strategy selection, some researchers use a message construction approach (Burlinson et al., 1988). Research participants are provided with a hypothetical scenario; then, they write what they would say, or in some cases, their message is audio recorded. The features of the messages are then categorized by trained coders. This approach produces actual discourse and is less biased by item desirability than is the strategy selection method (Burlinson et al., 1988). However, like the message selection method, the message construction method is not interactive. Typically, it assesses what individuals initially would do and provides little information about how messages might change as the conversation progresses.

Perhaps the most realistic method is to have individuals engage in an interaction. After being provided with instructions, their interaction is recorded. In some cases, the individuals may have an existing relationship (e.g., spouses), and in other cases, they are asked to adopt a specific role. In addition, one of the conversationalists may be a confederate in the study and is programmed to respond in a given fashion. Although yielding a rich variety of message characteristics, this method is formidable to use. Conversations can be messy. Individuals often interrupt and talk over each other. Grammatical rules are strained. Comments are often incomplete or change in focus before they are completed. Hence, researchers often struggle when deciding which behaviors to code and what categories to be used. Moreover, because conversationalists are influenced by each other's actions, there is dependency in the data, which complicates the statistical analysis. Statistics assume that all data points are independent observations, but because data from interactions are correlated (e.g., "How are you?" and "Not so well today," are related to each other), they are not entirely independent. So statistical tests that assume independence will be inaccurate to some degree when used to analyze messages. This inaccuracy may or may not be substantial enough to provide wrong answers to the questions the researchers are asking, so it is important to verify results in these studies through replication (i.e., Do the findings hold when the study is conducted with another group of people?).

Process Measures

Although measures of message characteristics are important, they only provide indirect information into the processes that occurred while they were constructed. To more directly gain insight into those processes, a number of approaches have been used.

First, some researchers access the process by testing for statistical mediation. This approach examines the degree to which the relationship between two variables arises from a third variable that reflects a process. Hence, when requesting assistance from another, intimates often create shorter messages than do strangers. This relationship is thought to be mediated by relational obligations that specify that intimates should volunteer to help in a time of need and, hence, require no explanations or incentives for helping. To assess this relationship, statistics are used to determine whether the intimacy influences message length through relational obligations (Roloff et al., 1988). Although this approach is useful, it does not provide detailed information about when and how obligations were used when forming the message. Rather, the approach merely indicates that intimates generate brief messages because they feel that they are obligated to help.

Second, other researchers have looked for behavioral indicators of message construction. One such assessment is response latency (see Monahan & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2007). Response latency is the length of time it takes an individual to respond to another's statement. Presumably, the longer the response latency, the greater the amount of thinking that is going into constructing the response. One limitation to this measure is that it does not include detailed information about the content of the thoughts, nor does it inform as to other factors that may influence response latencies.

Finally, some researchers have used a "think-aloud" approach (e.g., Hample, 2000). This involves asking individuals to talk aloud while they are preparing a message for another or to review tapes of their interactions and describe what they are thinking at various points. Such an approach provides a direct description of the process. However, it is unclear as to the degree to which such a method might portray message construction as being more deliberative, rational, and focused than is actually the case when individuals are not accounting for their actions. Moreover, it is unclear whether post hoc (after the fact) analyses of thoughts actually reflect the processes occurring during the interaction.

Observing Variation

Variable analytic approaches observe variance in the constructs. Hence, a study that investigates how perspective taking influences message construction cannot be analyzed unless the study includes both individuals who vary in perspective taking and those whose messages vary in content. Researchers typically employ two methods of finding variance.

First, some researchers create variance through experimental methods. Often, research participants are given hypothetical scenarios and asked to select a strategy (i.e., Imagine that you want to go out on a date with someone; how likely is it that you would ask them to go out with you?), construct a message (i.e., Imagine that your friend is feeling bad and you want to make him or her feel better; write what you would say to him or her.), or enact a message (i.e., In the upcoming negotiation, you will play the role of a student who is selling a text, and your counterpart will play the role of a buyer.). These methods provide a great deal of control in that the researcher can focus the attention of participants primarily on key aspects of the study. However, such a strong focus may not generalize well to actual interactions. Moreover, the hypothetical nature of the stimuli may not create the same involvement as when interactions are natural rather than contrived.

An alternative method relies on capitalizing on existing variance. In this case, the researcher does not produce variance but seeks instances that may naturally vary. One method of doing this is to interview or survey individuals about actual instances when they constructed messages. Hence, a researcher may ask participants to describe what happened when they asked someone out on a date. This approach samples actual rather than contrived events. However, such recollections can suffer from a variety of selection biases. Individuals may have forgotten details of the event, may present them in a socially desirable fashion, or may select an atypical event (i.e., one that easily comes to mind). Moreover, rarely are both parties to an interaction interviewed or surveyed, and hence, it is not known if they would recall or report the event in a similar fashion.

Applications

As noted earlier, messages are a means of accomplishing one's goals, and hence, the study of message construction has pragmatic value. Several applications are paramount. First, research on message construction has provided insight into the development of effective communication skills (Berger, 2003). Indeed, some view message construction as a component of being a competent communicator (Wilson & Sabee, 2003). Considerable efforts have been made with regard to how to assess these skills (Spitzberg, 2003) and effectively provide instruction in them (e.g., Natalle, 2008).

Second, message construction research provides insight into the role of communication in determining a person's well-being. For example, individuals who suffer from chronic loneliness construct messages that include general or negative information about themselves that proves to be unattractive to others (Bell & Roloff, 1991; Berger & Bell, 1988). Some individuals who are highly sensitive to interpersonal rejection create a self-fulfilling prophecy by constructing negative messages that prompt others to reject

them (Downey, Freitas, Michaelis, & Khouri, 1998). Research also suggests that deficiency in skills may prompt individuals to construct messages that are counterproductive to their well-being. For example, depressed individuals often lack the social skills that would improve their mental state (Segrin, 1990, 2000), and verbally aggressive individuals often engage in counterproductive communication such as insults in part because they lack the ability to construct logical arguments (Infante & Rancer, 1996). Because of these patterns, clinical applications may be designed so as to improve communication and individual well-being (e.g., Segrin & Givertz, 2003).

Third, message construction also provides insight into relationship problems. Often, individuals in unhappy marriages construct messages that lead to counterproductive sequences such as demand-withdraw patterns, in which an individual demands that his partner change and the partner subsequently withdraws from the conversation (e.g., Caughlin, 2002). Additionally, an individual's criticism of a partner's behavior can stimulate a sequence of defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling (Gottman, 1994). Both traditional and integrative behavioral therapies focus on helping couples construct positive messages and have been shown to be effective in treating marital problems (Christensen et al., 2004).

Fourth, some message construction researchers have conducted studies that have implications for communication in applied contexts. For example, there is a growing body of research focused on how health care providers and patients can communicate in a fashion that is informative, sensitive, and builds partnerships (e.g., Street, Krupat, Bell, Kravitz, & Haidet, 2003). In fact, some medical schools have begun incorporating such skills into their curriculum (Makoul, 2003) and continuing-education programs (e.g., Van Dulmen & Holl, 2000). Organizational researchers have focused on how superiors and subordinates can establish high-quality working relationships by providing constructive and supportive feedback (e.g., Mueller & Lee, 2002), and many MBA programs have incorporated communication training into their curriculum (Knight, 1999) as a result. Education and instructional communication research also focuses on the importance of constructive feedback. Communication research also informs as to student compliance-gaining attempts, even between students and instructors of different status levels (e.g., graduate teaching assistants and professors) (see Golish, 1999). The increasing use of online technologies in educational contexts via teacher-student e-mail exchanges, computerized discussion groups, and distance learning has made computer-mediated communication an area of particular interest as well. To this end, research informs as to a variety of issues, including the impact of teachers' e-mail strategies on students' willingness to communicate online (e.g., Waldeck, Klearney, & Plax, 2001).

Fifth, with the growing interest in and use of information technologies, some researchers have attempted to use the findings of message construction research to create

computer software that can communicate with humans. Given the tendencies of human beings to anthropomorphize (attribute human qualities to nonhumans), such software could allow for human-machine communication. For example, some research indicates that humans mindlessly use interaction norms such as politeness and reciprocity when communicating with computers (see Nass & Moon, 2000). Moreover, some researchers have created embodied conversational agents that are computer interfaces containing humanlike characters that can enact messages as well as integrate nonverbal cues with them (Cassell, Sullivan, Prevost, & Churchill, 2000). There is evidence that individuals can engage in rudimentary dialogue with these agents, and as they do so, they come to expect the agents to communicate like humans (Bickmore & Cassell, 2005).

Finally, with the increasing opportunities for members of different cultures to interact, researchers have been interested in identifying cross-cultural communication skills. Cross-cultural encounters can have a high degree of anxiety and uncertainty that, if not handled effectively, can create miscommunication (Gudykunst, 1993). Hence, individuals in intercultural settings must be aware of the messages they are sending, understand alternative ways by which they might be constructed, and verify how their messages are perceived. Hence, cross-cultural training programs are designed to include information about how to construct messages that allow individuals to initiate conversations, carry on meaningful discussions, and clear up misunderstandings (e.g., Eschbach, Parker, & Stoeberl, 2001).

Trends

Two trends are apparent in message production research. First, with the increasing use of communication technology, researchers are increasingly interested in the relationship between channel characteristics and message production. Several theories have developed that focus on channel characteristics associated with computer-mediated communication versus face-to-face conversation (e.g., Daft & Lengel, 1984) and how individuals choose media based on their interaction goals (Sheer & Chen, 2004) and conform their messages to norms associated with an Internet community (Lea & Spears, 1995; Wilkins, 1991) or adjust their messages to overcome channel characteristics (Walther, 1996). With the rapid advancements in information technologies, it is likely that new insights will emerge, and theory will need to be adjusted (Soukup, 2000).

Second, researchers continue to be interested in the degree to which the principles of message construction are universal or culturally bound. Although the concrete features of messages vary with cultures (e.g., different languages), some aspects of message production are thought to be universal. For example, identity implication theory assumes that regardless of culture, individuals want to gain approval and autonomy from others, realize that others

have the same needs, and, hence, act in ways that support the face needs of themselves as well as others (Wilson & Feng, 2007). Hence, individuals from different cultures share rules about the types of face attacks that may arise from a particular type of conversational move (e.g., a directive), but the likelihood that a face attack will occur in a given situation depends on cultural norms. Moreover, the influence of culture may vary with the context. Some psychologists argue that culture provides a shared cognitive tool or frame that can be used to guide behavior. However, these cultural cognitions are not always activated, and consequently, behaviors across cultures are sometimes similar (Hong & Chiu, 2001). Hence, cultural differences are most likely to be seen when individuals must act quickly or when culture has been primed, such as when communicating with others from the same culture. Indeed, individuals who are members of more than one culture (e.g., Asian Americans) may engage in cultural frame switching when they communicate with others from the different cultures to which they belong (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000).

Conclusion

Over the past three decades, message construction theory and research have grown in volume, methodological sophistication, and focus. Researchers have moved from descriptive studies often focused on identifying features and patterns of messages to more specific accounts of the cognitive process that influences message construction. Message construction research has implications for understanding both well-being and how humans are able to communicate with computers. Furthermore, there is increased recognition that new technologies may influence message construction, and with increasing globalization, researchers are investigating how culture influences message construction. The study of message construction is a multidisciplinary effort carried out by scholars from anthropology, communication, computer science, linguistics, psychology, and sociology. This pattern has produced models that span disciplinary boundaries and reflects a useful model of interdisciplinary approaches.

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COGNITION AND INFORMATION PROCESSING

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A simple fact motivates this chapter: The mind makes human communication possible. Obviously, there are many extra-individual elements and processes, including symbol systems (e.g., language), culture, and so on, that play a role in shaping and constituting communication events. Cognitive processes, though, are the absolutely essential and ineluctable foundation of communication—without these processes (which will be examined in this chapter), communication (whether it be interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, mass communication, whatever) simply doesn't transpire.

“Cognition and information processing” is an umbrella term that encompasses all mental states and activities—those we are conscious of, those that take place outside of consciousness, and even consciousness itself. From the instant we encounter a stimulus to the time (a moment or years later) when we respond, cognitive processes are at work. Cognitive processes allow us to see, comprehend, move, and speak.

A Quick (and Selective) Survey of the Domain

To gain an appreciation of just how deeply intertwined cognitive processes and communication are, it is useful to consider some examples of the phenomena encompassed by “cognition and information processing.” To set the stage for that discussion, let us begin with a rudimentary scheme that partitions the mental realm into three components: the input-processing system, memory systems, and the output system.¹

Basic Frameworks of the Information-Processing System

The Input-Processing System

The input side of the information-processing system includes all those activities involved in taking in and making sense of the stimulus environment. The input-processing system thus includes processes such as *attention*, *perception*, and *comprehension*. The attentional subsystem functions to bring cognitive resources to bear in processing certain inputs, to the relative exclusion of others. In essence, attention is a selection system that serves as the “front door” to the rest of the information processing system: If you don't attend to what another person is saying, or a message in the mass media, those inputs are not likely to have an impact.

Perception refers to a set of cognitive operations by which we segment and categorize stimulus inputs into meaningful relationships and kinds. For example, the perceptual subsystem allows us to recognize that some objects in our visual field are farther away than others, to identify the letters printed on this page, to isolate the sound units that make up spoken language, and to recognize facial expressions of emotion. Our perceptual systems allow us to arrive at a coherent, “sensible” grasp of what's out there. Take away perceptual systems, and the world becomes a morass of unintelligible shapes, colors, movement, and sound.

Comprehension encompasses those processes by which we combine basic perceptual information with knowledge of causal relationships, rules of language, social regularities, and so on to construct a model of unfolding reality.

For example, it is comprehension processes that permit us to move from the perception of linguistic sound units to an understanding of the meaning of a phrase (e.g., “You look so handsome tonight.”); to link successive utterances, even when there is no stated connection between them (“And you must have been drinking.”); and to make sense of those phrases as elements of a larger discourse or story (“That’s it; I’m going home to mother!”).

The Memory System

The memory system can be partitioned in various ways, but doubtless the most fundamental distinction is between *long-term memory* (LTM) and *short-term*, or *working memory* (STM). As the label suggests, LTM is a repository that preserves information for an extended period—even years or decades. Moreover, the capacity of LTM is virtually unlimited—we don’t have to forget old information in order to make room for new facts. Again, there are different ways of subdividing the LTM system, but one common approach distinguishes between *declarative* and *procedural* memory. Declarative memory is memory for facts—the things you know about the world. It is in declarative memory that you have retained your mother’s middle name, the story line of *No Country for Old Men*, and the lyrics of your favorite songs. Procedural memory, on the other hand, contains information about how to do things: It is the basis of our skills. Because of procedural memory, people are able to drive a car, pronounce the words of their native language, or play a musical instrument.

While LTM preserves a vast store of information, most of that information isn’t available for use or processing at any particular time—cognitive scientists say that it isn’t “activated.” The STM system, then, is the site of information that is activated and available for further processing. You could think of LTM as a blackboard filled with written statements in a darkened room and STM as a small portion of that information illuminated by the beam of a flashlight. As the light beam moves across the board, information is lost from the STM as new facts enter. So, unlike LTM, where the storage capacity is virtually unlimited and where information is preserved perhaps for a lifetime, STM holds a very limited amount of information and for only a brief period. On the other hand, STM allows you to rehearse, manipulate, and elaborate its contents: You can, for example, rehearse a new acquaintance’s telephone number, add its digits, or even mentally traverse them in reverse.

The Output System

The output side of the information-processing system involves all those processes by which we formulate and execute behavioral responses. Essential components include, but aren’t limited to, activities such as those identified in the goals-plans-action (G-P-A) model (Dillard, 2008): *goal formation*, *response planning*, and

the *assembly and implementation* of overt behaviors. Scholars differ in their conception of the exact nature of “goals” (e.g., must they be conscious?), but the basic notion of what goals are is one we all intuitively grasp: Goals define what we’re trying to accomplish and constrain how we go about it (e.g., the car salesperson tries to make a sale without appearing to be too aggressive). Goal-formation processes, then, are those that give rise to these objectives and constraints. As the “drivers” of the output system, goals channel mental resources toward particular cognitive activities and thereby shape how and what we think, and what we do and how we go about it.

Planning involves formulating a behavior, or more likely a sequence of behaviors, for accomplishing one’s goal(s), and it entails several distinct subprocesses (see Berger, 1997). For example, one aspect of planning is the identification of subgoals—intermediate steps that must be taken to achieve the overarching objective (e.g., to accomplish the goal of serving dinner, one must procure the necessary ingredients, combine them properly, preheat the oven, etc.). Planning also involves identifying potential ways of accomplishing each goal or subgoal (e.g., given the goal of introducing himself to a stranger, a certain denizen of the jungle might consider saying “Hello, my name is Tarzan, and I am delighted to make your acquaintance” or, alternatively, “Me Tarzan.”). And yet a third component of planning is anticipating the likely outcomes of potential behaviors, that is, “engaging in Behavior X is likely to result in Outcome Y.”

Assembling and implementing behaviors involves those processes by which our plans are actually manifested as overt responses (see Greene, 2007). The content of plans is represented in relatively abstract mental formats—the sorts of symbolically based representational formats of which we are consciously aware and that we can even report or describe to others (so, e.g., you can tell your roommate what you’re planning to do over the weekend). On the other hand, overt behavior consists of the motor commands that allow us to speak and move. There is an intricate system that translates our conscious conceptions of what to do into actual behavior, and without this component of the output system, we might possibly still be thinkers (of a sort), but we couldn’t be doers.

A “Second Tier”: Building on a Basic Framework

The preceding section should make it pretty clear that the input-processing, memory, and output systems play an inescapable role in communication processes. But for communication scientists, the properties of these systems are typically not so much a primary focus as they are an essential foundation for exploring a vast array of phenomena that derive from and are shaped by the nature of these systems.² It is instructive, then, to consider a few examples of these “second-tier” phenomena.

Cognitive Load

Among the most common conceptions in cognitive science is the notion that the mind is a limited-capacity system in the sense that there is a finite pool of “processing resources” that restricts the number of mental activities we can carry out at any given time. If some activity makes heavy demands on our processing resources, we are said to be under a heavy “cognitive load,” and our ability to carry out other activities is curtailed. So, for example, if you are engrossed in text-messaging your roommate, you probably aren’t going to be able to process what your professor is saying about some complex topic. This idea of a limited-capacity system shows up in a variety of communication phenomena. For example, while it is not always true, everything else being equal, lying tends to be more cognitively demanding than telling the truth: The liar has to fabricate an account, keep his or her story straight, control nonverbal behaviors so as not to give himself or herself away, and so on. As a result, liars often exhibit behaviors indicative of heavy cognitive load (e.g., speech errors). A second example, often in the news these days, comes from studies that show that hands-free cell phones are no safer when driving than hand-held models. The reason, of course, is that it’s not having something in your hand that creates the problem; rather, the problem stems from having something other than monitoring the road on your mind.

Communication Skill Acquisition

It will come as no surprise to the readers of this volume that communication skills matter—skillful communicators simply fare better in the workplace and in their interpersonal relationships (e.g., marriages). But people aren’t born with communication skills; they are acquired over time, through practice. The process of skill acquisition is accompanied by a number of behavioral changes; for example, we get faster, we make fewer errors, and we experience less cognitive load. Cognitive science has made considerable strides in illuminating what happens in the mind as we acquire a skill and why these behavioral changes occur (see Greene, 2003). For example, recalling the declarative versus procedural memory distinction described above, one of the things thought to happen in skill acquisition is that one may learn a set of facts about what to do, and through practice, gradually convert this declarative knowledge into procedural form so that it is no longer necessary to keep the rules about what to do in mind.

There is another layer to the advances that have come from studies of skill acquisition. Because research has shed light on what happens in the mind as we acquire a skill, we can take that understanding and use it to design more effective training programs. For example, what are the most effective ways of *instructing* people about the skill, what conditions of *practice* are most effective, and what sorts of *feedback* are best for learning and skill transfer?

Creativity and Pattern

Human behavior is characterized by regularity and pattern. We readily recognize this in the behavior of others (and sometimes in ourselves). Our friends and loved ones have ways of speaking (e.g., favorite topics, vocabulary) and moving (e.g., facial expressions, mannerisms) that are just “them.” And the patterning of human behavior doesn’t just show up in individuals’ idiosyncratic ways of doing things. Members of groups (e.g., sorority members; church congregations), and even entire cultures, exhibit routines in their behavior that are common to all members of the group. We all know, for example, the basics of what to say and do when being introduced to someone.

Because this patterned, repetitive character of human behavior is so universal and so ubiquitous, failing to address it would leave some pretty big gaps in our understanding of communication processes. This is precisely one of the places, though, where cognitive science has made some important inroads. The fact that there is a repetitive element to our behavior implicates LTM. In other words, people must have preserved (in some form) the information used to produce the patterns they exhibit. Guided by this assumption, cognitive scientists have learned a lot about the nature of the LTM system(s), where knowledge of behavioral routines is represented, how that knowledge is acquired, and how it is used in shaping our actions (see Kellermann & Lim, 2008).

What is particularly fascinating in the context of a discussion of the patterned and repetitive nature of human behavior is that it is also simultaneously unique and creative. Sure, we exhibit idiosyncratic and shared ways of doing things, but we never do them in *exactly* the same way from one time to another. It turns out, for example, that even if you tried to repeat even a simple phrase three times in a row in exactly the same way, there would be variations in the vocal spectrograph of each repetition. Even more important, we have the capacity to think and say new things—to come up with ideas that we’ve never heard, seen, or thought before. This penchant for creation is the source of much of the best in human communication—our ability to tell a compelling story, to express an idea or feeling in just the right words, and even to come up with a great joke. As you might guess, studying and understanding the creative side of communication behavior is more difficult than coming to grips with the patterned aspects, but even here, theoretical and methodological advances have been made (see Greene, 2008).

Self and Self-Regulation

Like no other species, human beings have the ability to reflect on themselves—we are self-aware; we possess conceptions of who we “are” (and who we wish we were); and we think of ourselves and our actions in relation to others and their perceptions, actions, and purposes. These and

related self-relevant phenomena are central to social interaction. Such processes have been shown to be linked to social motivation (including concerns with self-presentation), social anxiety, marital satisfaction, and attitude—behavior relationships, to list just a few out of many.

Because they are mental phenomena, self-concept, self-regulation, and so on fall squarely in the domain of cognitive science, and considerable progress has been made in understanding their nature (see Baumeister, 1998). For example, one property of our experience of self is that it is relatively stable—we have a sense of unity and continuity concerning who we are. When I wake up in the morning, I feel that I am essentially the same person I was the day before. On the other hand, it turns out to be fairly easy to demonstrate that people’s conceptions of their abilities, attributes, and so on are often internally inconsistent and also malleable and subject to change. Models that describe the way self-relevant information is stored in and retrieved from LTM help explain how we can entertain inconsistent views of ourselves; how those perceptions of self can shift, sometimes pretty rapidly; and how even in the face of such inconsistency and change, we are able to maintain a coherent sense of self.

As a second example, while the self very often plays a role in motivating and shaping one’s behavior, this is not always true: There are times when we are not conscious of our selves (our thoughts, behavior, etc.). Models of self-awareness have shed light on those conditions under which aspects of the self are more or less likely to come into play, as well as on the behavioral consequences of self-awareness (see Baumeister, 1998).

Cognitive Changes Over the Life Span

Among the most intensively studied aspects of cognitive functioning are the various changes in mental processes that occur over the course of a person’s life. As we grow from infancy to childhood, adolescence, and beyond, numerous developments take place in the input-processing, memory, and output systems. For example, cognitive processes simply get faster over the course of childhood, we acquire the capacity to think in more abstract ways, and we develop the ability to monitor and regulate our own behavior.

Some of the cognitive changes accompanying development are particularly relevant to communication and social interaction. These include language acquisition, which typically commences with the production of single words around the end of the first year and rapidly progresses to multiple-word strings by about 18 months (see Clark, 2003). A second example of a socially relevant developmental change during childhood concerns what is termed the “theory of mind,” or the understanding that other people possess knowledge, beliefs, goals, and so on and that these may differ from one’s own mental states (see Premack & Premack, 2003). In the same vein, as children develop the

ability to take the perspective of others, they also begin to engage in strategic self-presentation in order to manipulate what others think of them (e.g., Aloise-Young, 1993).

The other end-of-the-life course is marked by cognitive changes as well. The efficiency of mental processing peaks as we reach early adulthood but begins a gradual decline shortly thereafter. An overall slowing of information processing begins in the early 20s. This decline becomes more pronounced as we age, ultimately affecting the ability to process language and text. Evidence of this decay is apparent in the communication patterns used by older adults, which can often be characterized as less complex (e.g., shorter, grammatically simpler constructions; fewer personal pronouns) than those exhibited by their younger counterparts (Kemper, 2006). As we age, we also experience deterioration in the efficiency of the attentional subsystem. We become less proficient in our ability to inhibit irrelevant stimuli (e.g., extraneous thoughts), making it more difficult to be attuned to important message features. Older adulthood affects memory as well. Decreases in STM begin in the 20s and become more pronounced with each passing decade—a deficit directly related to difficulty in sentence processing. With respect to the LTM system, declarative memory is negatively affected by age, but procedural memory is relatively impervious to the aging process. So while you may forget the name of your childhood best friend, you won’t forget how to play the piano.

A Second Pass at the “Second Tier”

The phenomena we’ve considered to this point, cognitive load, skill acquisition, creativity, the self, and life span changes, are simply examples, albeit fascinating examples, of what we’ve termed “second-tier” cognitive processes. There are many other such phenomena, and we should at least mention some of those that we could have as easily selected for inclusion here: cultural differences and similarities in information processing, the role of gender in thought and action, aesthetics and the perception of order and beauty, second-language acquisition, verbal and non-verbal message production (including understanding the link between the two), imagined interactions, person perception and impression formation, stereotyping and prejudice, attitudes (and the link between attitudes and behavior), self-deception, reasoning and decision making, consciousness, motivation, and emotion.

The Methods of Cognitive Science

The overview of the input-processing, memory, and output systems in the preceding section should make it obvious that no matter what communication phenomenon one sets out to understand, sooner or later, dedicated pursuit of that phenomenon leads to the realm of the mind. It is possible,

of course, to skirt the boundaries of the mental realm, assuming or ascribing properties (warranted or not) to the ultimate seat of message making and message processing (just as the early mapmakers designated the locations of “Atlantis” and “dragons”). Cognitivists, though, tend to be the sort of thinkers who want to know what’s there. And just as explorers during the Age of Discovery developed new tools and techniques for exploring the terrestrial realm (and those of our age, the celestial), cognitive scientists are able to draw on an array of innovative methods for understanding the nature of the mind. These techniques are both varied and numerous, but among the most important are verbal reports, memory assessments, temporal measures, and examination of performance errors.

Verbal Reports

Doubtless the most obvious and straightforward way of gaining insight into what and how people are thinking is to ask them. Under certain conditions, for example, people might reasonably be expected to be able, and willing, to tell you what they are trying to accomplish and how they are planning to go about it. Such verbal reports, however, can take numerous forms, and some are more or less reliable and valid than others (see Ericsson & Simon, 1996). For example, asking people to report on their activities and motivations is often problematic because they may censor or alter their accounts due to concerns associated with social appropriateness or out of considerations about what the investigator “wants to hear.” Even framing a verbal report as an instance of “communication” can shift the content of what is said from “that which one is thinking” to “that which would be sensible to the listener.”

In addition to the various *social* constraints on the content and quality of verbal reports, *cognitive* factors also pertain. For example, evidence suggests that people are more likely to give accurate reports of *current* thoughts and activities as opposed to *retrospective* accounts. Similarly, when people are asked about whether certain events or stimuli (e.g., an advertisement) may have influenced their behavior, they may quite easily answer the question not by relying on any specific or accurate memory of that influence but rather by *inferring* a plausible link (e.g., “I must have seen the ad, and I’m almost certain I bought the product, therefore I distinctly remember being influenced by that ad.”).

Finally, as a way of shedding light on cognitive processes, the usefulness of verbal reports is limited by the fact that many mental processes simply aren’t available to conscious awareness. You are aware, for example, of the words on this printed page, but not of the cognitive operations that allow you to perceive them; you apprehend the contents of your own consciousness at this instant, and maybe, if you direct your thoughts deeper, even of the environmental stimuli and remembered events that contribute to the thought(s) in your mind at this moment. But

chase as you will, you can only capture the content and residue of your thoughts and not the processes by which they came to be.

Memory Assessments

As noted in the first section of this chapter, the memory system holds a central place in science’s understanding of mental processes. It should be no surprise, then, that a great deal of effort has been devoted to exploring the nature of memory and various memory phenomena (see Tulving & Craik, 2000). In the main, studies of LTM involve either *recognition* or *recall* paradigms. Recognition studies typically involve two phases: In the first, people are presented with a series of stimuli (e.g., magazine ads), and in the second phase, the original stimuli are presented along with new stimuli of the same type. Participants, then, are asked to judge whether each item is “old” or “new.” Recall studies, in contrast, simply ask respondents to produce previously encountered information (e.g., “What is the capital of New York?”). The distinction between recognition and recall studies is exemplified in the difference between multiple-choice tests (which involve recognition) and short-answer or fill-in-the-blank exams (which require recall), and as you might expect, people tend to perform better on recognition tasks than on recall tasks. However, what is remarkable is that there are certain conditions under which that tendency is reversed, where people can actually recall information that they cannot recognize.

One of the key understandings to emerge from the research on memory processes is that memory is fundamentally a *constructive* process. In other words, memory doesn’t work like pulling up an intact document file stored on your computer. Instead (completely out of conscious awareness), multiple (incomplete) memory traces are retrieved, combined with current environmental stimuli, and laid over with sense-making cognitive processes to create a “recollection” of what transpired at some point in the past. Neath and Surprenant (2003) report an interesting example of this sort of memory construction involving a student who had fond childhood memories of a beloved family dog. As real as this memory was for this young woman, it turned out that the dog had died 2 years before she was born! This same sort of memory construction has been shown to apply in cases of eye-witness testimony, which is notoriously inaccurate, even under oath and, literally, with life-or-death decisions at stake (see Loftus, 1996). And that’s not the end of it: So pervasive is the constructive nature of recall that it occurs even to those “crystallized” moments that seem so indelibly etched in our minds that we would never forget them. For example, Talarico and Rubin (2003) found that in less than 1 year, people’s recollection of the events of September 11, 2001, were just as subject to loss and error as their memories of everyday occurrences.

Beyond our (in)ability to remember the events of our lives, other memory phenomena are equally compelling.

For example, one line of research has examined people's ability to remember *visual* versus *textual* information (see David, 2008). This work shows that we tend to have better memory for pictures than text, and this effect extends even to printed words that have visual referents (e.g., "mountain") versus those that are more abstract (e.g., "freedom"). Other studies have examined our ability to remember messages, both from face-to-face interactions and from the media (e.g., news reports, movies). Among the interesting findings of these studies is that we tend to have better memory for "what the other person said" in an interaction than what "we said" and that we are much better at recalling the "gist" of a conversation or story than the specific words that were used in its telling.

One final example of what we've learned about memory processes will resonate if you've ever observed that your ability to remember class material is worse on the final exam or your recall of jokes is better in bars. It turns out that our ability to retrieve information from memory is better when the conditions at the time of recall are similar to those at the time we originally acquired that information. So if your class meets in one room all semester and then you take the final in a different room, your ability to recall course material is reduced. And the same effect applies to your physiological state: If you study while drinking coffee, you'll have better recall with some caffeine in your system. Similarly, if you learn all your best jokes while drinking beer in campus bars, you're more likely to remember those jokes when you're in that same state and environment. This effect is so strong that people who are given the task of learning word lists underwater in scuba gear have better recall of those words when they're back underwater than when they're on dry land (see Neath & Surprenant, 2003).

Temporal Measures

Since the very inception of the scientific study of the mind almost 150 years ago, scholars have relied on measures of time to draw conclusions about the nature of mental processes. There are several, interrelated reasons that time is one of the most important tools of the cognitive scientist. Most simply, cognitive processes, like all other processes (e.g., boiling an egg, a solar eclipse) transpire over time, and for that reason, one of the key elements of understanding how a process works is to know how long it takes. By extension, assessing time allows one to determine whether a process takes longer under some conditions than others: If you have a good grasp of how something is operating, then you should be able to predict what factors will cause it to speed up or slow down (e.g., lowering the temperature will cause a chemical reaction to proceed more slowly). A third consideration is that examining the temporal characteristics of cognitive processes applies even to phenomena that occur outside of conscious awareness and thus are not available for verbal report. A final reason why temporal measures play such an important role in cognitive

science stems from the notion of "cognitive load" discussed previously. When mental activities make heavy demands on our finite pool of processing resources, our ability to carry out those activities is often slowed. For this reason, then, measures of response time can be used to draw conclusions about the cognitive demand that a person is experiencing.

Temporal assessments involve a variety of methodologies, depending on the specific aspect of the mental system that is under examination, but they typically involve measuring the time between presentation of some stimulus or task and initiation (or completion) of a subsequent response. The instructions can be as simple as pressing a button when a sound occurs or as complex as solving calculus problems. As a result of their versatility, temporal measures are commonly used to study each of the three major systems of the mind (input processing, memory, and output). In the input-processing realm, for example, studies indicate why some visual images take longer to be recognized than others (perception) and why it sometimes takes a while to comprehend a message (as when it takes us a few seconds to "get a joke"). With respect to memory, any number of experiments have shed light on conditions under which it takes us longer to retrieve information from LTM (the sort of occurrence that will resonate if you've ever "forgotten" your own phone number, experienced the "tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon," or momentarily blanked on the name of a person whom you know well).

One additional group of temporal measures merits special mention because they are directly tied to communication processes. Consider that verbal message production is characterized by various temporal parameters including speech rate (e.g., words per minute), speaker-turn latency (the period between when one person stops talking and another begins), and pause-phonation ratio (the duration of periods of silence divided by the duration of periods of talk during a person's speaking turn). These sorts of variables are particularly interesting because they lead "dual lives": On the one hand they have social significance because they are related to perceptions of credibility, social attractiveness, and so on, and on the other, they provide a window on the cognitive processes underlying speech production. Research on these temporal parameters shows that we speak more fluently (i.e., quickly, with less silent pausing) when we are familiar with our topic and when we've had an opportunity to plan what we're going to say in advance. Conversely, multiple-goal messages (e.g., trying to tell a friend that you didn't think much of her *American Idol* audition while also trying to be supportive) tend to slow us down.

Performance Errors

The final type of assessment in the cognitivist's toolkit actually goes hand in hand with those we've already covered. Studies that involve temporal measures also almost always examine errors in what a person says and does. This is because most tasks involve a speed-accuracy trade-off: The quicker we act, the more errors we tend to

make. (So you don't want to rush through an exam, and you really don't want your surgeon to be in too big a hurry!) Moreover, as we've alluded, in their verbal reports and in their memory performance, people make errors. What is particularly useful, though, is that when we do commit these errors, they are not random glitches—they emerge under certain conditions and not others; they are of certain types and not others. For example, people tend to “recall” events that never happened if those unseen occurrences are part of a “script,” or a familiar sequence of events. Similarly, we tend to “run off” well-practiced behavioral routines, even when they are not appropriate—and you have experienced this if you've ever called a new beau by the last one's name or, less embarrassingly, moved and found yourself dialing your old telephone number or even “driving home” to your old address! The key point is that because performance errors exhibit regularity rather than randomness, they provide an important window on the operation of the mind, not just when it “fails” but also when it is functioning normally.

The Special Allure of Cognitivism

The overarching theme of this chapter has been that cognitive processes lie at the very heart of human communication: The mind is the seat of message making and message comprehension. You can take away any other aspect of human existence (language, relationships, culture, cell phones, iPods, . . . —you fill in the blanks) and still have communication, but without the mind, you've got nothing. By extension, whatever other communication phenomenon one seeks to understand, sooner or later, pursuit of that issue will lead you to confront the nature of comprehension and action.

But the central and inescapable role of cognition in communication is only one of the reasons why cognitivism has come, here in the dawning years of the 21st century, to hold the position it does among all the various alternative approaches for studying communication processes. If the two of us, as your authors, have done any sort of creditable job to this point, a second contributing factor should be readily apparent: The phenomena in cognitivism's wheelhouse are inherently fascinating. As much as humans wonder at the complexity of the galaxies and the intricate nature of Earth's ecosystems, when God spoke these things into being, He was only getting warmed up, and He saved His best for last. The phenomena of the mind are intrinsically compelling: What is consciousness? How is it possible to think and do something new? What is the nature of dreams (and daydreaming)? How does what I think become manifested as speech and movement? How is it possible to know what to do, and to want to do it, and still do something else? How can I be so certain in my recollections—and so wrong? Why can't some people dance without looking at their feet?

Beyond the essential place of cognition in communication and the fascinating nature of the phenomena that it encompasses, there is yet a third reason (a whole cluster of reasons, actually) that gives cognitivism its particular appeal, and this is that it allows us to have our cake and eat it too. By this, we mean that people are sometimes led to think in terms of trade-offs and dichotomies (you can have one or the other), but the special nature of cognitivism allows one to work simultaneously at both “ends” of some commonly supposed continua. Let's consider three examples that illustrate this point.

Science and Aesthetics

One of the peculiar properties of human sense making is that we are so very prone to error and bias in what we perceive and suppose about the world. We see order, regularity, and association where it doesn't exist, and conversely, we fail to detect processes that really are at work. As an approach to understanding, science functions to minimize such error (see Haack, 1999). Rather than accept an assertion on faith or because someone in authority says it is so, science ultimately hinges on publicly available and replicable methods and data; it employs rigorous techniques to reduce the chances of illusion and the impact of wishing it were so.

At the same time that cognitivism affords the special advantages of science as a way of knowing, it also resonates with our aesthetic nature and our appreciation of order and beauty. And this is true in two distinct senses that are analogous to the ways in which a work of art can function aesthetically. A still life of a flower arrangement, for example, could reveal the beauty and structure of the blossoms, and at another level, that same painting can be appreciated for the artist's technique. In much the same way, the data and models of cognitive science reveal an elegance and order in human behavior that we might not apprehend otherwise. And at another level, the theories and models of cognitive science can, themselves, be a source of pleasure and satisfaction.

Theory and Practical Application

As we have just noted, thinking theoretically can be a source of genuine pleasure and excitement. People enjoy working on Sudoku and crossword puzzles, but building scientific theories is like working out newspaper puzzles on steroids. Theory construction is problem solving—finding ways of making sense of patterns of regularities and anomalies, and it requires imagination, intellectual discipline, and courage. And the appeal of thinking theoretically doesn't pertain just to building one's own theories; investing the effort to master the theories of others helps us to appreciate the “big picture” of how things fit together and why they work as they do, to understand how someone else went about trying to solve a problem, and even to think about things that person didn't see.

The sense of insight and satisfaction that comes from thinking theoretically is only half the story here because, even though cognitivism is fundamentally theory driven, the problems addressed by cognitive science are those that have very real applications and implications for people's lives. Just a few examples should be sufficient to illustrate the point: How can children with learning disabilities best acquire social skills; how can the cognitive changes that occur with advancing age be delayed or accommodated; and how can health campaign messages (e.g., don't drink during pregnancy). be designed to enhance the likelihood that people will attend, comprehend, and implement their recommendations? The overarching point is that if you want to make a difference in the quality of people's lives, it helps to understand how, and what, they think.

Universality and Difference

Cognitive science seeks to develop models of mental processes that are general in the sense that they apply to everyone. As an example, consider that people integrate sensory inputs with information in LTM in a way that allows them to understand the dialogue and follow the storyline of a movie. The cognitive theorist, then, sets out to develop an account of how this happens in a way that applies to all people (and all movies), not unlike the way physicists attempt to articulate the laws that govern the motion of all objects.

At the same time that cognitivism seeks to develop powerful, general accounts, it also seeks to understand the source and nature of differences in the way people process information and generate responses. Are there, for example, cultural differences in the content and structure of information in the LTM that are manifested in perception, comprehension, recall, and speech and action? At an individual level, why do experts in a particular domain perceive and interpret domain-relevant stimuli differently than do novices?

This striving after both universality and difference is illustrated in work that your authors have conducted on creativity in thought and behavior over the last half-dozen years. As we noted earlier in this chapter, human action is inherently creative—we all do it, and so part of our project has been to understand how it is possible for us to think and say new things (see Greene, 2008). On the other hand, some people just seem better at it than others: We all know people who just seem to be able to “think on their feet,” and we've been exploring what is at the root of this individual difference (see Morgan, Greene, Gill, & McCullough, in press).

Communication's Place in Cognitive Science: The Interplay of Minds

Cognitive science is an enormously broad interdisciplinary enterprise that spans a great many traditional fields of inquiry. Without any effort to formulate a comprehensive list, we can say that cognitive science draws on philosophy, neuroscience, anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics,

computer science, mathematics, . . . and communication. One of the great freedoms afforded by cognitivism is that of pursuing one's questions wherever they may lead. Rather than stopping or changing course because what one is doing is “not communication,” the cognitivist can go where he or she will.

At the same time, communication's emphasis on message behavior, code systems, social relationships, channel effects, and so on puts scholars in the field in a position to make unique contributions to cognitive science. A particularly interesting example involves the study of mutual influence processes—the ways in which the behaviors of interactants unfold in interdependent ways (see Burgoon, Stern, & Dillman, 1995). While much of the history of cognitivism has focused on studying the mind of the individual engaged in various tasks, there is a growing emphasis on exploring the interplay of minds (whether it be face to face, online, etc.). Communication scholars have much to contribute to that conversation.

Notes

1. You probably wouldn't want to push any general scheme for segmenting the realm of cognitive processes too far because, in point of fact, the mind functions as a system, and no matter where you draw lines for describing various subsystems and processes, those processes almost inevitably crop up as components of phenomena that have been partitioned into other subsystems. For example, even with the simple scheme introduced here (i.e., “input-processing system,” “memory systems,” “output system”), it should be readily apparent that memory plays a role in perception and comprehension and in behavioral production.

2. There are, of course, obvious exceptions such as attention processes to mass media and message memory.

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PERSPECTIVE TAKING, ADAPTATION, AND COORDINATION

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Perspective taking is the sine qua non of communication. Implicitly and explicitly, communicators make assumptions and have expectations about others' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors, and they act on those assumptions and expectations. "Think about it from her point of view." "How would you feel if you were in his shoes?" "The world does not revolve around only you." These exhortations proclaim the value of perspective taking. By considering another's vantage point, placing oneself in another's position, and acknowledging that there are other people in the world, with their own viewpoints, perspective taking can allow people to anticipate better the behaviors and reactions of others. In so doing, perspective taking can facilitate adaptation and coordination of interactions with others.

What is particularly interesting to communication scholars is how, when, and why the processes of perspective taking, adaptation, and coordination occur. In this chapter, the theoretical conceptualizations of perspective taking, adaptation, and coordination will be examined along with a discussion of the common methods used to study these fundamental processes. This will be followed by an appraisal of how these concepts have been and can be applied in various contexts, along with some of the key questions that are yet to be fully answered in these related areas of study.

Theoretical Conceptualizations

Perspective Taking

Although there is debate among developmental scholars about when children begin to be able to engage in perspective taking and what triggers this development (e.g., maturation processes and/or encounters with moral dilemmas), there is agreement that most adults do engage in perspective taking and know that other people can have different viewpoints from their own. Epley, Morewedge, and Keysar (2004) further argued that not only are adults less egocentric, but what allows adults to engage in perspective taking, as compared with children, is that adults can also correct for those egocentric tendencies.

Still, regardless of how this comes about, the concept of perspective taking remains an axiomatic element in communication. Researchers have typically defined perspective taking as the act of intellectually adopting the outlook or viewpoint of another person. Scholars have sometimes referred to this as a type of role taking and have further distinguished between affective and cognitive role taking. Thus, perspective taking or imaginatively taking another's perspective into account may entail considering both another person's feelings and thoughts.

Perspective taking also has been conceptualized as a form of empathy. In theoretical models of empathy, perspective taking is generally viewed in one of three ways. The first treats perspective taking as synonymous with empathy. The second considers perspective taking as one of several empathy dimensions or elements that have a separate influence on behavior (Davis & Oathout, 1987). Although the exact number of elements composing a multidimensional view of empathy (Davis, 1980, 1983; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987) is arguable, the most common ones, in addition to perspective taking, are emotion matching, empathic concern, personal distress, and fantasy. Briefly, emotion matching is feeling the same or very similar emotions to that of another person. For example, two people might both report that they are feeling happy. Empathic concern is feeling compassion and sympathy toward another person. People who show empathic concern do not feel the same emotion as another person (as with emotion matching) but have an emotional response to the situation of another person. This is other-focused. For instance, if a friend is feeling hurt because of a relationship breakup, you might feel sympathy for your friend. Personal distress is feeling anxiety, worry, and uneasiness in response to the situation of another person. This is self-focused. For example, if a classmate did poorly on an examination and is very upset about it, you might start to feel anxious and worried about your own grades. Fantasy is the tendency to identify with and become “involved” with fictional characters. For instance, you might respond to the plight of your favorite reality television star as if this was a real person in your life.

The third theoretical view of perspective taking treats perspective taking as a necessary antecedent, but not sufficient condition, to other empathy dimensions (Stiff, Dillard, Somera, Kim, & Sleight, 1988). This two-stage model places the cognitive forms of empathy (e.g., perspective taking) ahead of the affective forms of empathy (e.g., empathic concern). For example, after people are attentive to the views of another person, they feel compassion toward that person.

Adaptation and Coordination

The communication literature is full of a variety of terms that refer to various aspects of adaptation and coordination. Sometimes, the general area of study is referred to as accommodation or mutual adaptation. However, the multitude of terms can be confusing. In an attempt to provide a unifying rubric on these processes and to avoid confusion with specific theories and approaches (e.g., communication accommodation theory vs. accommodation processes) and methodological difficulties, Burgoon, Stern, and Dillman (1995) advocated the use of the term *adaptation*, or, more precisely, interpersonal adaptation, to refer to this literature. Similarly, taking a broader view of this phenomenon, Bernieri and Rosenthal (1991) referred to this literature as interpersonal coordination or “the degree to which the

behaviors in an interaction are nonrandom, patterned, or synchronized in both timing and form” (pp. 402–403). Thus, in this chapter, adaptation and coordination are considered synonymous with each other.

The typical patterns of adaptation and coordination in this area of study are often labeled as matching, complementarity, reciprocity, compensation, convergence, divergence, synchrony, and dissynchrony. Behavioral matching is exhibited when interactants have identical behaviors. For example, both interactants might display the same posture. The term, mirroring, is sometimes used when the identical behaviors are mirror images, or show reflection symmetry. They are essentially the same behavior, but in opposite directions. For instance, one person could cross his or her left leg over the right leg and the other person could cross his or her right leg over the left leg. Complementarity is exhibiting different or dissimilar behaviors.

Reciprocity refers to adjusting to the communication function of another’s behavior with behaviors that serve a similar communication function. If someone is showing anger by growling, then the other interactant could reciprocate by showing anger by glaring. Compensation, then, is responding to the communicative function of another’s behavior, but with an analogous behavior that fulfills the communicative function in the opposite direction. For example, instead of reciprocating with a glare, a person could compensate by showing pleasure through smiling.

Convergence is when one person moves toward a more similar pattern to that of another person. They become increasingly similar. Divergence is becoming increasingly dissimilar. For instance, if a person is behaving in a dominant manner, then another person could converge on that pattern by becoming more dominant over time as well or diverge by becoming less dominant over time.

Synchrony is the overall quality of interaction partners having the appearance of unity rather than separation or independence when communicating with each other. That is, the interactants’ behaviors are entrained to one another, with behaviors matching simultaneously or sequentially in an overall pattern. Synchrony, then, includes the qualities of interaction rhythm or tempo, simultaneous behavior or behavior changes that occur at the same time between interactants, and smooth meshing of behaviors. In a sense, synchrony is rhythmic reciprocity. Dissynchrony, on the other hand, is when the behavioral patterns of both interactants are out-of-sync or appear as if the interactants are operating autonomously from each other.

There have been a profuse number of theories offered to predict these various adaptation and coordination patterns. In an effort to provide more coherence to this literature, Burgoon and colleagues (1995) applied a communication-oriented organizational framework to the wide array of adaptation and coordination theories. They hierarchically arranged the theories along a dimension from automatic, nonarbitrary, or reactive to communicative, symbolic, or intentional and based their distinctions on the domain of

focus, ranging from individual to group to dyad. That is, there are biological approaches, arousal and affect approaches, social norm approaches, and communication and cognition approaches, respectively.

The biological models are grounded in innate, biological, and universal needs for survival, which often include concerns about safety, comfort, and connection with others, as well as building a foundation for more complex communication. Typically, the theorizing in this area examined interactional synchrony and dissynchrony, particularly between adults and children (e.g., when mother and infant vocalizations coordinate), and investigated instinctual forms of motor mimicry that occur when a person behaviorally responds to the situation of another when the situation is not actually happening to the person (e.g., when you observe someone about to be hit over the head and you duck your head) and mirroring behavior (e.g., Bernieri, Reznick, & Rosenthal, 1988; Condon & Sander, 1974; LaFrance, 1982; Lakin & Chartrand, 2003). One notable exception is Bavelas, Black, Chovil, Lemery, and Mullett's (1988) work on motor mimicry. In this case, Bavelas and her colleagues argued that motor mimicry, in the form of mirroring another person's behavior, goes beyond a biological basis and has a more communicative function of signalling similarity and rapport.

Arousal and affect models build on the foundations of biological needs and highlight the psychological needs of the individual. Some of the common theories in this area are affiliative conflict theory (a.k.a., equilibrium theory), arousal-labeling theory, discrepancy-arousal theory, and dialectical theory. For example, affiliative conflict theory is predicated on the idea that people try to balance their approach and avoidance needs to maintain psychological comfort in an interaction. When the equilibrium is disturbed, affiliative conflict theorists predict that behavioral changes will occur, primarily in the form of compensation (Argyle & Dean, 1965). For instance, if someone takes a step closer to you, you will step back to restore the interaction equilibrium.

Arousal-labeling theory explains both patterns of reciprocity and compensation (Patterson, 1976). From this theoretical standpoint, changes in the intimacy level in an interaction lead to arousal. When the arousal exceeds a certain threshold, that arousal is valenced positively or negatively and labeled as such by individuals. If the arousal is considered to be positive, then reciprocity is predicted. If the arousal is considered to be negative, then compensation is predicted. Continuing with the previous example, if someone steps close enough to you for the behavior to create sufficient arousal and you consider that arousal positive, then you will step forward. If you consider the arousal negative, then you will step back. Discrepancy arousal theorists (Cappella & Greene, 1982) downplay the cognitive emphasis that is present in arousal-labeling theory and posit a quicker process that generates reciprocity and compensation. That is, they theorize that people's behavior can be discrepant with their expectations and that discrepancies,

within a certain acceptable range, generate moderate arousal and are associated with positive affect. Discrepancies, outside a certain acceptable range, generate large arousal and are associated with negative affect.

Proponents of discrepancy-arousal theory generally predict that when two interactants want to approach each other, the discrepancy-arousal-affect chain will lead to reciprocity and when one interactant wants to approach and the other wants to avoid, then the discrepancy-arousal-affect chain will lead to compensation. Dialectical approaches also focus on psychological needs. However, according to dialectical theorists, people have competing and complementary needs that create dialectical tensions in relationships (Altman, Vinsel, & Brown, 1981; Baxter & Montgomery, 1997). To manage these tensions, people sometimes oscillate, fluctuate, or cycle between different needs. This leads to dyadic adaptation and coordination patterns of matching, complementarity, reciprocity, and compensation.

Rather than focusing closely on biological and psychological needs, social norm models emphasize the influence of social and cultural norms. The norms of reciprocity, social exchange, dyadic effect, Gottman's negative affect reciprocity, and communication accommodation are examples of theories in this area. For instance, the norm of reciprocity, as the name implies, predicts reciprocal patterns.

According to Gouldner (1960), reciprocity is a moral obligation to respond in kind through reciprocal patterns of people helping each other and avoiding injuring each other. Social exchange theorists similarly predict reciprocity and view the exchange of resources between people as fundamental to societal functioning. In communication research, social exchange principles are theorized to allow for exchanges of roughly equivalent resources and variable intervals of time when people can reciprocate behavior (Rolloff, 1987). For example, if a friend helps you move into your dorm room, you might help your friend move when he or she finds a new place to live or you might help your friend wash his or her car. Additionally, reciprocity of self-disclosures or personal information about the self, what Jourard (1959) refers to as the dyadic effect, was originally theorized to help develop personal relationships. For example, you tell your date your most embarrassing moment, and your date tells you the same. Analogously, Gottman's (1979) research on marital couples demonstrated that reciprocity of negative affect deteriorated personal relationships. For instance, a husband snipes at his wife, and the wife snaps back at her husband. Another theory that emphasizes norms is communication accommodation theory, originally known as speech accommodation theory (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991).

Generally, communication accommodation theorists focus on the patterns of convergence and divergence of communication behaviors, particularly as they relate to people's goals for social approval, communication efficiency, and identity. Depending on whether interactants are mutually accommodating or only one interactant is accommodating, the patterns of reciprocity and compensation are

also applicable. For instance, at a high school reunion, you see your good buddy from history class and your vocal patterns become more similar to each other. When you run into a disliked classmate from high school, your vocal pattern becomes more different from that classmate's.

While still retaining a basis in biological, psychological, and sociological orientations, communication and cognition models place more emphasis on the multiple functions of communication (e.g., message production and processing, relational management, social influence and control, identity and impression formation and management, and conversation management) and the meanings and interpretations of communicative behavior. Theories in this area include the sequential-functional model, expectancy violations theory, cognitive-valence theory, and interaction adaptation theory.

Patterson's (1983) sequential-functional model provides a broad framework for predicting reciprocity and compensation. According to Patterson, there are genetic and environmental determinants; personal, situational, and relationship antecedents; and preinteraction mediators, such as behavioral predispositions, arousal, and cognitive-affective expectancies, that influence interaction between people. When people interact, these factors and emergent features of the interaction are theorized to guide behavior. During an interaction, the interactants interpret the meaning and functions of each other's involvement level. This creates a change in arousal. When the arousal change is minimal, stable exchange and reciprocity are expected. When the arousal change is large, unstable exchange and compensation are expected.

Burgoon's (1978; Burgoon & Le Poire, 1993) expectancy violations theory is based on the idea that people have communication expectancies of others. During interactions, if these expectancies are violated, they are arousing and refocus attention to the features of the communication, the nature of the relationship between the interactants, and the nature and meaning of the violation. Communicative behavior that confirms expectancies has a valence ranging from positive to negative, and the interactant who violates expectancies has a communication reward valence ranging from positive to negative. Expectancy violation theorists generally predict that when communicative behaviors that confirm or violate expectancies have a positive valence and the communicator reward valence is positive, reciprocity results. When communicative behaviors that confirm or violate expectancies have a positive valence and the communicator reward valence is negative, reciprocity or compensation can result. When communicative behaviors that confirm or violate expectancies have a negative valence and the communicator reward valence is positive, compensation results. When communicative behaviors that confirm or violate expectancies have a negative valence and the communicator reward valence is negative, compensation results.

Andersen's (1999) cognitive-valence theory describes the communicative process of intimacy exchange between people, specifically increases in intimacy. This change in

intimacy is predicted to generate varying degrees of arousal. Proponents of this theory predict that adaptation occurs at moderate and large increases in arousal. For a moderate increase in arousal, an interactant's increase in intimacy behavior has a valence based on six types of cognitive schemata (i.e., cultural, self, interpersonal, relational, situational, and state schemata). If each of the six types of cognitive schemata has a positive valence, the overall valence is positive and reciprocity, in the form of an increase in intimacy behavior, is predicted. If any one of the six types of cognitive schemata has a negative valence, the overall valence is negative and compensation, in the form of a decrease in intimacy behavior, is predicted. For a large increase in arousal, compensation is predicted.

Finally, Burgoon and colleagues' (1995) interaction adaptation theory provides a comprehensive explanatory calculus for examining adaptation and coordination patterns in interaction. She parsimoniously integrated and built on past theories in this area. In so doing, interaction adaptation theory is based on five key concepts: required factors, expected factors, desired factors, interaction position, and actual behavior. When interacting with another person, interaction adaptation theorists posit that required, expected, and desired elements are arranged hierarchically and are interdependent. The most fundamental are required factors that are grounded in biological drives and basic human needs. Then, there are expected factors, which are based in social norms and cultural norms. Finally, there are desired factors that are personal and idiosyncratic to individuals' preferences and goals. People consider all three factors and develop an interaction position. This interaction position is basically a behavioral interaction pattern in a situation that is derived from the combination of what is required, expected, and desired by an individual. This individual could refer to the self or the partner. Actual behavior is a partner's enacted behavior. Both interaction positions and actual behaviors are valenced from positive to negative. Furthermore, people are anticipated to move toward more positively valenced behaviors, whether it is toward a more positively valenced interaction position or a more positively valenced actual behavior. Thus, the theory predicts that when interaction position and actual behavior are not discrepant, there is matching. When the interaction position is more positively valenced than the actual behavior, divergence, compensation, and maintenance (enacting the same behavior) are predicted. When the actual behavior is more positively valenced than the interaction position, convergence, matching, and reciprocity are predicted.

Methods

Operationalizing Perspective Taking

Researchers generally believe that perspective taking is dispositional, when people have overall tendencies to spontaneously think about the other person's perspective,

and situational, where people can be induced to think about another person's perspective. When studying perspective taking then, researchers often consider how to measure and manipulate perspective taking.

Perspective taking is typically measured either by asking people to report on their own perspective-taking skills in a survey or by inferring perspective-taking ability after examining how people respond to a variety of scenarios, vignettes, audio recordings, or role play instructions. Perspective taking is commonly manipulated through a set of instructions. The instructions ask people to imagine themselves or other people in a specified situation and imagine how they would think and feel if they were in another person's place and/or how another person is thinking and feeling.

Operationalizing Adaptation and Coordination

Burgoon and colleagues' (1995) review of adaptation patterns offers a useful set of criteria for distinguishing various forms of adaptation and coordination from each other and discusses the various ways these patterns can be and have been operationalized. To determine if and which forms of adaptation and coordination are occurring in interactions, Burgoon et al. indicated that the methods employed to study these phenomena must reasonably demonstrate or assess whether behavior was directed toward or was contingent on another person, whether there was a change in behavior, whether the influence was effected by one or more parties, whether the change was ordered or sequential, and whether behavior was strategic, as well as the direction and degree of the change and behaviors that are functionally equivalent.

Some methods that have been used to assess adaptation and coordination include directly asking people about their intentions in questionnaires, in diaries, or in video-cued recall sessions for various time intervals. This strategy provides information about whether people believe that their behavior was directed toward another person and whether their response was contingent on another.

Another method was to manipulate people's behavior by having them systematically change their behavior and observe any resulting changes in another person's behavior. This will help determine directionality, contingency, sequencing, and whether behavior change was lagged.

Researchers have also measured the magnitude and direction of behavioral change by comparing behavior with a baseline or control. The control could be a person's own behavior, in a within-individual or within-dyad design. Or the control could be a separate group, in a between-dyads design. In related fashion, social normative standards have been used as a baseline to infer behavioral change. In this case, an a priori list of behaviors that are consensually recognized as directed toward others is compared with the observed behavior.

Furthermore, adaptation and coordination can be inferred by using a variety of statistical techniques. For example,

directionality and contingency can be approximated by using a social relations analysis to assess actor, partner, and relationship effects and statistically partitioning the behavioral contribution of each effect or statistically examining conditional probabilities. Behavior change has been assessed using longitudinal designs with time as a factor in the statistical analyses. Sequencing and contingency have been surmised by comparing baseline correlations with correlations in different experimental conditions and using statistical techniques such as lag sequential analysis.

Burgoon and colleagues (1995) also noted that assessing directionality of change, magnitude of change, and functionally equivalent behaviors requires additional methodological considerations. For example, researchers might theoretically and empirically examine the range of changes and standard deviations. They might also need to use multiple behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, that are substitutable to each other and/or look at functionally equivalent molar measures. They could look at behaviors, behavioral change, and interpretation of those changes using observer and participant perspectives. Moreover, investigators of behavioral adaptation and coordination would need to make a judgment about the degree to which the measures should be microscopic or macroscopic.

Applications

Understanding and engaging in perspective taking and the resultant adaptation and coordination are useful for mundane to critical communication events. These concepts and the theories about them are helpful both in the everyday type of communication with other people as well as during challenging or difficult exchanges with people. For example, when people engage in competitive and cooperative activities, consideration of how others will respond helps people to better adapt and coordinate actions. On a basketball team, for instance, a player might assist a teammate for an alley-oop to a slam-dunk. This not only requires precise passing and dunking skills, but it also requires teamwork and pinpoint timing. Players or audience members might also try to "psych out" the other team or taunt them during a game by choosing words or phrases that they believe will upset the other team or help them lose focus.

Perspective taking, adaptation, and coordination are equally applicable in a variety of other situations. People who are in the customer service field often need to make assessments of what other people want and then adjust to those desires. People who handle client complaints or irate clients can fruitfully use the ideas of perspective taking, adaptation, and coordination in deciding whether to strongly and forcefully state a position, with the hope that the client will back down, or calmly state a position, with the hope that the client will respond in kind.

When persuading someone, a common tenet of effective persuasion is the use of two-sided arguments. This means that persuaders must consider the arguments that

are consistent with their position and refute counterarguments by others. If a teenager wants to stay out past a curfew, then arguing for why he or she should be able to stay out later is only part of the process. The teenager should also consider what the parents' reasons are for wanting the teenager to come home on time. The teenager should refute those reasons as well as consider how to nonverbally present the information. Similarly, if an employee wants to ask the boss for a raise, the employee should consider the boss's viewpoint and state the employee's own case in a confident manner (in the hope that the boss will accept it) or in a submissive manner to show deference.

In public speaking, audience analysis is stressed. This means that information must be considered in light of the attributes of the audience and the audience's prior knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and values, or basically, the perspective of the audience should be taken into account when planning a presentation. Additionally, after doing audience analysis, the public speaker must adapt his or her presentation to the information from that analysis. For example, if the audience is expected to be disinterested, then the speaker might be even more animated and enthusiastic, with the idea that the audience response will converge on the speaker's pattern, and the speaker might consider which factors will facilitate convergence.

In interpersonal interactions, perspective taking, adaptation, and coordination are valuable concepts that can be applied. For instance, if a friend has a problem, perhaps there was a death in the family; thinking about the situation from the friend's perspective would be helpful. If the friend is not talking about the problem, then a person could remain silent and hope that the friend will fill the void by compensating for the silence with talk, or the person could begin talking with the expectation that the friend might reciprocate the behavior. If a person is on a date with someone who is very attractive, the person might consider how receptive this attractive other would be to flirting. The person might think about whether to initiate flirting behaviors in the hope that the behavior will be matched or wait for the other person to initiate interest.

As is evident from this diverse array of examples, many communication activities can be analyzed through the ideas of perspective taking, adaptation, and coordination. What is also particularly clear is that adaptation and coordination often begin with perspective taking. Thus, the rest of this chapter will be devoted primarily to a discussion of perspective taking. The research on perspective taking indicates that perspective taking plays an important role in exhibiting communication competence, engaging in prosocial behaviors, and managing problematic events.

Exhibiting Communication Competence

Many have argued and found evidence to support the fact that perspective taking is significantly related to overall social skills, such as the ability to verbally and nonverbally encode, decode, and regulate messages and communication competence, or communicating effectively and appropriately (Redmon, 1989; Riggio, Tucker, & Coffaro, 1989).

Whenever people communicate with each other, perspective taking is applied as people take the other person's knowledge into account (Fussell & Krauss, 1992). Perspective taking is relevant when people adapt to diverse audiences, choose how to address someone, decide on the formality or informality of their language choices, engage in deception and deception detection, manage impressions, and regulate the flow and structure of their conversations. For example, Grice's (1975) conversational maxim approach hinges on perspective taking. That is, according to Grice, when people communicate with each other, they adhere to the cooperative principle by making appropriate inferences about the communicator's intentions when comprehending and responding to messages. This is how understanding indirect messages is possible. If someone says, "Can I ask you a question?" most will make sense of this question by thinking about the perspective of the person who said it and recognize that this question is a preamble to a question that is going to be asked subsequently and is not a signal of communicative incompetence (or a failure to recognize the apparent contradiction in that the person who asked to ask a question has already asked the question).

Engaging in Prosocial Behaviors

Research on perspective taking indicates that perspective taking directly or indirectly facilitates a variety of prosocial behaviors, such as being more fair and moral in actions; helping others; giving more resources to a disadvantaged other, even to the detriment of the collective good; forgiving others; and showing compassion toward others (e.g., Batson, 1987; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). For instance, Batson and colleagues (2003) found that imagining the other person's position stimulated moral action and when people imagined the self in the other's position, they behaved more fairly toward the other person if that other person was relatively disadvantaged. Hodgson and Wertheim (2007) found that in situations when someone had committed a transgression or a hurtful action against another, those people who were better able to manage and regulate their emotions were associated with more dispositional perspective taking, and dispositional perspective taking was associated with an increase in instances of forgiveness of the transgressor or instigator of the hurt. Clearly, the relationship between perspective taking and prosocial behaviors has applications to persuasion. Whenever people are interested in convincing others to engage in prosocial types of behaviors, be it personally or through a media campaign, accounting for perspective taking might increase the success of the persuasive attempt.

Managing Problematic Events in Relationships

Research has also linked dispositional perspective taking with overall relationship satisfaction, happiness, and adjustment. The reason for this may be due to the effect

of perspective taking on the management of problematic events, such as being narrow minded, engaging in destructive forms of conflict, showing anger, and displaying aggressiveness in relationships.

For example, people who can take another person's perspective are more open-minded and flexible. They are less likely to stereotype other people, less likely to be prejudiced, less likely to commit attributional errors, and more likely to avoid dispositional attributions regarding others' behaviors (e.g., Galinsky, Ku, & Wang, 2005). Richardson, Hammock, Smith, Gardner, and Signo (1994) examined people's self reports of their conflict responses with friends and siblings. They found that dispositional perspective taking was positively associated with problem-solving responses and calm discussions without yelling.

Perspective taking was also negatively associated with aggression and aggressive tendencies, such as irritability, hitting, pushing, and sulking. When perspective taking was manipulated, Richardson and colleagues (1994) found that participants behaved less aggressively (set their partners to receive a lower level of electric shocks) at the start of the experiment, when they had not actually received shocks themselves. Additionally, they found that when the partners of the female participants engaged in offensive and insulting name-calling, those females who were high in dispositional perspective taking did not reciprocate the behavior, as compared with females who were low in dispositional perspective taking. When the partners of the male participants used relatively mild name calling, the males who were high in perspective taking reciprocated the less offensive name calling, as compared with the males who were low in perspective taking. Mohr, Howells, Gerace, Day, and Wharton (2007) also found that dispositional perspective taking was associated with lesser anger arousal and lesser inclination to express anger when provoked in interpersonal situations

Future Directions

Given the importance of this area of study, future research should continue to expand knowledge of these processes in communication. Some of the vital areas of focus that future investigations can concentrate on include examining when perspective taking can be used for darker purposes; how perspective taking can be triggered or activated in real life; and what the differences in perspective taking are between groups, partners, and judgments, or how types of groups, partners, and judgments can be compared.

Darker Side of Perspective Taking

Imagine an argument between a couple that ends with the statement "I knew you were going to say that." This statement is provocative to communication scholars because it reveals several issues about perspective taking and its role in communication that deserve additional

research attention. In the hypothetical scenario between the couple, perspective taking is used as a justification for actions. The literature on perspective taking, however, portrays a more optimistic view of perspective taking. That is, perspective taking is valuable and good, and we can better adapt to others' communication and coordinate our behaviors with increased perspective taking. Thus, future studies should also focus on the darker side of perspective taking. For example, research could examine how people might deliberately thwart another person's behavior, how people can use an assessment of the other person's perspective as a justification for inaction because the outcomes of the interaction were already anticipated, and how people might exploit each other's sensitive spots.

Future research could study the limits to perspective taking as well. Investigations could examine when perspective taking is applied and when it is withheld, perhaps even resisted. For instance, Frantz and Seburn (2003) examined argumentativeness and perspective taking and found that underlying motivations and preferences affected how people applied perspective taking. They found that when highly argumentative people had a preference for a particular viewpoint in a conflict situation, those individuals were less likely to see both sides of the argument than when they did not have a preference.

Further work could also focus on the negative consequences associated with perspective taking. Galinsky and colleagues (2005) reported that when people see more of themselves in others and more of others in themselves, they take on the attributes of others, both positive and negative. Research could investigate if adopting the perspective of an outgroup member leads to conflict with an ingroup member. For example, consider the case of a high school with a popular group and a socially isolated teenager. If a member of the popular group adopts the perspective of the teenager, members of the popular group might be upset with the perspective-taking popular group member. Future research could examine these dynamics.

Perspective-Taking Triggers

Additionally, if perspective taking is advantageous and can be situationally induced, then future work should investigate what triggers perspective taking. The content and form of a message to encourage perspective taking in the real world need to be investigated empirically. Research might also focus on other strategies for enabling people to think about others' viewpoints. Some worthwhile starting points include examining whether familiarity with a person, self-disclosure, and prior experience with a need might make people more inclined to take another person's perspective into account.

Analogously, research could investigate the ways in which perspective taking might be hindered or inhibited. Krcmar and Vieira (2005) argued, in their study of elementary-school-age children's television viewing of fantasy violence, that television fantasy violence portrays only one

predominant perspective (that of the perpetrator of the violent act), and this can hinder perspective taking. They found support that increases in viewing exposure to fantasy violence were related to decreases in perspective taking and decreases in perspective taking were related to decreases in moral reasoning (especially about a justified violent act).

Comparisons in Perspective Taking

The role of culture in perspective taking might be an important avenue for future work. Perspective taking might not be viewed similarly across cultures. Additionally, future research might investigate how people from collectivistic cultures think about perspective taking as compared with people from individualistic cultures. Initial evidence showed that Chinese people, with an interdependent self-construal, used perspective taking to focus more on others' knowledge and needs during a communication game than did Americans, with an independent self-construal (Wu & Keysar, 2007). If perspective taking is a part of overall social skills, then the role of perspective taking in reducing lack of coordination and awkwardness in intercultural communication interactions could also be examined.

Further research on perspective taking could also compare the effects of thinking about another's perspective when the other is a person or some other animate object. Servillano, Aragonés, and Schultz (2007) provided tentative evidence that concern for nonhuman animals could be induced through the use of perspective taking. Additional work could compare unidirectional and mutual perspective taking. Much of the research has been concentrated on how one person views another person. However, research has neglected to examine the dynamics involved when two people are adopting the perspectives of each other in their communication. Finally, further research could focus on whether accuracy in perspective taking is important and to what degree. Much of the current research on perspective taking did not assess the congruency between the perceptions of one person and the perceptions of another. Even so, Ickes's (1997) work on empathic accuracy draws further attention to the need to study the degree of congruency between people's perspectives, what facilitates that congruency, whether congruency is necessary for the various prosocial findings to remain robust, and when people are motivated to be inaccurate.

Conclusion

In this chapter, a variety of literatures were consulted to provide a sampling of the many theories about and research methods used to examine perspective taking, adaptation, and coordination. Although these three processes are significant aspects of communication, for the most part, perspective taking has remained an important but not explicitly identified component in adaptation and coordination theories. By discussing these processes

together, the reader can see how they are intimately and inextricably tied together and the multiple functions and applications they have. People live in a world of diverging and converging perspectives. In communication, a consistent failure to take into account others' perspectives and adapt and coordinate behaviors dooms people to a life buffered and isolated from others. Recognition, appreciation, and utilization of these critical processes in communication does not guarantee success in life, but it does mean that life will be enriched by complexity, offer unique challenges, and be ever changing.

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SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

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Social construction¹ is about asking questions (Bartesaghi & Castor, 2009). Before we explain what we mean by this, we will describe social construction as both a framework and a process in communication and illustrate its importance to your everyday ways of acting within social reality.

James Carey (1989) identifies two views of communication that are prevalent in our culture: transmission and ritual. According to the first, to communicate is to exchange information; so we speak of getting a point across, of mismatches between intentions and the actual messages received, of changing minds, and of message content. When we see communication as having to do with building relationships and *really* talking to each other (Katriel & Philipsen, 1981), with sharing stories about who we are as a culture, with gatherings as a way to keep us together, then we are thinking in terms of what Carey calls the ritual view.

Transmission and ritual views are not mutually exclusive; both are historically tied to the quest for travel and carrying messages across great distances and to the religious desire to pass on God's word. But in our culture, talking about communication in terms of transmission has become so natural that we cannot even tell that it is only *one* way of making meaning about and within communication (Krippendorff, 1993). According to the transmission way of thinking, language is merely a conduit for communication (Reddy, 1979), a way to transport meanings, feelings, and so-called contents that can be extracted at will at their destination. But if this is so, and if meaning is just a matter of transporting content, how can we explain the following conversation?

Driving back from a visit out of town, a married couple is chatting in the car, when the wife turns to the husband and says, "How about we stop for coffee?" "No, thanks," he responds and, as he is driving, does not stop the car. "Well, that's not very nice!" exclaims the wife, who proceeds to seethe for the rest of the drive home. The husband, seeing that his wife is upset, knows that he has done something wrong and wishes that he had stopped. Why, they both think, can't the other one just grow up and be a considerate, reasonable partner?²

And consider the role played by communication in our social world when we say that a person going through legal proceedings is *innocent until proven guilty*. This is not simply a matter of legal judgment but of speaking making it so. Before the jury is asked to pronounce the verdict, the life of someone standing trial hangs in the balance, his or her fate depending on the uttering of one word: *guilty* or *innocent*.

Inasmuch as these examples are about communication involving something other than messages being exchanged or information reaching a destination, the transmission metaphor so prevalent in our talk about communication is not an adequate construction for capturing what is occurring. The entailments of the transmission metaphor—where language is an empty vessel and there is one and only one message, independent of the relational word that creates and is created by it (Krippendorff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)—believe the experience of the married couple and the accused whose fate 12 peers must decide. The communication events in the two examples illustrate *communication as social construction*: continuously emergent

in relationships, constitutive of social reality, consequential to communicators, experienced through the bodily senses, and afforded by their material circumstances. Moreover, questioning the taken-for-granted transmission metaphor in communication, as we have done, is something encouraged by a social construction stance.

In the following sections, we first reconstruct communication by means of an intellectual collage of social construction as a framework for communication study and then present and discuss five propositions that illustrate a social construction position for communication. In the final section of this entry, we encourage reflection on what social construction has brought to the field of communication and the challenges that lie ahead.

Social Construction: An Intellectual Conversation

We invite you to conceive of social construction in communication (hereafter communication social construction, to distinguish it from social construction in other fields; see Bartesaghi & Castor, 2008, p. 5) as one voice in an intellectual conversation, itself carrying the overtones and timbre of many other voices. Social construction is not a form of knowledge but a way to think about and ask research questions in communication. It is a perspective, a possibility, itself made possible by a virtual joining of conversational threads among scholars in philosophy, sociology, psychology, and, of course, communication. Our account is by no means exhaustive, and we invite you to consult the list of further readings at the end of this chapter.

The phrase *social construction* comes from Berger and Luckmann's (1966) groundbreaking sociological treatise, *The Social Construction of Reality*. Central to its argument is that human beings, unlike any other species on earth, make their own environment real through "linguaging." Though we are born into a world of institutions that we experience as objectively there, Berger and Luckmann detail how our reality is (re)produced in social practices and everyday encounters, involving a circular, three-step process: externalization, objectification, and internalization. Together, these steps allow us to construct the social world (externalization), experience it not as a construction at all but as very much real (objectification), and then believe in it so much that we think it within ourselves (internalization).

Garfinkel (1967) brought Berger and Luckmann's (1966) theoretical ideas into the field with his *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Conducting interviews and tape-recording conversation data from everyday and institutional encounters, Garfinkel and his student Harvey Sacks showed how individuals made sense of their own social worlds and each other in interaction. Sacks (1995) later developed Garfinkel's insights into conversation analysis, an approach within language and social interaction (Fitch

& Sanders, 2005) that reveals how social reality is both patterned and emergent, constructed in the utterance-by-utterance dynamic of the ongoing exchange.

The important move, shared by the various voices speaking within social construction and certainly by its most widely published scholar, the psychologist Kenneth Gergen (e.g., 1994, 1999), is what became known (in a phrase coined in anthropology) as a "crisis in representation," or the disavowal of the idea that language should serve, as the philosopher Rorty (1979) put it so well, as a "mirror of nature." In 1973, Gergen's paper "Social Psychology as History" made the case that there is no universal knowledge but only knowledge that is culturally and historically contextualized. By deconstructing knowledge, Gergen's argument reconstructed language as *making* knowledge rather than mirroring it. The critique of language as purely representational, something that could more or less accurately "reflect," "portray," or "transmit" reality, involved no less than a critique of traditional social science dictates that there is a truth out there and that it is the business of research to find it. Positivism was an important system of belief about the reality "out there" that alternative thinkers tackled in powerful ways.

Drawing from psychological theory and cybernetics, respectively, *constructivists* such as Rom Harré (1983) and Ernst von Glasersfeld (1988) focused on the individual's role in the construction of knowledge, for anything that is putatively "out there" must first be processed by the individual's sensory, emotional, and psychological makeup. In this respect, von Glasersfeld is particularly radical in his belief that "knowledge is not passively received either by the senses or by way of communication, but is actively built up by the cognizing subject" (p. 83). Inasmuch as they run counter to the idea of an objective reality that can be perceived in the "mind" through observation, constructivist accounts bolster social construction's critique of positivism. There is a big difference between constructivism and social construction, however, and that has to do with the role of social interaction, rather than the individual, as the locus of reality construction.

Discursive psychologists such as Edwards and Potter (1993) are a case in point; by tracking how we respond to each other in conversation, they aim to demonstrate that language does not represent but indeed constitutes the very objective truths that positivism seeks outside it. Edwards and Potter locate mental predicates such as "thinking," "remembering," and so on in everyday communication exchanges, arguing that their meaning is situated and contingent: It depends on what participants are trying to do. Discursive approaches such as discursive psychology, conversation analysis, and discourse analysis (e.g., Tracy, 2002) are all central to social construction arguments about the constitutive and performative nature of language and how social members *do* things with words (Austin, 1962).

By the 1960s, other voices joined the intellectual conversation that became the phenomenon we call social construction, as part of a movement known as postmodernism. These

were voices that the academy had marginalized or silenced for not speaking the language of traditional social science. Feminist voices provide one good example of this, such as Carol Gilligan in psychology (e.g., 1982) and Dorothy Smith in sociology (e.g., 1978). Gilligan's rewriting of psychology *In a Different Voice* (1982), for example, demonstrates how women's reality has been silenced by mainstream psychological theory, in favor of men's. By revoicing psychology, Gilligan (1982) demonstrates that one of its major theories of moral development is, in fact, based on faulty interpretation.

In communication, scholars broke away from empirical studies concerned with linear, causal relationships and favored social approaches (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1995). An important approach to communication social construction is Pearce and Cronen's (e.g., 1980) *coordinated management of meaning* theory, which foregrounds conversation and the ongoing negotiation of meaning (see Bartesaghi & Castor, 2008, pp. 9–10). The work of John Shotter (1984, 1993a, 1993b, 2000; Shotter & Gergen, 1994) in social accountability, joint action, and dialogical knowledge is also central to communication social construction. A unique and original thinker, Shotter developed the ideas of Wittgenstein, Bakhtin, and Garfinkel, among others, into relationally responsive social construction, where conversation is the key to understanding social life. In turn, Shotter (1993a) constructs conversation as a place for the unexpected, for unintended consequences and in-the-moment occurrences. Relationally responsive social construction understands communication as a moment-to-moment interaction in which participants continuously respond to the past, the present, and an anticipated future, and to each other.

Though social construction shook the taken-for-granted narratives of positivism, it may appear that it is itself taken for granted and may even be old news (Bartesaghi & Castor, 2008). We believe that this is just an appearance. In 2007, the Communication as Social Construction Division was added to the National Communication Association as a result of a summer institute on social construction that was held the previous year in Albuquerque, showing that the conversation is far from over and only just beginning. Indeed, two new books relevant to this chapter are available, *Socially Constructing Communication* (Leeds-Hurwitz & Galanes, 2009) and *The Handbook of Constructionist Research*, which includes a chapter on communication social construction by communication scholars Elissa Foster and Arthur Bochner (2008).

Social Construction in Communication: Five Propositions

As a response to the all-encompassing metanarrative of positivism, social construction is not a theory. Rather, it exists in the empirical dialogues among the proponents in

our discipline, as well as in the practices of those who apply it in their everyday activities. In the following five propositions, we outline the principal beliefs of *a social construction perspective in communication* (Bartesaghi & Castor, 2008; Bartesaghi & Castor, 2009).

1. Questions the Taken for Granted

This first proposition invites you to ask questions, think critically, and take nothing for granted. Once you adopt a social construction stance, you will find questioning a natural way to approach the world. We recommend three ways for you to ask questions. A good place to start is with definitions and classifications. Take gender, for instance. Most of us assume that the categories “male” and “female” are natural, assigned at birth, and have nothing to do with the social process. But hundreds of gender reassignment surgeries are performed each year in the United States alone, many of these on adults who wish to choose a different gender for themselves. This suggests that masculinity and femininity are bound up with gender (Burr, 2003, p. 3) and with how we talk it into embodied being (Bartesaghi & Castor, 2008, pp. 16–19).

A second way we encourage you to ask questions from a social construction perspective is in your own work. Our students often ask us whether they are allowed to write in the first person. As social construction scholars, we encourage students to do so because we do not treat research from an objectivist position, viewing the endeavor as a way of knowing the reality “out there.” Social construction thinkers recognize the researcher's role (and think of students as researchers) in shaping the context that we are studying (e.g., Briggs, 1986). How you write up your own work is crucial to this recognition, and writing styles that make explicit the role of the researcher in the research process are in direct contrast to the passive, third-person voice of traditional social science (e.g., Kondo, 1990). In communication, autoethnographic narratives (Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 1996) that evoke emotions and reflection in the reader are fascinating ways to question the constraints of the organization and representational language of social science articles, which, by and large, purge narrative and first-person elements.

Finally, we invite you to see questioning as an interesting topic of study. A communication social construction thinker sees questions as connected to shaping identities (e.g., Antaki, 2001; Bilmes, 2001) and defining situations (e.g., Agne & Tracy, 1998). In political and news interactions, especially, questions are active and strategic attempts to control situations by defining social reality (Bilmes, 2001; Clayman & Heritage, 2002). Because they are powerful conversational acts (Sacks, 1995; Wang, 2006), and destabilize the taken for granted, questions are a great place to start to see social construction in action.

2. Positions Meaning in the Everyday Dynamic of Relationships

With this proposition, we resonate with Bakhtin's (1984) relational understanding of meaning making and his assertion that "truth is not to be found inside the head of an individual person [but] between people collectively searching for the truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction" (p. 110). To see truth, in the sense of knowledge and meaning, as a process of relationship is to challenge notions of knowledge as individual property as well as of mind and cognition (Antaki, 2006; Maynard, 2006). It is also to place social construction within the competencies of communication scholarship (Pearce, 1995).

As early as 1929, the philosopher John Dewey raised doubt about the individual as a psychological creation, a cognizing subject engaging in activities such as perception, memory, and information processing. For the "self-sufficing individual"—the same psychological creation that Edward Sampson (1977) addresses in terms of the "self-contained individual"—communication is no more than a mechanical connection between "inner" mental states and "outer" expression (Dewey, 1929/1958, p. 169; Radford, 1994). But as work in discourse studies has shown, the idea that meaning making is radically hidden (Shotter, 2000) within individual minds is no more than a picture that, as Wittgenstein would say, is holding us captive.

First, let us tackle the very idea of the mind and mental processes. Perhaps the most striking insight of the pioneering interaction scholar Harvey Sacks is how *thought is made visible in conversation*. By studying transcripts of tape recordings, the conversation analyst can *see* how thinking is constructed by the way conversants respond and orient to each other's contributions in the moment-by-moment shifts required by the exchange. In the turn-by-turn dynamic of talk-in-interaction, terms such as *think*, *remember*, and *know* become meaningful *relationally*, according to what the participants can *do* with them pragmatically within the conversation: argue a point, tell a story, or dispute one another's knowledge.

For example, consider Ochs and Capps's (1997) examination of how "I remember" functions as a device in the construction of a story (rather than as a verbal avowal of a cognitive process). Based on a transcribed exchange among family members, Ochs and Capps show how "I remember" is used as an assertion by both the parent and the child to engage in a tug-of-war with respect to who remembers best and, therefore, who is entitled to tell a particular family story. Authentic memory, the authors argue, is a narrative told or authored by the person who is granted author-ity to do so.

In another example, Antaki (2006) shows how cognition is visibly constructed in a relationship between two people engaged in everyday talk by analyzing a diagnostic interview between a (cognitively) disabled person and his institutional interviewer. By choosing which of the interviewee's answers actually counts as valid evidence of a cognition, the

interviewer not only *produces* cognition (in the sense that he constitutes it in interaction) but reproduces institutional order and the relational manifestations of that order.

What we particularly like about Antaki's (2006) essay is that it is a great empirical example of an aspect of Wittgenstein's (1953) philosophy. In his *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein wrote that

since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us (p. 126). . . . How do sentences do it [manage to represent]? Don't you know? *For nothing is hidden* [italics added]. (p. 435)

Understanding meaning as a relational accomplishment, which is what Wittgenstein exhorts us to do, rather than as a hidden property to be extracted from individuals by cognitive measurements, frees us from (to borrow a phrase of Paul Ricoeur, 1970) a "hermeneutics of suspicion" (p. 33). Once we understand that we share in making memory, thought, and meaning, we need not suspect what others remember, think, and mean.

Scholars thinking about relationships in terms of communication social construction have developed Bakhtin's (1984) ideas on identity in dialogue into a notion of relational identity: "Through dialoguing with the other, we get a sense of who we are" (Sullivan & McCarthy, 2004, p. 307). The idea that identity is constructed in talk is now well entrenched (e.g., Tracy, 2002), and work in discourse approaches has endeavored to show how the concept of personhood can be an everyday relational accomplishment, as well as a topic of talk itself (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998). We are all ongoing, emergent creations in the dynamic of claiming and being granted our identities, which, as Eisenberg (1998) tells us, exist in the ambiguity of the space between self and other.

In a communication social construction perspective, relational meaning making also comes with *relational responsibility* (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). This means resituating the burden of responsibility in the relationship *to the relationship* rather than the individual, who presently bears responsibility in our legal, educational, and psychiatric institutions, to name a few. What would that mean, exactly? How would we feel differently if we could see ourselves connected to and accountable for each other's actions rather than choosing psychological explanations that make others solely responsible for their thoughts and choices?

3. Realizes Communication as Constitutive and Consequential

Anderson (1997, p. 111) says it best: Each conversation is embedded within, will become a part of, will be influenced by, and will influence myriad other past and future conversations. By locating meaning in a dynamic of relationships, social construction makes us realize how the acts, and the choices we make within them, reflexively make the very relationships that we realize together. In

turn, this perspective is grounded in a view of communication as *constitutive*: something created in its very practices (Craig, 1999; Deetz, 1994). Because our participation makes it what it is, with our “past activities point[ing] in the direction of our present ones,” communication is both self-generating and self-specifying (Penman, 2000). In other words, your actions and words matter. They are not the isolated events of one individual but connected to relational and social matrices of actions and words that have the real power to reconstitute, or reconstruct, the events of your life and the world through communication.

We found a powerful example of communication as constitutive on the Web site of Rape Victim Advocates, a Chicago-based organization that mobilizes for those who have been targets of sexual assault. Their homepage reads as follows: “Through our presence in Chicago area emergency rooms, we provide nonjudgmental emotional support to *victims* of sexual violence, enabling them to *become survivors* [italics added]” (About RVA, n.d.).

In this excerpt, Rape Victim Advocates is distinguishing between what is constituted by the terms *victim* and *survivor* and is endeavoring to bring about a transformation from one state of being to the other for those who experienced rape. Realize that the terms *victim* and *survivor* refer to the same person but constitute and embody very different social realities. In altering the way the experience of rape is called, Rape Victim Advocates subscribes to a constitutive view of communication, proposing that the rape experience itself can be reconstructed in a different, more enabling way.

John Stewart’s *Language as Articulate Contact* (1995) exemplifies an eloquent theoretical argument on the constitutive nature of communication. Urging us to abandon the epistemological notion of communication encouraged by scholarship in fields such as semiotics, which focuses on representation (and, much like in the transmission view, constitutes communication in terms of signs, messages, and codes), Stewart encourages an ontological view of communication. For this purpose, he develops the ideas of the philosophers Heidegger (1962) and Gadamer (1989) and proposes communication as *dasein*, the human condition of everyday coping and being-in-the-world. According to the ontological view of communication, there is no need for language to bridge the gap between subject and object by means of representation (which can be more or less good). Language, in this sense, is not something we possess to represent, as in the epistemological view, but something we inhabit (Stewart, 1995). Language is experience, as the work of Rape Victim Advocates suggests.

Because communication constitutes our social world, it is also *consequential* to it (Sigman, 1995). Consider Krippendorff’s (1996) reflection on communication as a consequential activity among the scholars and teachers of our discipline:

Although social scientists communicate in numerous ways—interviewing their subjects, engaging discursively with colleagues, publishing their work [–] self-applications of

communication theories are surprisingly rare if not totally absent from the literature. It is as if the communicative involvements of scientists were immune to critical examination or so perfectly obvious as to be not worthy of attention. This schism easily leads to theories that people find hard to live by. I know of no communication scholar who could communicate by the protocols of the classical theories they tend to perfect with their colleagues, for example, of communication as attitude change, as information transmission, as prediction and control, as management of meanings, or as institutionalized mass-production of messages. (p. 311)

In this extract, Krippendorff (1996) underscores consequentiality. He takes communication scholars to task for the social realities implied by the theories they put forth and asks whether these are theories that you would choose to describe you and descriptions you would choose to abide by? And is it not interesting that Krippendorff chooses information transmission as one taken-for-granted theory in communication whose consequences we are unwittingly re-creating in our everyday communication?

4. Understands the World as Very Much Real for Those Who Live in It

We often find ourselves entangled in one of the great misunderstandings of social construction. This seemingly no-win quandary, also known as the realism-relativism debate, usually goes something like this: “So you believe that reality is socially constructed? This must mean that if you say that this dirty plastic bottle is actually a valuable treasure, then it must be so, right?” (Bartesaghi & Castor, 2009; Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002). Because social construction understands the world as very much real for those who live in it, this fourth proposition suggests how communication social construction thinkers may step out of this argument altogether.

The speaker in the example is committing two fallacies. The first is that he or she does not understand the very idea of *social* construction. Martin Buber (1965) put it this way: “We do not find meaning lying in things nor do we put it into things, but between us and things it can happen” (p. 36). In this case, it involves the way a community talks something into being, such as the value we place on something (and yes, it is possible that an empty plastic bottle could one day be sold on EBay for a good deal of money, if it were once the bottle of a rock star, right?). The second fallacy is misunderstanding social construction as representation rather than materiality and embodiment. Once experience and language are separated, the trouble starts. In a controversial and influential paper, Edwards, Ashmore, and Potter (1995) call this sort of trouble the “death and furniture” arguments. The material reality of tables (see this? *bang!*) and victims (what about Hurricane Katrina? and the bodies that come back from Iraq!) is brought up as evidence of how social construction is nothing more than a new recipe for relativism.

Because when you are trapped in a box the solution is to step out of it, we find the death and furniture arguments deceptive, for they position social construction *in opposition* to material realities, which social construction does not deny. In *The Social Construction of Reality*, Berger and Luckmann (1966) offered a solution. Tables and taxes acquire their ontological status through the circular process we described earlier, by which we, as social members, create together our social world through our coordinated work, and then we respond to them as objective truths: things that are there and that are part of our human experience. This is why we experience institutions as already “out there” material entities not of our own making. Reality may be a *relative* product of our interactional choices, but it is a very *real* experience once those choices have been made (Bartesaghi & Castor, 2009). But Berger and Luckmann (1966) can take us only so far in understanding social construction in material terms (Potter, 1996). They provide a phenomenological account, concerned with individual experiences and how they are internalized; thus, we need to seek further.

Edwards and colleagues (1995) offer their own counterproposition to realists who argue the brute physical reality of tables and the like. Just like anyone else, realists have to *make the argument*, for the argument cannot make itself: It has to be spoken by someone, from a particular position, and with a particular stake and entitlement. And relativists have a similar problem: “While realists shoot themselves in the foot as soon as they represent, relativists do so as soon as they argue. To argue for something is to care . . . which is immediately not relativist” (Edwards et al., 1995, p. 39). The social construction position sees both realist and relativist as ultimately trapped in a dilemma, and it does not side with either. To do so is to understand “reality” in objectivist terms (Pearce, 1995) as the opposite pole to “falsehood.” This means misusing *construction* to be synonymous with *made up* (as the challenger in the example of the plastic bottle was doing) or, as Burr (1998) notes, “*merely* [italics added] constructed” (p. 101).

Social construction’s view on reality is nothing if not realistic (Pearce, 1995; see also Bartesaghi & Castor, 2009). Once constituted, our social reality is very real and consequential to us. This is particularly visible in cases where a particular reality is selected as factual from an ambiguous set of differently interpretable acts. The construction of child abuse as a social problem is a good example (see Johnson, 1989). Child abuse, as we understand it today, is, in fact, a historical and social contingency, born of the large postwar child population, access to medical specialists with improved diagnostic techniques, and laws that required child beatings to be reported to the authorities. Before these historically traceable changes, beating children was not considered abuse. In addition to this, media reporting of horror stories in the 1960s to 1980s raised child abuse to the level of a social crisis. As Johnson (1989) explains, the media’s construction of child abuse as a social problem was based on, among other

things, linguistic presentation. Specifically, acts of child abuse were presented in the news as irrational and the acts of one individual; they provided no relational or social context, such as a family altercation, divorce, poverty, joblessness, or family strife. As such, the media (for ratings, readership, and a “good story”) constructed child abuse as pure evil against the innocent.

For another example, consider *The Construction of an LD Student* (Mehan, 1996), which explores how Shane, a fourth grader who sometimes stops in the middle of a math problem and says “no way” (but later completes it) ends up being declared learning disabled. Different parties are involved in defining Shane’s status as a learner: the mother (who does not think her child has special needs), the teacher, and the psychologist. By leading us through a transcription of the exchange among them, Mehan shows how the psychologist prevails over the others, by speaking in ways that are more authoritative and using complicated terms that the mother and teacher cannot challenge or question. Shane, who is not present, must, however, be subjected to the consequences of this meeting and of his newly constructed diagnosis. Mehan’s (1996) study, which is about how some have more say in defining what is real than others do, is also relevant to the following proposition that has to do with how power exists as a relationship, which we construct in communication.

5. Tackles Power as a Material and Embodied Relationship in Communication

With this final proposition, we argue that power is not something that exists “outside of” our talk, as institutions or abstract social structures. Rather, we propose that power is a material and embodied consequence of relationships, constituted in communication (Lannamann, 1998; Shotter & Lannamann, 2002).

Foucault (1980) has told us that power is everywhere around us. It is ironic, therefore, that in doing so, he abstracted it rather than materialized it (Krippendorff, 1995), for if it is everywhere, where exactly is it, and how do we know we have found it? Discourse scholars such as Thornborrow (2002) offer an empirical answer to Foucault by grounding power in everyday talk and linking talk to larger discursive frameworks. For example, by analyzing institutional talk, Thornborrow reveals how police work is accomplished in the everyday orderliness of conversational turn taking, showing how power is visibly co-constructed in the constantly shifting asymmetry between officers and a woman in a rape interview. Although the woman tells the two male officers that she has been raped, the officers’ questioning works to cast doubt not only on her story but also, gradually, on the woman’s moral fitness to tell it. As the exchange progresses, it is obvious that the woman has been placed, by a process of conversation, under police suspicion. As a result of the interview, the bodily experience of her rape is disclaimed by the male officers. The consequences of

this are very real: The woman will not receive the care and attention she needs; she is treated poorly; and, with their questioning, the officers officially categorize the woman as whom they believe her to be—someone who does not merit police protection. This is an embodied shift in her material circumstances, affected through a process of communication that is institutionally sanctioned. This is the social construction of power.

In her book *Talking Power* (1990), Robin Lakoff presents the following exchange between a therapist (T) and a client (C) as an example of a power imbalance. We invite you to consider how the therapist and the client engage in the construction of an asymmetrical relationship:

C: Why can't you see me on Monday?

T: That seems to disturb you, doesn't it? (p. 69)

As Lakoff (1990) points out, what is interesting about the therapist's response is what it tells us about the presuppositions it embeds about power distribution in therapy. There are, as we see it, three. The first is that the therapist is not bound by the same rules of conversation as the client (Bartesaghi, 2008) and may respond to a question with another question rather than give an answer. Second, the therapist constructs the client's question as information about the client's anxiety rather than as a genuine request for information (Lakoff, 1990, p. 69), thus claiming a relational reality in which words signify mental states. Finally, the conversation reflects on the tacit claim that therapy works by virtue of one person's ability to read the true meaning of the words of the other and to interpret that rather than what the other is actually saying. This ability is granted to therapists, and not clients, and in this brief exchange, we see this therapist claiming that right. That the exchange has to do with access to help (therapy) really brings home the fact that power is socially co-constructed in discourse, where one person is able to coordinate the material placement of the other's body (Lannamann, 1998).

Something remains to be said here: The client does have the option to respond to the therapist. As *joint action*, action that people intentionally engage in together but whose results are indeterminate and often unintentional (Shotter, 1993b), power in therapy (as elsewhere) is a relational accomplishment, a co-construction (Buttny, 1996). We do it together by claiming it and granting it. As such, through acts of communication and re-embodiment, it can also be undone (Krippendorff, 1995). The client could call the therapist's bluff, laugh, or find a new therapist. We are not suggesting that this is easy, as we do recognize that relationships are embedded in larger institutional and social frames. Rather, we are suggesting that power is locatable in our communication exchanges and that a social construction perspective allows us to see that it is not beyond our reach.

Conclusion

We have endeavored to offer a definition of social construction by reconstructing communication according to the perspective afforded to us as social construction communication thinkers. We have, first, questioned the very languaging of "communication" in transmission terms and instead positioned communication in the ongoing exchanges of our relational activities. Because social construction is not a unified theory but a response to theory's discontents, our second move was to offer a collage of thinkers and scholars who have contributed to our thinking and doing as communication scholars within the intellectual heritage of social construction. In the third section, we put forth five propositions for our readers to consider as key tenets for social construction scholarship in communication. We encourage you to use these propositions as starting points for your own conversations about communication and social construction; may they lead you to many more ideas than we ever thought possible.

Doing communication social construction work has its challenges. An important disciplinary challenge concerns the extent to which communication scholarship should involve critically, politically engaged work. Some scholars have convincingly argued for an ontological version of communication, where research can address material circumstances, illuminate issues of asymmetry, and make a difference in practice (Craig & Tracy, 1995). Inasmuch as communication social construction tackles power as material and embodied, working within its framework means that we cannot eschew doing critical work and work that may ask difficult questions (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002).

Having come to the end of our chapter, we look forward to new beginnings, new conversations, and new thoughts about communication social construction: yours.

Notes

1. In his address to "Caught in the Act," a 2006 Summer Institute on social construction approaches to communication, John Stewart argued for dropping the suffix *ism* from *social construction*, to promote greater accessibility of social construction as a process in communication study rather than a theory in psychology, where it originated (see Stewart, 2009). We agree and drop the *ism* in our own writing (see also Bartesaghi & Castor, 2009).

2. We adapted this exchange from Tannen (1990).

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LISTENING, UNDERSTANDING, AND MISUNDERSTANDING

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Listening has been identified as one of the most used and one of the most important communication skills in personal, academic, and professional settings alike (Wolvin & Coakley, 1996, pp. 13–25). The vital role of listening in communication begins with the recognition that listening is the first language skill to be acquired. The fetus listens as it develops in the mother’s womb; henceforth, this listening development plays a central role in one’s language acquisition. Auditory and visual discrimination also are central to the child’s early development of other (including survival, social, and intellectual) skills.

Studies of time spent communicating (Emanuel Adams, Baker, Daufin, Ellington, Fitts, et al., 2008) suggest that people listen for as much as 55% of their day. The primacy of listening is not just a matter of time on the task. Listening is a critical factor in academic success. Federal initiatives to strengthen educational outcomes for secondary school and post-secondary-school students underscore the need for listening proficiency. The U.S. Department of Labor established a commission to identify what critical skills are essential for high school graduates to function effectively in the workplace. The basic skills of mathematics, reading, writing, speaking, and *listening* were determined to be at the core of preparation for graduates to enter the workplace. In the workplace, listening ability consistently ranks in the top three skills that employers seek in hiring for entry-level positions. Effective listening is recognized as a key to organizational success, because poor listening can be costly.

The study of listening behavior in the field of communication is not a new focus. As early as 1948, Ralph G. Nichols, considered by many to be the “founder” of listening as a field of study, established some dimensions of what constitutes listening behavior, including inference making, listening for the main ideas, identifying the organizational plan, and concentration. Basic to any attempt to define listening, however, is a consideration of how listening is a unique behavior separate from other intellectual behaviors. Early listening research isolated a disparate listening comprehension factor, distinct from the students’ performance in areas such as reasoning, verbal comprehension, attention, auditory resistance, and memory.

The Listening Process

As a communicator, the listener engages in a sequence of behaviors that are generally accepted to characterize the decoding process: receiving; attending; perceiving; interpreting; and responding.

Receiving

The listener receives messages. During reception, the listener employs auditory and visual sensory receptors. While the listening process can include hearing sounds, listening and hearing are not the synonymous functions that many

individuals assume. The auditory reception of the message is itself a detailed process involving the intricate hearing mechanism. The sound must enter the middle ear, set into vibration the tympanic membrane, and be conducted through the inner ear to the brain. Problems with the hearing mechanism can compound the receptive process. Research at the National Institutes of Health suggests that as many as one out of every nine Americans has some type of hearing loss. Exposure to loud music, especially through headsets, has been identified as a major contributor to this situation.

While many researchers and practitioners have focused their definitions and models of listening on listening to auditory-only stimuli, listening also involves the visual channel when the source of the stimuli is in the presence of the listener. The visual channel is an influential communication media, and the other senses (smell, taste, touch) impact the listener as well.

Attending

After the message has been received through auditory and visual channels, it must be attended to in the working memory (Baddeley & Hitch, 1974). At this point, the listener is required to focus on the auditory and/or the visual stimuli and concentrate on the message received. While researchers differ as to how the short-term memory system receives and holds the information, they do agree that the attention span is quite limited. Cognitive psychologists recognize that attention is a limited resource of a fixed capacity of sensory systems and memory mechanisms combined.

The human attention span today undoubtedly has been limited further by the impact of the media. Many people raised in the television generation, for example, have come to expect a 7- to 10-minute program format with time out for a commercial break. This shortened attention span affects one's capacity to listen to lectures, to participate in conversation, and generally to function as a listener in all sorts of settings.

A listener's ability to attend to a message is influenced significantly by attention energy. Kahneman (1973) has determined that attention energy may be distributed according to (1) the difficulty of the mental task; (2) automatic, unconscious communication rules (such as focusing on the speaker who uses the listener's name); and (3) conscious decisions (such as focusing on one's supervisor's message rather than on that from a coworker).

Perceiving

Attention to the message is affected not only by the listener's energy in the short-term memory system but also by the listener's perceptual filter. The perceptual filter serves to screen the stimulus so that one's predispositions alter the message received. The listener's frame of reference—all of one's background, experience, roles,

and mental and physical states—makes up the perceptual filter. The frame of reference establishes the perceptual expectations that listeners bring to the communication so that, essentially, we see and hear what we want to see and hear. The listener who understands how the frame of reference shapes his or her listening behavior can function at a more sophisticated level. This understanding should extend to understanding the other communicator(s)—why they are responding as they do. Getting to this level of empathic perception affords the listener a solid frame of reference for interpreting the message.

Interpreting

Once the message has been received and perceived by the listener through the auditory, visual, and attention processors, the message must be interpreted by the listener. This stage of the listening process involves fitting the verbal and/or nonverbal messages into the proper linguistic categories stored in the brain and then interpreting the messages for their meanings. Lundsteen (1979) describes this representational process as one of internal speech. Decoding the verbal and nonverbal language varies according to each individual's perceptual filter and linguistic category system, so the original intent of a speaker's message may be misinterpreted, distorted, or even completely changed as the listener's meaning is assigned.

The assignment of meaning to the message is influenced not only by the linguistic category system but also by one's cognitive processing. This mental activity is framed by the hemispheric dominance of an individual; by his or her inductive, deductive, or intuitive orientation; and by the long-term memory. As the message is processed, it is analyzed, visualized, and associated according to the linguistic categories in the long-term memory store. As individuals are called on to handle a vast amount of information during the course of any given day, techniques to process and recall information become critical.

Some cognitive psychologists use schema theory to describe this complex task of decoding and interpreting messages. Schema theory posits that humans carry schemata—mental representations of knowledge—in their brains. These organized information structures consist of nodes (concepts, events, objects) and links (relationships of the nodes). New information that listeners receive is first run through existing schemata, or scripts, and then interpreted. Schemata represent the generic concepts that are stored in memory and relate persons or objects to attributes or relate actions to anticipated consequences. Smith (1982) suggests that schemata serve important listening functions in (1) telling us to what we should attend, (2) serving as the framework for interpreting incoming information, and (3) guiding the reconstruction of messages in memory. Cognitive responses to the message, thus, serve to frame the listener's interpretation of the information received.

Responding

After assigning one's own meaning to the message, the listener responds to it. This phase of the listening process involves moving the received, attended to, and interpreted message from the short-term memory into the long-term memory store for potential retrieval. As memory development specialists stress, retention requires strategy. Familiar techniques such as the use of mnemonic devices, linking, clustering, and chunking are considered by researchers studying the dynamics of short-term memory and recall.

The listener's response also is external, manifested in the feedback that the listener provides to the source of the message. Though listening constitutes an intricate internal process, attention to feedback is essential to good listening. Research by Leavitt and Mueller (1968) demonstrates that with increased feedback, both listener and speaker gain confidence that the message is communicated with accuracy and experience satisfaction with the communication. Other communicators in an interaction base their assessment of a listener's effectiveness on the feedback,

responses that might take the form of performance on a comprehension test, questions asked, attentive behaviors, or even compliance. Thus, while some listening scholars argue that feedback goes beyond listening and takes the listener back into a sender's role in the communication transaction, we rely on feedback, albeit unfairly at times, as an indicator of listening "accomplished."

The complex listening process, including reception, attention, perception, interpretation, and response, may be illustrated as a process model of overlapping circles (Figure 16.1). While the stages of listening occur in some sequence, in the listener's "real time," the dimensions probably occur in close simultaneity. At the core of the process are communication influencers—variables of the speaker, message, channel, environment, and individual listener—that affect the outcome at every stage of this process. It should be apparent, then, that listening behavior is one of the most complex of all human behaviors—and certainly extends far beyond the auditory processing that has been the focus of so many of the earlier listening scholars.

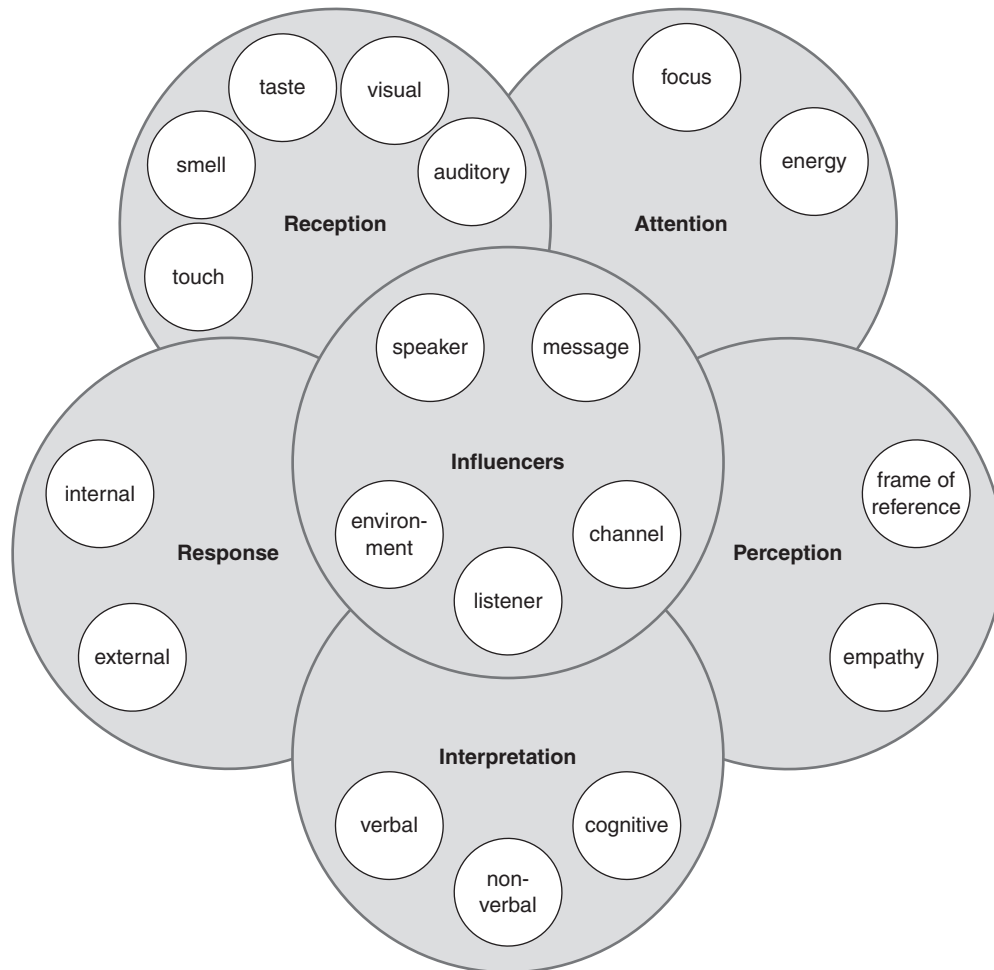


Figure 16.1 Listening Model

Listening Variables

As listeners receive, attend, perceive, interpret, and respond to messages, they are influenced by many variables that can enhance or impede effective listening. Listening researchers have focused on key physiological, social/psychological, and contextual influencers.

Physiological Influencers

Listening physiology certainly plays a major role in how listeners function. Sensory acuity, especially auditory and visual, is basic to listening. Age-related deterioration of sensory mechanisms can lead to loss of both the verbal content and the nonverbal dimensions of the communication. Additionally, the neurological makeup of the listener is a factor. Research on hemispheric specialization, for example, suggests that the left brain may be the more rational, objective, organizing processor, while the right brain is the more emotional, intuitive side.

Age also is an important listening variable. In a body of research on listening across the life span, my colleagues and I have determined that what may characterize competent or effective listening can change as one physiologically, sociologically, and/or communicatively ages (Halone, Cunconan, Coakley, & Wolvin, 1998). A listener acquires differential listening experiences and gains a wider array of general knowledge throughout his or her life span. Significantly, children, adolescents, young adults, older adults, and elders report different listening needs, different listening goals, and different listening strategies as they account for listening expectations and for listening experiences alike.

Just as age is a listening variable, so too is gender. One of the highly perpetuated American stereotypes is that listening is, essentially, “women’s work.” Brain imaging research (Phillips, Lowe, Lurito, Dziedzic, & Mathews, 2001) does demonstrate that men and women bring some very real differences in attention styles and cognitive processing styles to the communicative interaction. As these researchers explore more deeply the biological influence of the male/female genetic makeup, however, the social influence model continues to dominate our understanding of gender variables. Research reveals that men and women have been found to “learn to listen for different purposes and have different listening goals. The primary contrast appears in task versus interpersonal understanding: Males tend to hear facts, while females are more aware of the mood of the communication” (Booth-Butterfield, 1984, p. 39).

Psychological Influencers

In addition to the physiological influences on listening, listeners bring psychological variables to the communication. The listener’s attitudinal state may well be one of the most significant influences on that person’s listening behavior. A positive listening attitude, along with listening knowledge, is a critical ingredient of effective

listening. Positive attitudes give the listener a willingness to listen.

Positive attitudes that facilitate effective listening may be identified. Being interested is probably one of the most significant. Too frequently, listeners tune out with the excuse “Oh, this isn’t interesting.” A high level of interest combines with an active, responsible approach to listening. Unfortunately, Americans are conditioned to listening as a passive act. Good listeners recognize that they are partners in the communication and that they share in the responsibility for meeting the goals of the interaction. Effective listeners also remain open-minded, willing to listen to differing points of view and to speakers whose styles are not necessarily attractive or engaging.

Positive listening attitudes are not directed only at the other communicator. Positive listening attitudes also influence one’s self-concept as a listener. Sadly, listening is not a highly valued American communication skill; we seldom reward good listening. Rather, we reinforce negative listening behaviors in schools and families alike. “You’re not listening.” “You never listen to me.” “Be quiet and listen.” These admonishments are more prevalent in American speech than “Thanks for listening” or “You’re a good listener.”

Listeners, like speakers, also suffer communication apprehension. Wheelless (1975) has pioneered some study of receiver apprehension, “the fear of misinterpreting, inadequately processing, and/or not being able to adjust psychologically to messages sent by others” (p. 263).

Research on receiver apprehension suggests that listening anxiety stemming from stressful situations can lead to distorted messages and misunderstandings.

Additionally, there is evidence that receiver apprehension can result from inadequate information processing. McReynolds (1976) hypothesizes that the processing of material that is difficult to assimilate tends to accumulate (resulting in “cognitive backlog”) and to produce anxiety. Beatty (1981) has determined that receiver apprehension is a function of unassimilated information that results from processing difficulties because of the cognitive backlog.

The listener who suffers receiver apprehension and/or negative attitudes toward listening is not going to be an efficient listener. Indeed, an unreceptive listener may not be a listener at all. Wheelless, Frymier, and Thompson (1992) have looked at receptivity—being open to influence—as it relates to the listening behaviors of responsiveness and attentiveness. Extending this line of research, Roberts and Vinson (1998) determined that the importance of the topic is the crucial factor in establishing a listener’s willingness to listen.

A listener’s willingness to listen also depends on his or her listening preferences. Listeners choose different ways to listen, choices grounded in habitual responses that evolve over the course of one’s listening lifetime. Watson, Barker, and Weaver (1995) identified four listening styles: (1) a people-oriented style, which focuses on the emotional and relational aspects of a communication; (2) a content-oriented style, centered on processing complex information; (3) an action-oriented style, where the listener prefers

clear, efficient information; and (4) a time-oriented style, where the listener has a preference for short, limited messages. Undoubtedly, other listening factors, such as listening type (data driven, structure oriented, vision seeker, human dimension oriented), cognitive style (inductive, deductive, intuitive), introverted/extroverted personality style, conversational sensitivity, and channels, influence listening behavior in significant ways.

Contextual Influencers

While listeners bring significant physiological and psychological variables to their listening behavior, contextual influencers also play a central role in shaping the listening experience. Roles, culture, and time have received the attention of listening researchers.

The context of the communication frequently shapes the roles that communicators must assume in the interaction. We listen in many different communication relationships—personal, academic, professional—which require that we assume different roles as family members, friends, students, workers, or managers. It is noteworthy that listening effectiveness has been correlated with perceptions of good leadership. And listening enhances the sales relationship by creating a trusting climate.

Culture is understood as the set of customs, behaviors, beliefs, and language that distinguish a particular group of people and make up the background, experience, and perceptual filters of individuals within that group. The anthropologist Edward Hall (Hall & Hall, 1989) described how different cultures manage information in different ways. Low-context cultures, such as the United States and Canada, require communicators to give and receive a considerable amount of verbal information, while high-context cultures, such as Japan and Saudi Arabia, requires less extensive verbal messages. In high-context cultures, more information is contained in the communication setting and in the communicators themselves than in the words used.

As a result, people listen differently in different cultures. Kiewitz, Weaver, Brosius, and Weimann (1997), for example, compared the listening style preferences of young adults in three different cultures. They discovered that Germans preferred the action style, Israelis were more prone to the content style, while Americans were more oriented to the people and time styles of listening.

Like culture, time is a major variable in listening. Listening communicators are influenced continuously by various dimensions of time. Time is manifested in the aging process itself and how that process affects sensory acuity and the experience level of the listener. The time in which the communication occurs has an effect on listening, because people deal with information differently at different times of the day. Interestingly, verbal information presented in the afternoon may be retained longer than that offered in the morning.

Additionally, the time it takes to listen is a factor. It has been suggested that listeners can listen (and think) about

four times faster than the normal conversation rate, so we have a considerable “time gap” in the system for attention to wander and to lose focus. This gap between speech speed and thought speed may be one of the most significant factors.

With the advances in communication technology and information, many listeners today feel overwhelmed with messages. The average American worker confronts as many as 201 messages a day. As a result, we justifiably perceive that we are running out of time.

Listening Typologies

Listeners function in this complex, multidimensional process of listening with a variety of purposes. These purposes have been identified through several typologies by listening scholars. Lundsteen (1971, 1979), one of the first to analyze listening skills as a hierarchy, offered an instructional taxonomy of listening skills in general and of critical listening skills in particular. Lundsteen was concerned with building a listening curriculum, so she stressed the value of looking at levels of listening skills: Level A, the lowest level, is acuity or sound perception; Level B represents basic discrimination among sounds; and Level C is the comprehension of sounds. Skills at these levels may form a hierarchy, stresses Lundsteen (1979), “because persons who fail to discriminate sound differences with finesse probably also fail to symbolize much verbal meaning from those sounds” (p. 54).

Two other categories have been proposed by Barker and by Mills. Barker (1971) defined listening contexts as social and serious. These categories were explicated further as social listening, which includes appreciative, conversational, courteous listening and listening to indicate love or respect, while serious listening was classified as either selective or concentrated. Mills (1974) described listening targets as responsive listening (agreeing with the speaker), implicative listening (identifying what is not being said), critical listening (evaluating the message), and nondirective listening (providing a sounding board for the speaker).

Extending the previous work on the hierarchical nature of listening skills, Wolvin and Coakley (1979) developed a taxonomy of listening functions that correlate with five general purposes of listeners (aligned, of course, with the general purposes of speakers): discriminative, comprehensive, therapeutic, critical, and appreciative. Just as there are specific listening skills unique to each of these listening purposes, these skills operate in a hierarchical sequence—depending on what each listener’s intended objective or objectives for listening might be at any particular time. To listen to comprehend information, for example, the listener must use discriminative as well as comprehensive listening skills. Discriminative and comprehensive listening are the basic types in which listeners engage. At a higher order, then, listeners build on their discriminative and comprehensive listening skills to function as therapeutic, critical, or appreciative listeners.

It should be recognized that these listening purposes are not always discrete categories. There are times when an individual may listen for multiple purposes while receiving, attending, perceiving, interpreting, and responding to messages.

Discriminative Listening

Discriminative listening involves distinguishing the auditory and/or visual stimuli. Discriminative listening requires careful concentration on, and sensitivity to, the various stimuli to differentiate between/among them accurately. Effective discriminative listening demands sensitivity to the verbal and nonverbal cues offered by the communicator and a concerted effort to identify the auditory and the visual messages.

The importance of listening to discriminate is significant. Parents quickly learn discriminative listening skills when listening to the cries of their newborn infant. Auditory discrimination serves as the base for reading readiness programs for young children. Panhandlers are experts at visually discriminating an “easy mark” on the street. Auto mechanics rely on sound discrimination to understand the malfunctioning of a car. Musicians must discriminate sounds to perform at a professional level. And speech and hearing specialists work to distinguish speech sounds in order to assist clients in dealing with speech disorders.

Discriminative listening serves as the basis for all other purposes of listening behavior. The receptive stage in the process requires the listener to identify and interpret carefully the auditory and visual cues in order to deal effectively with the information being received.

Comprehensive Listening

Listening for comprehension extends from the discrimination of the stimulus to an understanding of the message. Comprehensive listeners listen to lectures, briefings, reports, conferences, television and film documentaries, telephone messages, traffic alerts in order to comprehend the information presented. Much of the educational process at all levels is based on comprehensive listening. Students are asked to listen carefully to lectures and class discussions in order to understand and retain vast amounts of information.

The effective comprehensive listener actively strives to understand and to retain the information in the message. Essentially, the listener is after listening fidelity, a concept identified by listening scholars as the “degree of congruence between the cognitions of a listener and the cognitions of a source following a communication event” (Mulanax & Powers, 2001, p. 70). To assign the meaning intended by the speaker instead of assigning his or her own meaning, the listener avoids critical judgment of the message, the speaker, the channel, or the language used. In addition to not being evaluative, the listener requires proficiency at listening for comprehension by having a

well-developed vocabulary, skill at making accuracy checks through questioning, and even note-taking strategies. Understanding and retaining the information presented requires the listener to develop memory skills—skills that enable the listener to initially hold the incoming information in the short-term memory, to rehearse the information in order to ensure that it is placed in the long-term memory store, and to draw on the long-term memory store to assign meaning. All these memory strategies depend on intense concentration, an essential key to effective listening comprehension. Given the fluctuating nature of attention, an effective comprehensive listener must work to refocus and maintain focus on the speaker’s message. Using internal summaries and identifying the speaker’s “signposts” may assist in this concentration process.

Therapeutic Listening

Therapeutic listening (also referred to more narrowly as “empathic” listening) requires that the listener serve as a “sounding board” to provide the speaker with the opportunity to talk through a problem, ideally to the speaker’s own solution to it. Effective therapeutic listening builds from discrimination and comprehension of the message for the listener to provide the necessary supportive behaviors and responses that enable the speaker to talk through the problem. While serious psychological problems must be handled by qualified therapists, an empathetic ear can be all the assistance required for many people to deal with daily concerns. An effective therapeutic listener must be careful not to evaluate or judge what is said. The therapeutic listener must operate from a high level of empathy—understanding why the speaker is responding as he or she does—to understand the speaker’s thoughts and feelings. By applying principles of nondirective listening, the listener offers just the necessary responses (verbalizations such as “uh huh” and nonverbalizations such as head nods) to keep the speaker communicating without directing him or her to any one particular solution.

Successful therapeutic listening demands a supportive communication climate in which the speaker feels free to express his or her feelings and thoughts without judgment. Likewise, the therapeutic listener must work to remain an empathetic listener without offering a great deal of advice. This is a difficult task, because many individuals will say, “What do you think I should do?” and we have a natural tendency to want to respond with “If I were you, I would . . .” Unfortunately, such advice then imposes *your* solution on another’s problem, and that may not be the most productive. People need help in solving their own problems.

Critical Listening

Unlike therapeutic listening, critical listening requires that a listener evaluate/judge what is being said. Once the critical listener has discriminated and comprehended the message, it

is necessary then to form judgments about the message in order to accept or reject the persuasive appeals. It is important to determine when critical listening is required. Unfortunately, too many listeners go to a critical evaluation prematurely or inappropriately, passing judgments on speakers and messages before comprehending them.

Listeners respond to persuasive messages at various levels. The credibility (trustworthiness, dynamics, and believability) of the speaker is influential. Furthermore, listeners respond to the structure and support of the speaker's arguments. Since effective persuasive communicators will use a variety of psychological appeals to get listeners to respond at the appropriate need levels, the conscientious critical listener must know what speakers are doing to develop persuasive messages and, consequently, how he or she is responding to them.

Critical listeners do well to train themselves in recognizing argument fallacies, particularly hasty generalizations drawn from too little or no evidence. And emotional language can distract listeners if they are not careful to recognize the "red flags" that lead to strong emotional responses. Furthermore, critical listeners should be able to assess the impact that the speaker may be having on their responses to the persuasive messages. Effective critical listening, thus, involves sound judgment and awareness of the persuasive strategies being used.

Appreciative Listening

Appreciative listening is listening to enjoy or to gain a sensory impression from the material. Listening to music, to environmental sounds, to a book on tape, or to a television presentation all represent forms of appreciative listening.

Although listening for appreciation also builds from discrimination and comprehension of appreciative experiences, it results from a very individual response. Listeners' tastes and standards for appreciation vary widely. Some specialists argue that awareness of the background and the style of the material may provide a more meaningful basis for appreciating that material. Thus, music appreciation courses, for example, frequently stress music history, form, and composition. Other specialists, however, encourage listeners to "go with the experience" and not be terribly concerned about analyzing the elements.

The effective listener, then, will make some determination as to what purpose for listening is appropriate in any given communication situation and adapt his or her listening responses accordingly. Although these categories are not discrete (a person may both appreciate and evaluate some material, for example), the taxonomy of listening purposes has been helpful to listeners in understanding their own listening behavior and in developing strategies for functioning more effectively with the different purposes.

While the taxonomy serves as a useful instructional frame, Arnold (1990) argues against this (or any) classification system by suggesting that "these distinctions do not hold up in practice and they provide little insight into

the processes of listening" (p. 3). As a result, he proposes to look at listening as a continuum from listening for information on the left side (of the continuum) to listening with empathy on the right side. However, as we have described the listening process, listening with empathy is integral to all forms of listening. For the listener to best interpret any message, he or she must bring a certain level of empathetic understanding to his or her perception of what the speaker is communicating.

Whether viewed as a continuum or as a taxonomy, listening is a complex communication behavior. The listener functions at different purposes depending on his or her objective as well as the speaker's goal in the communication. Because listening is such a complex human behavior, because as a covert behavior it is difficult to investigate, and because research on listening is still at a relatively exploratory stage, conceptualizing the process of listening continues to occupy the attention of many listening scholars.

Given the multidimensionality of listening, Fitch-Hauser and Hughes (1992) call for the establishment of some agreed-on operationalizations of listening. Yet most listening tests have focused only on the recall abilities of listeners who are aware that they are being tested.

Listening Competency

Traditionally, listening researchers and educators have focused on a skills-based approach to listening. Nichols's (1948) work on listening established 10 principles for good listening, which for decades became the benchmarks for skills in listening. These "ten commandments" for skilled listening formed a familiar base for much of the writing and teaching about listening:

1. Find an area of interest.
2. Judge content, not delivery.
3. Hold your fire (withhold evaluation until you comprehend the message).
4. Listen for ideas.
5. Be flexible in note taking.
6. Work at listening.
7. Resist distractions.
8. Exercise your mind (don't avoid difficult material).
9. Keep your mind open.
10. Capitalize on thought speed (productively use the gap between speech rate and listening/thinking rate).

Listening competence, however, has come to be understood as more than behavioral technique. Ridge (1984) concludes that "competence in listening is acquired by knowing and doing, and is evidenced by appropriate feedback or

response” (p. 4). Rhodes, Watson, and Barker (1990) articulate a similar view of listening competence: Competent listening cannot be defined as only possession of knowledge; effective, or competent, listening is a behavioral act, and like other behavioral acts, listening can be improved with practice and feedback” (p. 64).

Competence in listening, then, demands both knowing about listening and doing or engaging in appropriate listening behavior. Clearly, there are cognitive, behavioral, and affective dimensions to listening competency.

My colleagues and I have argued that listening competence must extend beyond knowledge and skills to the development of listening attitudes. The listeners’ motivation and willingness to participate in communication transactions are essential to all listening experiences. Bostrom (1990) supports the incorporation of attitude as a listening dimension, because willingness to listen is such an inherent part of the process. Given that listening is not a simple, passive communicative act, it becomes important that the listener engage as a fully functioning communicator in the communication process. Indeed, we argue that successful listeners must assume at least 50% (if not 51%) of the responsibility for the outcome of the communication.

The engaged listener is generally referred to as the “active” listener, the listener who does take his or her communication responsibilities seriously. Of necessity, accepting responsibility works into the attitudinal frame—being willing to listen. And the listener has to know what he or she is doing as a listener to understand how he or she is functioning in this complex process. The knowledgeable listener must understand not only the process itself but also the enhancers and the deterrents to functioning in this process at any given point—reception, attention, perception, interpretation, and response—while engaged in the act of listening.

Our research (Halone et al., 1998) provides an inventory of what listeners do. Individuals in different age groups across the life span, responding to open-ended questions about their listening, enabled us to develop a multidimensional profile of listening competency. We have established five listening dimensions: cognitive (what listeners know); affective (listeners’ attitudes); behavioral/verbal (listeners’ verbal responses); behavioral/nonverbal (listeners’ nonverbal responses); and behavioral/interactive (listeners’ relationship behaviors with speakers).

To expand our understanding of listening behaviors, Imhof (1998, p. 95) asked students in the Introduction to Psychology course at German universities to describe their listening strategies. The student self-reports enabled Imhof to design a profile of listening strategies before, during, and after listening. In further research, Imhof (2000) discovered that listeners who engage in strategic mental activities raise their motivation levels and their comprehension. The listeners’ mental strategies include intentionally monitoring interest in a topic, listing a set of questions before approaching a listening task, elaborating on the material

during listening, constructing a mental model of the orally presented text, and integrating the material into existing knowledge structures.

Another useful profile of the competent listener emerges from Stein’s (1999) research using the think-aloud protocol, in which students were asked to describe their thoughts and feelings as they were listening. After coding the listeners’ observations and the researchers’ observations of the listeners, Stein developed an inventory of what listeners do. Her inventory breaks out the cognitive, affective dimensions into a (similar to Imhof’s) prelistening (constructs goals and prepares to listen), listening (evaluates, expresses affective reactions, infers, interprets, monitors and activates comprehension repair strategies, selectively attends, integrates, and takes notes), and postlistening (evaluates retrospectively, notes goals’ relevance, asks questions, and retrospectively interprets, infers, monitors, integrates and expresses affective reactions) profile.

It is possible that Stein’s use of the think-aloud protocol and the resulting inventory will enable listening researchers to get closer to determining the cognitive, behavioral, and affective dimensions of listening so that listening assessment and listening training can be targeted more specifically to what listeners actually do when they listen. Just as reading researchers have used the protocol to determine what *expert* readers do, so too, it will be helpful to create a profile of how expert listeners function when they listen.

Listening Practice

Practice is crucial to listening proficiency. But that practice must be good practice. Listeners must be prepared to practice *correct* listening skills. And they must be prepared to practice listening skills throughout their communication life spans. Just as good speakers, writers, and readers practice and polish their communication skills across their lifetimes, so too do good listeners monitor, adapt, change, and polish their listening skills.

And good listening requires commitment. Americans assume far too passive a role as listeners. We expect speakers to do all the work. We don’t value listening as a leadership quality. Recent political campaigns are illustrative. Running for a U.S. Senate seat in New York, Hillary Clinton launched her successful campaign with a “listening tour” in the summer of 1999. While the vote may still be out on listening politicians, the information demands of the 21st century require that we take another look at listening skills. We live in a global economy, connected around the world by computers and cell phones. Information travels so fast and changes so fast that written documentation takes too much time. Organizations today rely on oral briefings with presentation graphic support as a primary means for managing information. Skilled oral briefers need skilled listeners.

Some institutions have recognized the importance of preparing skilled listeners for the 21st century. Alverno College in Milwaukee, for example, prepares all its students to listen and reinforces good listening competencies throughout its 4-year curriculum. As such listening training becomes more central to communication studies, it also becomes more sophisticated. Given the multidimensionality of listening competency, higher-order theory, and research about listening offer a substantial cognitive, affective, and behavioral frame for training listeners.

Listening Research

As should be apparent, the multidimensional, complex nature of listening makes this challenge even more complex from a research perspective. Research in listening has focused on the measurement of listening comprehension and on perceived listening effectiveness. The first major research study to do this, as has been noted, was the seminal study in 1948 by Nichols, in which he subjected University of Minnesota students to a battery of tests to develop a profile of how effective listeners do (and don't) behave while listening to lecture material. How listeners function has continued to receive the attention of quantitative scholars.

Expanding from Nichols's focus on listener behaviors, some empirical scholars have developed tests to assess listening skills. Bostrom and Waldhart (1983) developed the Kentucky Comprehensive Listening Skills Test, a measure of a listener's ability to comprehend audio messages. Watson and Barker (1984) designed a broader listening assessment (delivered via video) that taps into five dimensions: listening for message content; listening to dialogues/conversations; listening to lectures; listening for emotional meaning; and listening for directions and instructions. Steinbrecher and Wilmington (1993) published a video test that is designed to assess comprehensive, empathic, and critical listening skills.

Other empirical scholars have explored, from a qualitative research perspective, how listeners listen in different personal and professional contexts. Ross and Glenn (1996), for example, looked at how grown children and their parents listen to each other. Wolvin and Coakley (1993) used survey methods to profile the status of listening training in Fortune 500 corporations.

Empirical research in listening is drawing on more sophisticated models and methodologies today. Janusik (2005), for instance, explores how working memory influences listeners, expanding listening research beyond behaviors to cognitions. Consistent with communibiology theory, researchers (Phillips, Lowe, Lurito, Dzemidzic, & Mathews, 2001) are making use of brain imaging to determine how listeners respond to various stimuli.

Humanistic scholars also bring perspectives to critical interpretations of listening behaviors. Cornwell and Orbe (1999), for example, have used the concept of dialogic

listening to explicate the impact of hate speech on culturally diverse listeners. Wolvin (2005) has used a leadership model to analyze the effectiveness of Hillary Clinton's 1999 listening tour at the beginning of her U.S. Senate campaign.

The considerable body of research on listening enables scholars to better frame the pedagogy and practice of listening in the communication process. Bodie (2007) suggests that this research can be conceptualized as listening as a process (i.e., an information processing, cognition model) and listening as a product (i.e., a communicative function). Exploring the intersections of these two research perspectives and applying appropriate methodologies can expand the research agenda of listening scholars, who are found not only in the communication field but also in related disciplines such as psychology, religion, business management, education, and leadership.

Clearly, the study of listening offers interesting, challenging opportunities to better understand what listeners do cognitively and behaviorally and how those cognitions and behaviors are affected by a host of factors that influence the communicative outcome of the listening act. As scholars apply more sophisticated research and instructional strategies to understand this complex process, the significant role of listening in today's fast-paced communication world undoubtedly will be recognized and respected. Advances in technology and economic globalization have significantly altered the act of listening in the 21st century. "These changes are far reaching," observes Bentley (2000), "and have significant implications for how we will study and teach listening skills in the future" (p. 130).

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PERFORMANCE AND STORYTELLING

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Performance and storytelling are key processes in communication. These processes are understood in a variety of ways within the field of communication. Indeed, scholars regularly refer to performance as “an essentially contested concept” (e.g., Carlson, 1996; Strine, Long, & HopKins, 1990), in recognition of the different meanings, discourses, and traditions that accompany the term. This variety is evident in the many ways performance enters into daily conversation. Speakers talk of going to see a theatrical performance, of the recent performance of a popular singer, of performing a favor for a friend, and of enduring a performance review at work. In a similar way, storytelling is understood to draw on and encompass a variety of theories, approaches, and disciplinary orientations (e.g., Bamberg, 2007a). Speakers tell about what happened on the way to the store and about the life history of a politician; and they retell an urban legend posted on a weblog and recount atrocity stories from the newspaper. Both performance and storytelling are celebrated as generative concepts that revitalized research and academic disciplines at the end of the 20th century, to the point where scholars talk about “the performance turn” and “the narrative turn” in the human sciences. Performance and storytelling are described as interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and even antidisciplinary concepts.

Given the contested terrain within which performance and storytelling operate, any description of them as communication processes risks oversimplification and reduction. With this caution in mind, however, the approaches to understanding these processes can be organized into two predominate views. One view positions performance and storytelling as processes set apart from the ordinary or

everyday communication that surrounds them. Performance and storytelling *make* something of communication; they make it into play, verbal art, jokes, stories, drama, aesthetic expression, ritual, and poetic communication. A second view positions performance and storytelling as processes that are intrinsic to any communicative act. Performance and storytelling name the actual *doing* of communication; they refer to the exercise of linguistic and communicative competence, the practice of behavior and speech acts, the work of habit and discipline. Any particular approach, therefore, selects and combines aspects of these two views—making and doing—to theorize performance and storytelling.

Theorizing Performance and Storytelling

The theoretical description of performance and storytelling as making and doing has its clearest formulation in the classical Greek concepts of *poiesis* and *praxis*. *Poiesis* refers to the productive sciences of making things, such as making a good speech or a good poem. *Praxis*, on the other hand, refers to the practical sciences of doing things, such as the conduct of a good person or a good society. As Richard L. Lanigan (1992) summarizes, *poiesis* “brings into existence something distinct from the activity itself,” whereas *praxis* is “an activity that has a goal within itself” (pp. 211–212). The ambiguous combination of these views can be seen in early references to *mimesis*. These references involve a family of related terms that describe the expression, representation, or imitation of actions through

speech, dance, or song. These terms are used to describe the person who performs, the context of action, the act of doing a performance, and the result of the performed action. In the work of Plato and Aristotle, this ambiguity is reduced by emphasizing mimesis as a making, in particular as the capacity for making images, for making copies of concrete action, for representing ideas, and for imitating worthy models. Let us examine the work of two contemporary scholars who emphasize poesis, or making, with regard to performance and storytelling before turning to theories that emphasize praxis, or doing performance and storytelling.

Making Performance

The view of performance as the making of art, epitomized by Aristotle's discussion of tragedy in his *Poetics*, is not restricted to ancient Greece or even Western cultures. In his overview of performance studies, Marvin Carlson (1996) writes, "There has been general agreement that within every culture there can be discovered a certain kind of activity, set apart from other activities by space, time, attitude, or all three, that can be spoken of and analyzed as 'performance'" (p. 15). The communication process of making performance, across these various cultures, is not restricted to aesthetic venues such as theaters, concert halls, and festival tents. The anthropologist Victor Turner (1988) argues that "the basic stuff of social life is performance" (p. 81) and that humans are "self-performing animals," or *Homo performans*. Cultural performances, such as those found in theater and films, arise from and respond to performance in society, or what Turner calls social drama.

Social drama erupts from the fabric of ongoing social life and its normative customs and practices. Like Aristotle, Turner conceptualizes performance as a process bounded by a diachronic structure; that is, social dramas have a beginning, a middle or a sequence of distinct phases, and an end. In his book *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, Turner (1974) identifies four phases of public action that constitute the diachronic structure of social drama. First, regular social relations and ongoing normative interactions are interrupted by a *breach*, which makes social conflict and antagonism visible. Second, this breach widens and extends into a mounting *crisis*, which cannot be ignored or re-absorbed into the existing social order. The crisis is liminal in the sense that it symbolizes a threshold or boundary that opens up a transgressive space within and against public life. Third, representatives of the social system respond through informal and formal means with *redressive action* to mediate, arbitrate, or ameliorate the crisis. In the final phase, the contesting parties move to closure through the *reintegration* of the disturbed social group or through the recognition of the legitimacy of the breach and the schism between the contesting parties. The symbolic transgression of social drama constitutes a

reflexive process whereby society can communicate about the communication system—a process that both makes and remakes the fabric of ordinary, customary, and norm-bound social life.

Making Storytelling

"Making storytelling" is an awkward expression; but it has the advantage of emphasizing the twofold sense of making that occurs in storytelling. Storytelling involves both the making of a story and the making of an event of telling. A person becomes a storyteller by making a story or a narrative out of the events of experience, both real and imaginary. And the storyteller makes that story into a communication event by telling it to and for an audience. Scholars from a variety of fields—such as folklore, anthropology, literature, linguistics, history, education, psychology, sociology—join communication scholars in exploring both these senses of "making storytelling" under the rubric of speech play, verbal art, narrative performance, folktales, and oral literature and traditions (for an overview, see Finnegan, 1992).

One example of this perspective on storytelling comes in Richard Bauman's study of storytelling as a way of speaking. For Bauman (1986), the essence of storytelling "resides in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative skill, highlighting the way in which communication is carried out, above and beyond its referential content" (p. 3). This display of skill in expression calls on the audience to go beyond appreciating the story to evaluating the ways in which the storyteller enhances experience. "Performance thus calls forth special attention to and heightened awareness of both the act of expression and the performer" (p. 3). Bauman follows Roman Jakobson (1960) here in his emphasis on the way storytelling enacts the poetic function of communication (see Peterson & Langellier, 2006, for further discussion of communication as storytelling). A storyteller is not valued by an audience simply for the information or message that the performance conveys. On the contrary, it is the storyteller's ability to make a report of events into something remarkable, memorable, and worthy of appreciation and response that draws the audience's interest. In storytelling, communication is productive; that is, storytelling makes something special, something poetic, out of what might otherwise be a prosaic or mundane message. As Bauman (1986) suggests, "Every performance will have a unique and emergent aspect" (p. 4) that sets it apart from the conventions and structures that make it possible. The audience and storyteller take up these existing resources to turn back and communicate about them.

Doing Performance

As the preceding description suggests, a view of performance and storytelling as making, or poesis, requires the repetition or mobilizing of meanings that are already socially

established. The making of performance and storytelling does not take place *ex nihilo*, outside of any social and cultural context and history. In social drama, performance draws on the reenactment of social relations that are easily recognized and commonly held by the participants. It is only possible to challenge the legitimacy of these socially established forms and conventions because they are so familiar. And these social forms and conventions must be deployed and enacted to be challenged. In brief, performance does them; performance is doing something, or praxis.

The view of performance as praxis draws on work by scholars on the philosophy of language and communication, especially as they incorporate the work of phenomenologists, semioticians, feminists, poststructuralists, and queer theorists. For these scholars, performance is an extension of bodily capability. Acting, like other operations of the body such as imitation and habit, is an existential operation, an embodied project of perception and expression. When one person imitates another by repeating something the other has just said in a mocking tone of voice, something regularly witnessed among children, that person is not putting together knowledge of what is seen (the visible muscular contractions the other uses to speak) with knowledge of what is felt (the bodily ability to produce similar sounds). Rather, one person mocks the other by responding to the particular situation with a conventional form of solution—the person gets into the form of, or per-forms, the other's action. Communication, from this perspective, is intersubjectively developed as a form or structure in time. One person can mock another, and vice versa, because together they constitute a system in which perception can become expression and expression can become perception. Just as a person can perform with the left hand a gesture just performed with the right, so too can one person perform what is performed by the other.

Judith Butler, in a 1988 essay that would prove to be highly influential among communication and performance studies scholars, develops this view of performance as doing in her exploration of how gender is constituted in performative acts. For Butler, gender identity is not something that is “given” but something that is done through what she describes as “a stylized repetition of acts.” Gender identity is a set of historical possibilities that must be continually realized in corporeal acts. These repetitive acts are both habitual and habituating. A person does not choose or select a particular identity so much as reproduce it by taking up and performing existing and conventional manners or styles of bodily acts. Such acts are regulatory and disciplinary practices in the sense that conventional performances are rewarded and unconventional performances punished. As a result, gender identity is a site of both pleasure and anxiety. The identity performed by these acts must be continually reinforced and stabilized. Because they are highly conventionalized, gender identities are open to modification just as other sedimented structures or habits of the body can be destabilized and changed.

Doing Storytelling

The performative aspects of doing storytelling are readily apparent in events where a skillful performer tells a highly polished narrative for a clearly demarcated audience. In this case, theorists highlight the communication practices employed by good performers, the elements that make up satisfying narratives, and the behaviors and responses of conventional audiences. The performative aspects of doing storytelling are less obvious, but no less important, in the mundane experiences of storytelling that emerge fleetingly in fragments, across diverse settings and in ambiguous circumstances, as told by multiple participants with varying interests and abilities. For example, think of how families tell stories around the dinner table. A story may be told by one person, as when a child tells a story of what happened in school. Or a story about something that happened last summer may be developed by multiple family members, where they compete, collaborate, cooperate, and contest with each other. The story may be more or less clearly identified as a story, it may be diligently developed through interruptions about the meal and comments on other matters, or it may be a fragment that someone only briefly mentions and then drops. Some family members may be willing and enthusiastic listeners and tellers, others may be reluctant and unwilling.

The focus on doing storytelling shifts the emphasis from the making of a good storyteller, or a good story or performance, to the pragmatics of communication and the strategic functions of those practices for embodied participants. Della Pollock's (1999) study of telling birth stories illustrates this theoretical shift to what she calls “talking understood as performance” (p. 8). The birth stories she describes function as discursive strategies, or “mobile cultural fragments” (p. 22), that circulate among a variety of listeners and tellers, who use these stories to make tentative and temporary connections with changing social conventions and meanings in unstable and transitory circumstances. The practice of telling birth stories undercuts and resists narrative norms that would prescribe a naturalized comic-heroic narrative where difficulties in pregnancy and delivery are resolved in the happy ending of a healthy birth. Pollock listens for the absences and silences, the constitutive differences and multiple performativities, that mark how the telling of birth stories transforms women into maternal subjects.

As communication processes, performance and storytelling function as both a making and a doing, as both poesis and praxis. The complexity of this combinatory relationship is revealed in their reflexivity and reversibility. Poesis and praxis are *reflexive* terms in their circular and overlapping reference: Theorists talk about performance and storytelling as “doing what is done” and as “making the best of what is made.” Poesis and praxis are *reversible* terms in how they refer to each other: Theorists talk about performance and storytelling as “a making do,” “making a

to do,” as well as “a do about making.” Theorizing performance and storytelling as communication processes provides a basis for their systematic study in applications of methodology.

Methodology

The turn to methodology poses the question of how we know what we know about, in, and through performance and storytelling. Methodology makes explicit the importance of the context in which performance and storytelling are located as objects of study. One way to approach the question of methodology is to assume that there is a stable and predictable relationship between an object, such as a performance or a story, and the research context. This approach draws on research traditions in the natural sciences and posits performance and storytelling as objects that are already constituted for researchers to find. Such methodologies emphasize the invention of “that which is *given* as evidence,” or *data* (Lanigan, 1992, p. 215). If researchers *know* what performance and storytelling is (invention), then they can find occurrences of it in a particular situation (according to the given evidence).

The experience of studying different cultures and subcultures, however, suggests that storytelling and performance are neither stable nor predictable objects of study. Researchers may “miss” hearing a story as a story because what constitutes a story in one culture or subculture may not in another. Or they may not “see” a performance as performance because the elements that constitute performance may not be the same in a different setting or at a different time. The potential to overlook performance and storytelling as objects of research is particularly evident when performance and storytelling are understood as praxis rather than poesis. Research methodologies for performance and storytelling, therefore, rely on alternative approaches that emphasize the participation of the researcher in locating what is to be known. These approaches draw on qualitative methodologies in the human sciences and emphasize the discovery of “that which is *taken* as evidence,” or *capta* (Lanigan, 1992, p. 215). As researchers participate in a particular context, they *come to know* (discovery) those features by which they locate (taken as evidence) performance and storytelling as objects of research.

There are several ways to organize or categorize the qualitative methodologies used in the study of performance and storytelling. Following Lanigan’s (1992) analysis, four types of qualitative methodologies used in existing research can be distinguished according to their object of analysis (how they answer the question “What is performance and storytelling?”) and the type of evidence they feature (how they answer the question “How do I know performance and storytelling?”). These four methodologies are semiology, ethnography, historiography, and

phenomenology. The following descriptions emphasize research exemplars and are meant to be suggestive rather than comprehensive accounts.

Semiology

The term *semiology* covers a wide range of applications in structuralism, poststructuralism, and textual and discourse analysis. As a methodology, semiology takes what is capable of occurring as its object of analysis. The researcher looks to substantial evidence to intuit or construct a narrative of what is problematic in performance and storytelling. The most common form of substantial evidence used in such research are signs (the material expressions of meanings) and their combination in texts: Everything from utterances, conversations, literature, meaningful action, and cultural practices to institutions can be taken as texts. The researcher then analyzes these texts to identify the codes that make them capable of occurring. Or, to use a distinction taken from linguistics, researchers specify the underlying competence that makes any particular performance possible.

Robert Scholes (1985) illustrates this type of methodology in his book on *Textual Power*. Scholes identifies three communication practices or skills that constitute textual competence: reading, interpretation, and criticism. To read and understand a story, we must deploy the basic elements of cultural and narrative coding gradually acquired from parents, teachers, and peers. Interpretation comes into play when a reader encounters unknown words, incomplete or excessive references, and ambiguous meanings. In this case, the reader looks to codes or “the rules of the game” of reading by locating repetitions, oppositions, regularities, and patterns to make sense of the text. In criticism, the reader examines how codes shape the text, how they normalize and naturalize it, and how they enact power and ideology. Methodologically, these three practices (praxis) of textualization are productive (poesis): “In *reading* we produce *text within text*; in *interpretation* we produce *text upon text*; and in *criticizing* we produce *text against text* [italics in the original]” (p. 24). Textualization produces substantial evidence for what is capable of occurring through the operation of codes.

Ethnography

Where semiology emphasizes the ideal operation of codes to specify what is capable of occurring, ethnography investigates what really occurred as its object of analysis. The researcher takes symbolic evidence to construct a narrative that thematizes performance and storytelling. Symbolic evidence can include the realities of human conduct, everyday activities, rituals, ceremonies, feasts, cultural events, as well as the realities of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching in daily life. Ethnography uses participant observation and other forms of fieldwork

to immerse the researcher in cultural experiences. This methodology “privileges the body as a site of knowing,” as Dwight Conquergood (1991) summarizes in a key essay on performance ethnography.

Conquergood emphasizes boundaries and border crossings as the location for research—sites where difference makes a difference. The traditional boundary enacted in ethnography was one that defined the culture of the other as different from the culture of the researcher; one that distinguished the subject who writes from the subject who was written about. Postmodern and critical versions of ethnography challenge this thematization of unified cultures and detached observation. Rather than mark out a discrete and stable essence or possession, cultural identity is thematized as fluid and fragmentary, as a process or performance. Contemporary ethnographers focus on locating the diversity, displacement, and discontinuities in cultures rather than the continuity, coherence, and unity presupposed in more traditional ethnographies. Similarly, the process of writing ethnographic research is reconceptualized as a shift from monologue to dialogue, from objective description to intersubjective co-constitution. Conquergood discusses how boundaries of the self—and not just boundaries between cultures—bleed, leak, and wobble. His rethinking of ethnography highlights the importance of studying the borderlands of refugees, migrants, and exiles, where people “make do” within the changing contexts of postcolonial societies and global capitalism. But his work also paves the way for reconsideration of the boundaries of the self and the self as other, as taken up by work in autoethnography. Such research in ethnography constructs a narrative that thematizes the symbolic evidence of bodily knowledge to locate what occurred.

Historiography

In historiography, the researcher takes artifactual evidence to assert a narrative that observes performance and storytelling. In this case, what is actual or occurring constitutes the object of analysis. Traditionally, the artifacts taken as evidence include historical records and documents such as letters, diaries, oral interviews, newspapers, magazines, government records, maps, paintings, photographs, and all manner of texts. Such artifacts also may include material culture, such as clothing, household goods, furniture, artworks, machinery, and the built environment. Historians of performance and storytelling also look beyond the archive and the museum to document the bodily practices that are sedimented in gestures, habits, manners, and customs (for examples of this type of work, see the essays in Pollock, 1998).

The variety of artifacts considered by historians of performance and storytelling raises questions about the practices of observation, sometimes referred to as crises of representation and objectivity. For the meaning and significance of these artifacts, much less their actual existence, is not given or self-evident but must be constructed

or reconstructed and made visible or narrated. Rather than somehow remain separate and distinct from the artifacts they observe, historiographers participate in them by narrating and performing them. In this way, the work of “new historicists” echoes the concerns raised by the poststructuralists in semiology and critical ethnography. As Della Pollock (1998) observes,

The writing of history becomes the ultimate historical performance, making events meaningful by talking about them, by investing them with the cultural and political assumptions carried in language itself. What we can or want to call the truth thus becomes problematic. (p. 13)

Research in historiography “makes history go,” as Pollock suggests, by discomposing even as it composes a narrative that traverses the terrain of artifactual evidence.

Phenomenology

Where the emphasis in historiography is on observation, phenomenology focuses on understanding by interrogating formal evidence for what is factual or must occur. Edmund Husserl’s injunction “to the things themselves” underscores phenomenology’s methodological interest in constructing a narrative that locates the variant and invariant structures—the empirical and eidetic “forms” of performance, so to speak—of conscious experience. Phenomenological research progresses through a series of reductions or reflections. The first reduction is one that attends to the phenomenon as it is constituted in conscious experience. The researcher brackets common sense and scientific explanations, as well as taken-for-granted knowledge, to understand performance and storytelling. For example, many types of discourse are not recognized as stories because they do not employ the conventions that dominant ideologies would position as common sense. Stories that women or members of minority ethnic groups tell may be dismissed by researchers as poorly formed or poorly performed stories.

In the second reduction, the researcher takes up the description of the phenomenon to discover its typicality or structure. The researcher specifies the logic of similarities and differences in the experiences of performance and storytelling. Storytelling by women and minority ethnic group members, to continue with the previous example, are marked by regularities and patterns that can be located when normative conventions are bracketed. Not all storytelling variations function in a meaningful way for all participants. And the same storyteller may tell stories in different ways and use different conventions when the context changes. Phenomenology looks to articulate the logics that inform these variations, that make some possibilities occur rather than others.

In the final reduction, the researcher turns to a hermeneutic or interpretive analysis of the description and structural reductions. Analysis here does not create a

replica or representation of the phenomenon but an understanding that takes it up. The interpretive reduction specifies the possibilities for agency and effectivity in performance and storytelling that are inscribed by historical conditions and discourse conventions as well as those that are erased or marked over. For phenomenology, the doing and making of performance and storytelling are contextual facts of a particular situation: embodied by participants, situated in specific material conditions, ordered by discourse, and open to legitimation and critique (e.g., see Langellier & Peterson, 2004).

Applications

Performance and storytelling appear in a variety of contexts, including aesthetic, political, cultural, pedagogic, and therapeutic applications. Undoubtedly the most familiar application of performance and storytelling comes in the aesthetic realm. Whether in the form of traditional staged productions or storytelling festivals, performance and storytelling have a long history of varied application as works of art. What works are considered worthy of appreciation, however, shifts and transforms. At the end of the 20th century, for example, performers such as Laurie Anderson were incorporating storytelling, music, song, and images into multimedia stage performances; others, such as Spalding Gray, Tim Miller, Holly Hughes, and Karen Finley, were incorporating and reworking autobiographical material into monologues and solo performances; Anna Deveare Smith was going into local communities to conduct interviews, rework them into performances, and then return them to the community in staged productions.

The rise of solo performance, monologues, and autoethnography (such as Gingrich-Philbrook, 2000) demonstrates both the remaking of texts for aesthetic applications and the connections of storytelling and performance with political applications. Not surprisingly, many solo performance pieces arose out of social movements and identity politics organized around issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, and ability. In these cases, personal narratives and public demonstrations—performances designed to catch the attention of television and newspapers—were used to make identities visible and to persuade the public to remedy social inequities and injustices. The use of performance and storytelling to raise public awareness and mobilize action on HIV/AIDS illustrates one such political application (Kistenberg, 1995).

The rise of storytelling and performance also can be witnessed in the realm of popular culture. These cultural applications range from memoirs and celebrity biographies, talk shows and reality television programming, to homepages and weblogs. These popular applications highlight storytelling based on the presumed authority and authenticity of personal experience; and they emphasize performance grounded in the apparent spontaneous and

unadulterated action of personal presence and immediacy. Critics question the romantic individualism of these applications and how they naturalize specific storytelling and performance conventions. Other critics examine how stories and performances are rendered normal or normalized, such as in Jay Baglia's (2005) analysis of popular media accounts of Viagra and its relationship to the performance of masculinity.

Performance and storytelling have a range of applications in pedagogy. Histories of the teaching of expression and oral interpretation illustrate how performance and storytelling have been applied in classroom practices as a way to understand literature. More recently, these classroom practices have been expanded to include a focus on cultural performance and the practices of daily life. In this case, performance and storytelling serve to illuminate and enter into dialogue with "the other"—other persons, communities, and cultures. Such practices offer the possibility of opening up spaces where other stories can be heard and cultural performances reflected on (Stucky & Wimmer, 2002). As such, they can be applied in communities and not just classrooms, as witnessed by work in critical pedagogy. Drawing on the work of Paulo Friere and Augusto Boal, critical pedagogy emphasizes the performative character of storytelling and performance; that is, the embodiment of specific performances and stories is a way to enact, know, reflect, and potentially remake them in collaboration with other participants (for examples, see the essays on pedagogy in Madison & Hamera, 2006).

Therapeutic applications also emphasize the performative aspects of storytelling and performance. The very act of telling a story or performing is seen as a way to understand, come to terms with, or reframe that experience. Survivor stories, illness narratives, witness accounts, and personal testimonies are examples where performing or telling about lived experience constitutes the storyteller or performer as agents, as subjects of their own experience and not just as subjected to it. In some cases, these stories and performances recover and testify to cultural frames and forms that are excluded by dominant institutions and practices. For example, Rita Charon's (2006) advocacy of narrative medicine, juxtaposes the official medical chart with stories, drawings, and photographs that write into the record the embodied struggles with illness performed by patients and doctors. These varied applications make the case that performance and storytelling are as much about agency and efficacy as they are about appreciation, entertainment, and pleasure.

Comparison

The extent and variety of applications in performance and storytelling suggest that there is an inherently comparative aspect to them as communication processes. For some, this comparative aspect is based in the nature of the poetic and

the variability of aesthetic experience. Even in classical discussions of beauty, there is a concern to reconcile individual taste with the supposed universality of aesthetic judgment. How can individual speakers say that something is beautiful and be certain that their judgment is not idiosyncratic? What grounds do speakers have for going beyond the presumption that “there is no disputing about taste” (*de gustibus non est disputandum*)? Other thinkers locate the comparative aspect of performance and storytelling as a function of the variability of the practices that constitute them as communication processes. In this case, comparisons are made on the basis of locating what Jakobson calls “distinctive features,” or the differences that make a difference in language and communication.

To borrow a question posed by critical ethnographers, What are the differences that make a difference in performance and storytelling? As the work of Jakobson and the previous sections on theory and methodology suggest, differences can be located in the different contexts for performance and storytelling, the different forms that the poetic object or text can take, the different conventions and codes it puts into play, the different kinds of contact it enables among participants, the different expressive capabilities of performers and storytellers, and the different interpretive responses and responsibilities of audiences. In the past few decades, the importance of locating and understanding the operation of these differences has been greatly influenced by work in cultural studies, postcolonial studies, disability studies, critical race theory, feminist theory, and queer theory.

The simple sense of difference as a distinction between already constituted entities crops up in comparisons of this performance with that performance, of traditional storytelling with contemporary storytelling, of stories told by women with those told by men, and of coming-of-age rituals in this culture with rituals in that culture. A more complicated sense of difference asks how such entities are seen or constituted as different in the first place. Instead of taking the compared entities as natural or pre-given, this latter sense of difference asks how they came to be understood as something in and of their differences. This view of difference troubles the commonsense coherence and homogeneity implied in terms such as *the folk*, *tradition*, *ethnic culture*, or *a people*.

Consider the generative differences used to distinguish gender and sexuality. Feminist and queer theories reposition the normative constraints of “being a woman” or “being a man” by conceptualizing them as performative. Gender and sexuality, following the work of Butler (as discussed above), are socially reflexive and self-constituting practices for *doing* and not just something to be done. Positioning the identity and expression of gender and sexuality as performative avoids both a universalist essentialism (one is either a woman or a man, masculine or feminine, gay or straight), on the one hand, and a volunteerist individualism, on the other (one can consciously choose to be whatever one wants to be). The historical

realities of gender and sexual identities are continually performed in the embodied gestures, behaviors, habits, and institutions of daily life. In the field of communication, Kroløkke and Sørensen (2006) develop this view of gender and sexuality as performative.

Other authors have repositioned race and ethnicity as performative formations, as captured in the expressions “performing blackness” (Johnson, 2003) and “performing whiteness” (Warren, 2003). Petra Kupperts (2003) uses performativity to refigure the binary opposition of disabled and able-bodied identities. For writers such as José Esteban Muñoz (1999), such formations of identity are always already hybrid or “identities-in-difference.” By using this phrase, Muñoz argues that the subject is not created or posited in a linear process of identification that would present or re-present a uniform and consistent persona or self. He complicates identity formation by attending to the processes of disidentification, in which divergent, fragmentary, and contradictory practices work on, with, and against identification. Identities-in-difference are unstable, transitory, and discontinuous formations that function strategically; that is, they may deploy existing discourses of power and knowledge at one level and, at the same time, work to resist, oppose, and destabilize these same discourses at other levels.

Contemporary Issues and Future Directions

The postmodern movement of performance and storytelling outside the detached realm of aesthetic expression—as demonstrated by their varied applications and comparative dimensions—raises a series of issues that will shape the future direction of students, scholars, activists, audiences, and artists. Some of the first responses to this movement, not surprisingly, were reactions against an expansive understanding of what could be considered the appropriate subjects and texts of performance and storytelling. Attendees at the National Festival of Storytelling complained that their favorite storytellers were not performing the much loved folktales and classic cultural stories; instead, they were telling stories drawn from personal experience and daily life. The new performance studies scholarship, published in journals such as *Text and Performance Quarterly*, was criticized for taking up varied phenomena such as flight-attendant announcements, fake identification, office folklore, anorexia nervosa, and gay pornography instead of studies of great literature, great performers, and great performances.

The objections of critics to the new scholarship in performance and storytelling can be seen in part as a reactionary response to the domestic social movements of the time, a resistance to diversity and identity politics, an opposition to changes in the global flow of peoples and capital, and a rejection of postmodern art and aesthetics.

But such criticism also advances, and somewhat obscures, an important question regarding the nature of performance and storytelling. If performance and storytelling are no longer to be defined in modernist terms as the making of art and the art of making (poiesis), then what are the boundaries that define it as a communication practice (praxis)? In performance studies, Jon McKenzie (2006) tracks how performance has “gone global” and can be found not only in cultural forms but also in technological, organizational, governmental, economic, and environmental forms of power and knowledge. In narrative studies, Michael Bamberg (2007b) describes the shift from research on “big stories” and master narratives to an increasing emphasis on narrative practices and the “small stories” of what people do *in particular* when they talk and tell stories, on the situated and contextual nature of storytelling. But is everything performance and storytelling? Is performance and storytelling everything?

The boundary issues provoked by the new scholarship on performance and storytelling are recognized by scholars in a variety of ways. For example, the editors of a new journal posed the problem this way in their introduction to the inaugural issue:

Storytelling, Self, Society sets itself this task, among others: to steer between the dangerous shoals of fetishizing this particular medium (to the exclusion of the fertile channels that connect it with virtually any other) and of surrendering to the metonymic swoon in which the name *storytelling* can be bestowed on whatever one finds sufficiently uplifting. (Sobol, Gentile, & Sunwolf, 2004, p. 3)

This formulation evokes the dangerous shores trope that Wallace Bacon articulated more than four decades earlier on the need to navigate performance (in the guise of oral interpretation) between the shores of theatrical and literary study. Contemporary scholarship in performance and storytelling suggests that the future direction of theory and research is not to be found in opposition of different forms of study, exclusion of art from life or life from art, or the choice between poiesis and praxis but in charting their differential combinations.

Two contemporary issues in performance and storytelling research illustrate the difficulty of charting these differential combinations in ways that do not collapse into oppositional and exclusionary thinking. The first issue is the problem of representation and mimesis (e.g., see Diamond, 1997), or what might be described as the conjunction and combinatory logic of performance and performativity. Performativity names the repetition and citation of genres and conventions that, because they are materialized in performances, disappear in the act of doing them. Performance, to use phenomenological terms, has a horizon of retention and protention, where what is done trails off and fades away even as anticipations of what may happen begin to emerge in the act of doing what will soon be done. To continue performing requires that communication

research encompass both the performative repetitions and citations that make it possible and the transitory ephemerality of performance that opens it up to new horizons.

The second issue is the embodied ambiguity of the imaginary and the real. For example, in storytelling research, the analysis of storytelling practices—usually talked about as practices of showing and telling—constitutes and positions subjects with varying degrees of agency. At a minimum, these subject positions include the narrator in the story and the narrator of the story, the audience addressed by the narrator in the story and the audience addressed by the narrator of the story. Of course, any narrative can position the narrator as a character in the story and as a narrated subject by that character. Or, to move in the direction of the storytelling event, the narrator can be positioned as an audience to the audience addressed by the narrator, and so on ad infinitum. Furthermore, these various subject positions, both actual and imaginary, are now extended in computer and new media technologies, through sampling and remixing. The challenge for communication researchers is to account for the motility of embodied subjects that articulate or “mash up” the real and the imaginary in the changing terrain of storytelling.

Conclusion

Performance and storytelling are key processes that can be understood theoretically as a reflexive and reversible combination of making and doing communication. They can be studied through the human science methodologies of semiology, ethnography, historiography, and phenomenology. Performance and storytelling appear in applications that range across aesthetic, political, cultural, pedagogic, and therapeutic contexts. These applications highlight differences in contexts, messages, codes, and contact and differences within and among participants. These comparative differences lead scholars to question the boundaries that define performance and storytelling as communication processes. Rehearsing these arguments—putting performance and storytelling on stage, in other words—is a way to *make* what scholars *do*, their poiesis and praxis, explicit and open to critique and revision.

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PERSUASION AND COMPLIANCE GAINING

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Persuasion is both ancient and modern, an art and a science. It probably dates back 50,000 years or so, when hominids first developed language (Wade, 2006). If one counts nonverbal cues, then the practice of persuasion is even older. One can easily imagine a stone-age fellow, Lothar, grunting and gesturing to borrow his neighbor's flint to make a fire. Regardless of its date of origin, the study of persuasion in Western civilization dates back to at least 399 BCE, when Aristotle wrote *Rhetoric*. The advent of controlled laboratory experiments on persuasion dates back to the 1940s and 1950s. Much of the credit for research in this era goes to Carl Hovland and the Yale Attitude Change Program, a think tank devoted to the study of persuasion (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953).

The Vitality of Persuasion

The study of persuasion is fascinating. Part of the attraction is that persuasion is all around us. Estimates of the amount of advertising we're exposed to range from 300 to 3,000 messages per day. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Most influence attempts take place in interpersonal

settings rather than advertising. Some of the allure is because so much remains to be learned about persuasion. As Henry Ford once remarked, "Half the money spent on advertising is wasted, but we don't know which half." A good deal is known about persuasion, but it is hardly an exact science.

Why learn about persuasion? First, persuasion is all around us and will persist in the "real world," whether studied as an academic discipline or not. Since a good deal of human communication is persuasive in nature, it is important to know how processes of social influence operate. Second, learning about persuasion can assist one in becoming a more effective persuader. Finally, a better knowledge of persuasion can make one a more discerning consumer of persuasive messages, especially unscrupulous forms of influence.

With this in mind, we provide an overview of research on persuasion. Our approach is social scientific in nature, which is to say we are interested in empirical, quantitative research. We cover both traditional and contemporary theories, concepts, principles, and processes. We also examine some newer, "cutting-edge" topics in persuasion. We try to touch the major bases, but because the field of persuasion is vast, we cannot include everything.

Macro Theories and Models of Persuasion

Persuasion scholars are interested in discovering how and why persuasion works. A variety of “umbrella” theories and models provide explanatory frameworks for how persuasion functions. We examine some of the best-known ones here.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model and the Heuristic-Systematic Model

The elaboration likelihood model (ELM; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and the heuristic-systematic model (HSM; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993) are dual-process models of persuasion. While the models are distinct in important ways, here we focus on their commonalities. Specifically, both models suggest that there are two basic modes by which people process persuasive messages. First, people might not put forth much thought or effort while processing a message. For instance, a consumer might rely on a name brand or celebrity endorser to make a decision. ELM calls this *peripheral processing*, while HSM calls it *heuristic processing*. Second, people might exert a lot of mental energy while processing a message, carefully analyzing evidence and scrutinizing message content. ELM calls this *central processing*, while HSM calls it *systematic processing*.

By way of example, let's say Loretta is pondering which brand of music player to buy. If she compares their features, looks up reviews on each brand, and reads about their warranties, she is using *central* or *systematic processing*. Suppose Luke also wants to buy a music player. Rather than agonizing over his decision, however, Luke buys the same brand as Loretta, because he trusts her judgment. Luke is using *peripheral* or *heuristic processing*.

Both the ELM and the HSM suggest that to use central/systematic processing, an individual must have the *motivation* and *ability* to do so. Motivation tends to be stronger if an issue affects a person directly. The person must also be able to understand and process the message. If a persuasive message were too technical, for example, a person might want to analyze the message but may be unable to do so.

The evidence suggests that persuasion that takes place via central/systematic processing is more lasting, whereas persuasion based on peripheral/heuristic processing is more temporary. Thinking about a message seems to cement it in the recipient's mind. Persuasion that occurs through central/systematic processing is also more resistant to change. Thus, a persuader who wants his or her message to stick should foster central/systematic processing of the message.

Both the ELM and the HSM are useful explanatory and predictive models of persuasion. Dozens of studies have been carried out using these two models, on a wide variety

of topics and issues, such as condom use, conservation, nuclear power, and vegetarianism. Neither theory is without its flaws, but both have held up well under testing.

The Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behavior

Two interrelated theories developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen focus on behavioral intentions, or what a person plans to do, as the most effective means of predicting actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) presume that people are rational decision makers who make use of the information available to them. Behavioral intentions are based on three key elements. The first is a person's *attitudes toward the behavior* in question. The second is *subjective norms*, which depend on what the person perceives *others* think about the behavior. The third is *perceived behavioral control*, or whether the person thinks she or he has the ability to perform the behavior in question. Combining these three elements, suppose Naomi is contemplating whether to become a vegan. The first element would be her attitude toward a vegan diet and lifestyle. Does she believe that a vegan diet is healthier, kinder to animals, and better for the environment? The second element would be Naomi's beliefs about how others view veganism. Does she believe that other people look favorably on vegans, or think vegans are cool? The third element would be whether she believed she could adhere to a vegan diet and lifestyle. How hard would it be to eschew all meat and dairy products? Could she do without leather clothing? Taken together, these three elements would form Naomi's behavioral intention to become a vegan.

A few caveats regarding the TRA and TPB are in order. One is that the person's behavior must be volitional. In many persuasive situations, a person's choices are constrained by other factors, such as the cooperation of others. Another limitation is that the model focuses on rational information processing and, hence, cannot explain irrational thinking, such as phobias and prejudices. Nevertheless, this theory has held up well under testing on a variety of topics, including brand loyalty, cheating by students, condom use, breast cancer prevention, flu vaccinations, and seat belt use.

Attitude Change Theories

The study of how attitudes are formed and changed has fascinated persuasion researchers for over 50 years. Attitudes are important because they explain and predict behavior reasonably well. Because attitudes tend to correspond with behavior, changing a person's attitudes may also change the person's behavior. Attitudes can be measured as well, by using a variety of scales.

People's attitudes are often entrenched. Therefore, it is usually easier to align a persuasive message with an audience's existing attitudes than to change audience's attitudes, just as it is easier to tailor a suit to fit the customer than it is to change the customer's physique to fit the suit. It also is easier to nudge receivers' attitudes in a series of smaller steps than in one full swoop. As is the case with all persuasion, when attempting to change attitudes, a persuader may only achieve some of what she or he is after. Changes in attitudes also may be transitory.

Cognitive Consistency Theories

Attitudes don't exist in isolation, they occur in clusters. A person's attitudes toward gay adoption, for instance, would probably correlate with the person's attitudes toward gay marriage. Changes in one attitude tend to reverberate throughout related attitude structures. A variety of consistency theories, which we've melded into one general framework here, explain this process.

People tend to strive for consistency among their attitudes. If a person loves cats, it would be better if his or her significant other liked cats too. As such, the consistency principle can be used by persuaders quite effectively. A persuader might point out that a person holds conflicting attitudes by saying, "If you say you are against torture, then how can you be in favor of 'water-boarding'?" Even the UN condemns 'water-boarding' as a form of torture." A persuader might also point out that holding a particular attitude is inconsistent with another's behavior. For instance, one might say, "You claim to be opposed to illegal immigration, but your nanny has no green card. Why don't you practice what you preach?" A persuader can also try to demonstrate that attitudes held by another are not conflicting but rather consistent with each other. A person might argue, "Science and religion are not mutually exclusive. One can believe in science and god at the same time."

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Cognitive dissonance theory focuses on the anxiety that accompanies decision making. The theory explains "buyer's remorse," or the angst associated with second-guessing an important decision (Festinger, 1957). We don't relish finding ourselves in a situation where someone says, "I told you so" or we think to ourselves, "I should have known better." To reduce dissonance, people engage in a variety of strategies, such as denial, bolstering, and rationalization. People also can change their behavior or try to change another's behavior. The *magnitude of dissonance* one experiences hinges on how much freedom one has in making a decision; the freer the choice, the greater the dissonance. The amount of time and effort that one puts into a decision also affects the severity of the dissonance; the greater the energy or sacrifice involved, the greater the dissonance.

Another intriguing feature of cognitive dissonance theory involves the role of *counter-attitudinal advocacy* (CAA). If a person voluntarily advocates a position contrary to his or her own personal views, the person will tend to experience dissonance. This causes the person's attitudes to shift, though not entirely, in the direction of the counter-attitudinal position. The person must freely choose to engage in CAA, however. If the person is bribed or coerced into doing so, little or no dissonance will be aroused.

Social Judgment Theory

Carolyn and Muzafer Sherif's social judgment theory (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965) explains that the more ego involved a person is in a topic, the more the person will tend to distort persuasive messages on that issue. The theory posits that on any given topic, there is a range of positions that can be advocated. The position a person finds most acceptable serves as an *anchor point* or benchmark by which other messages are judged. When exposed to a persuasive message, a person initially perceives the message as falling into his or her latitude of acceptance (LOA), latitude of rejection (LOR), or latitude of non-commitment (LNC).

A message that falls within the range of positions that a person judges as acceptable is within the person's LOA. A persuader who advocates such a message is "preaching to the choir." A message that falls outside the range of tolerable positions is in the person's LOR. A persuader who advocates such a message faces a hostile audience. Issues on which the person has no opinion fall within the person's (LNC). Importantly, the more ego involved a person is in an issue, the *narrower* his or her LOA and the *wider* his or her LOR are.

Social judgment theory maintains that persuasive messages tend to be distorted by receivers. Specifically, a message that falls within a receiver's LOA is distorted favorably and perceived as *closer* to the receiver's anchor position than it really is (*assimilation effect*). A message that falls inside a receiver's LOR is distorted negatively and perceived as farther from the receiver's anchor position than it really is (*contrast effect*).

A persuader is best advised *not* to advocate a position that falls within the receiver's LOR. Such a message will likely be rejected out of hand. Instead, a persuader should advocate a position that is discrepant from the receiver's anchor yet still close enough to the receiver's anchor to trigger the assimilation effect. This is where *message discrepancy* enters the picture. The greater the disparity between a persuader's position and the receiver's anchor, the more the attitude change that occurs, but—and this is important—only if the message does not cross the line and fall within the receiver's LOR (Siero & Jan Doosje, 1993). Effective persuasion, then, is rarely a one-shot effort. A person's attitudes must be "nudged" along via a series of

messages that are different from, but not too different from, the person's own position.

Traditional Research Foci

Traditional research on social influence focuses on several key components in the persuasion process. Notably, Berlo (1960) identified the source, the message itself, the channel by which the message is transmitted, and the receiver as primary components in communication and persuasive interactions. This section examines the role of each.

The Source

Source credibility, perhaps the most studied concept in the field of persuasion, refers to how believable audiences perceive a communicator to be. It would seem intuitive that the source of a message has a good deal to do with the message's persuasiveness. That is why companies pay handsomely for credible spokespersons to endorse their goods and services. Not any celebrity can sell any product, however. The *match-up hypothesis* (Kamins, 1990) suggests that the source and the brand must be a good fit.

Credibility Characteristics

Source credibility is a *perceptual phenomenon*. It exists in the eye of the beholder. Related to this is the recognition that credibility is also *situational*. A source might be regarded as credible in one persuasive context but not in another. Source credibility is also *dynamic*. It can change over time or even during the course of a single speech.

Researchers have argued for some time over what the fundamental dimensions of credibility are. There is now general agreement that there are three *primary dimensions*. These dimensions, identified by James McCroskey, are *expertise* (sometimes labeled competence), *trustworthiness* (sometimes called character), and *goodwill* (also known as perceived caring) (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). These dimensions almost always play a role in the evaluation of sources. If you had a serious medical condition, for example, you would want a physician who was highly knowledgeable about your condition (expertise). You would also want a doctor you could trust, one who wouldn't overbill you or recommend unnecessary treatment (trustworthiness). You would also want a doctor with a good "bedside manner," one who took an interest in your personal well-being (goodwill).

Credibility is almost always beneficial for a persuader. Since credibility is often a peripheral cue, receivers with low involvement are more likely to succumb to source influence than receivers with high involvement. Source credibility is not as great an asset if receivers use central processing. Credibility is not always a peripheral cue, however. There are occasions when receivers use central processing to scrutinize a source's credentials, knowledge,

and understanding of an issue. Evaluating the veracity of a witness's statements in a criminal trial, for example, would require jurors to use central processing.

The Message

Order Effects

Quintillian, the great Roman rhetorician, noted that just as generals must strategically place their troops on a battlefield, so too should persuaders strategically place their arguments within a speech (Corbett, 1971). This section provides a glimpse of other ways in which the order of messages affects persuasion.

First, imagine you are preparing a speech and have several arguments—some stronger, some weaker—that you plan to include in the speech. Where should you place them? Most research on this topic advises putting your best arguments either first (*anticlimax order*) or last (*climax order*) rather than sandwiching them in the middle (*pyramidal order*). Of course, this assumes that the audience is capable of distinguishing between strong and weak arguments. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. For example, a study by Petty and Cacioppo (1984) found that people who were not involved in a topic were more persuaded by the quantity of arguments (a peripheral cue) than by their quality (a central cue).

A second issue has to do with the order in which an audience is exposed to opposing messages. For example, if two people are arguing on different sides of an issue, who should speak first? The research results are mixed. Some studies suggest that the material presented first has more influence, a *primacy effect*, while other studies suggest that the material presented last has an advantage, a *recency effect*. Even so, the nature of the persuasive encounter can tip the scales one way or another. One condition, for example, is timing. Specifically, when people hear back-to-back messages and then wait some time before making a decision, the first message tends to be more influential. On the other hand, if people hear one message, wait some time before hearing the opposing message, and then decide immediately afterward, the second message tends to be more influential (see Miller & Campbell, 1959).

Inoculation

The material presented first has the additional advantage of facilitating *inoculation*. Inoculation theory is based on a biological metaphor (McGuire, 1964). In the same way that being exposed to a small dose of a virus defends you against subsequent exposure to the virus (think flu shots), being exposed to a small dose of a persuasive argument, made weak through refutation, defends you against the argument later on.

Two key components of inoculation are *threat* and *refutational preemption* (Pfau & Szabo, 2004). Threat, or warning people that existing attitudes are about to be challenged,

motivates them to strengthen their attitudes. Refutational preemption, the process of raising and refuting challenges, provides the ammunition required to bolster the attitudes against attack. By way of example, a parent might tell a child, “When other kids tell you that smoking is cool (threat), remember that cigarettes are a leading cause of cancer, which definitely isn’t cool (refutation).” Previous literature suggests that inoculation is not only robust under the proper conditions, it also enjoys widespread application to a number of persuasive contexts. What’s more, inoculating people against one set of arguments increases their resistance to other, different arguments on the same issue.

One-Sided Versus Two-Sided Messages

The importance of the refutational component of inoculation is underlined by a related area of research on *message sidedness*. Such research asks whether persuaders should present only their side of the argument or opposing arguments as well. The answer depends on the nature of the arguments that are presented. Specifically, *two-sided messages* (those including both supportive and opposing arguments) are more persuasive than *one-sided arguments* but *only if* the opposing arguments are refuted (Allen, 1998). When opposing arguments are raised but not refuted, then one-sided messages are more persuasive. Thus, the best bet is to use a two-sided, refutational approach.

Mere Exposure Effect

Up to this point, we have examined what happens when audiences are exposed to multiple arguments presented in some order. What happens, though, when audiences are presented with the same message repeatedly? According to the Mere Exposure Effect (Zajonc, 1968), the more we are exposed to an unfamiliar stimulus, the more favorably we evaluate it. Perhaps you’ve noticed that after hearing a song several times, you like it more than you did at first. The same is often true of TV commercials too.

One explanation for the Mere Exposure Effect is *perceptual fluency*, which posits that positive feelings are generated by the increasing ease with which a stimulus is processed. Of course, any message will wear out eventually, and some messages are annoying even at first exposure. Even so, research shows that incidental messages (banner ads, pop-ups) can be viewed up to 20 times before wear-out occurs (Fong, Singh, & Ahluwalia, 2007).

Narrative Versus Statistical Evidence

Earlier, we noted that when an audience has low involvement in an issue, the sheer quantity of arguments matters the most. When an audience is highly involved in an issue, the quality of arguments is what counts. A related concern has to do with *what form* of proof is the most effective, narrative or statistical evidence? *Narrative*

evidence is anecdotal evidence, told in narrative form, presented as a case study, or related as personal accounts. *Statistical evidence* consists of averages, percentages, and other numerical proof.

Numerous studies have compared the effectiveness of these two forms of proof. The most reliable generalization to date is that statistical proof has a slight edge over narrative proof (Preiss & Allen, 1998). Nevertheless, a well-crafted narrative can be quite compelling, and numbers don’t always speak for themselves. The best advice we can offer is to combine the two. Begin with a narrative example, then use statistics to demonstrate that the example is not an isolated case.

Fear and Other Motivational Appeals

When a coach gives a half-time locker room speech, she or he often employs motivational appeals to fire up the team. Motivational appeals are “external inducements, often of an emotional nature, that are designed to increase an individual’s drive to undertake some course of action” (Gass & Seiter, 2007, p. 271). A variety of motivational appeals have been studied, including fear appeals, guilt appeals, humorous appeals, patriotic appeals, pity ploys, and sex appeals. For brevity’s sake, we focus on fear appeals here.

Arousing fear in people depends on their level of *perceived vulnerability*. Vulnerability hinges on receivers’ perceptions of the probability, severity, and immediacy of the fearful consequences. Kim Witte has built on previous research to develop the extended parallel process model (EPPM), which explains how and when fear appeals are most likely to be effective (Cho & Witte, 2004). The EPPM is a dual-process model, which posits two methods of processing a fear-arousing message. The first, *danger control*, is a constructive response, which focuses on ways of avoiding or minimizing the danger. The second, *fear control*, is a counterproductive response, such as panic or freezing. To facilitate danger control, a fear appeal must provide specific recommendations that are perceived as efficacious or workable. Perceived efficacy includes *response efficacy*, which consists of identifying a practical, feasible remedy, and *self-efficacy*—whether a receiver believes she or he, personally, can undertake that course of action.

To illustrate, let’s say a physician is trying to convince an elderly patient to get an influenza vaccination. To increase perceived vulnerability, the doctor might mention the number of flu-related deaths annually and the susceptibility of seniors to the flu. To promote danger control, the doctor could emphasize that flu shots are safe and reasonably effective (response efficacy). To encourage self-efficacy, the doctor could say, “I can give you an inoculation today, you won’t need to reschedule a visit, and it’s covered by your health plan (self-efficacy).” Scaring the patient without providing a practical solution would likely result in fear control.

Considerable research has been conducted on fear appeals. The preponderance of research shows that they work quite well. To maximize their effectiveness, however, a persuader must concentrate on triggering danger control rather than fear control.

The Channel

The means by which a message is transmitted—whether spoken, printed, televised or, more recently, online—is an important consideration when studying persuasion. A good deal of work has examined the role of language and nonverbal communication in the persuasion process. This section highlights some of that work.

Language

Two important features of language are intensity and power. *Language intensity* refers to how emotional, metaphorical, opinionated, forceful, and evaluative language is. For example, saying “This corporation is emitting pollution” is less intense than saying “This corporation is raping the environment.” One theory that explains when and under what circumstances intense language is more effective is the language expectancy theory (LET) (see Burgoon & Siegel, 2004). LET argues that when persuaders use intense language, they violate our expectations about social norms regarding communication. If the source is perceived positively (e.g., the source is attractive or credible), intense language is more persuasive. If the source is perceived negatively, the reverse is true.

A second feature of language is the degree to which it is perceived as powerless. Among other mannerisms, *powerless language* is characterized by hesitations (e.g., “Uh,” “You know”), hedges (e.g., “I guess I sort of agree”), intensifiers (e.g., “I really agree very much”), and polite forms (e.g., “Excuse me. If you wouldn’t mind . . .”). In general, such tendencies decrease a source’s credibility and persuasiveness. A study by Johnson and Vinson (1990), for example revealed that even a few instances of powerless speech reduced the overall persuasiveness of a message.

Nonverbal Behavior

While it is common for people to think of words when they consider persuasion, nonverbal behavior has as much, if not more, persuasive impact. The direct effects model of immediacy (Andersen, 2004) asserts that nonverbal behavior is particularly persuasive when it communicates warmth and involvement with other people. *Immediacy behaviors* such as eye contact, appropriate touch, open body positions, smiling, and pleasant tone of voice are related to increased compliance in a variety of contexts. Nonverbal cues also can foster a *halo effect*, whereby people assume that one positive aspect of a person generalizes to other favorable qualities of the person. For instance, an attractive person also might be perceived as more intelligent or capable, which, in turn, aids her or him in gaining compliance.

Not all research, however, presents such a simple picture of the relationship between nonverbal behavior and persuasion. Earlier, we noted that intense language may violate people’s expectations and, as a result, can produce positive or negative effects depending on how the source is perceived. Expectancy violations theory (Burgoon, 1994) suggests that the same process takes place when a source violates people’s expectations for nonverbal behavior. Thus, a source who stands closer to a person than normally would be expected may be more or less persuasive depending on whether the violation is perceived positively or negatively. A high-credibility source can therefore get away with “bending the rules” better than a low-credibility source.

The Audience

Effective persuaders do not move the audience to the message; they move the message to the audience. This involves more than simply paying attention and adjusting to factors such as the age, educational level, intelligence, or size of the audience. Sometimes other audience characteristics come into play. The search for a single trait or characteristic that makes people persuadable has been unsuccessful. Nevertheless, a number of less global characteristics have been identified as important. In this section, we briefly touch on a few of them.

Gender

Although some early research suggested that females were more persuadable than males, later work showed no differences and, instead, tried to explain *when* gender differences could be expected. Some work, for instance, found support for a *cross-sex effect*, whereby people were more easily influenced by members of the opposite sex than by members of the same sex.

Culture

Cultural differences play a major role in the way people respond to influence attempts. Some cultures are *individualistic*, valuing independence and the goals of the individual over those of the group, while others are *collectivistic*, valuing harmony, conformity, and concern for others. As such, messages that appeal to personal benefits and success tend to be more effective in individualistic cultures, while those that emphasize family and group goals tend to be more effective in collectivistic cultures (Han & Shavitt, 1994).

Traits

A number of personality traits affect the way persuasive messages are processed. To illustrate, we briefly mention two. First, people high in the *need for cognition* enjoy effortful thinking more than those low in the need. Because they pay more attention, they tend to be persuaded by strong, compelling arguments while their counterparts are

more likely to be persuaded via peripheral cues (attractive source, brand loyalty). Second, *dogmatic/ authoritarian* people see the world in “black and white” and follow authoritative leaders blindly. As such, they tend to be rigid and difficult to persuade, *unless* the source happens to be a respected authority.

Compliance Gaining

While traditional persuasion research tends to focus on mass persuasion and attitude change, compliance-gaining research tends to focus on interpersonal influence in “face-to-face” contexts and, as its name implies, on actual behavioral compliance. This section examines research on message selection and production, the principles underlying why people comply with requests, and sequential persuasion tactics.

The Selection of Compliance-Gaining Messages

Early studies sought to identify what types of compliance-gaining strategies people are likely to select. A typical research design presented participants with hypothetical scenarios and asked them to report which strategies they were likely to employ. Depending on the study, some participants generated their own strategies, while others selected strategies from a predetermined list. Results of such studies yielded *typologies* of compliance-gaining tactics. For example, Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) seminal study identified 16 different strategies (such as promise of reward, threat of punishment, liking, and debt). Despite the contributions of such research, it has been criticized for being atheoretical and for not reflecting the strategies people use in “real life.”

Goals and the Production of Compliance-Gaining Messages

More recent research has attempted to understand how goals influence the production of compliance-gaining messages. Two noteworthy examples are politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and the goals-plans-action (G-P-A) model (Dillard, 2004). First, according to politeness theory, people seek approval (known as *positive face*) and try to avoid disapproval (known as *negative face*). Because compliance-gaining goals may differ in the degree to which they threaten face needs, such goals play an important role in shaping compliance-gaining behavior. For example, because asking a friend to help you paint your house may threaten face more than asking the friend to pay back \$20, when seeking help in painting, you may be less direct and provide more reasons for the imposition.

Similarly, the G-P-A model suggests that although people have the primary goal of gaining compliance, a number of secondary goals also influence their choice of strategies. For example, even if you thought that a threat might be effective at gaining compliance (primary goal), you might refrain from using it if you thought it might damage your relationship with the other person (secondary goal).

Principles Underlying Why People Comply With Requests

Based on his observations of successful, real-life persuaders (e.g., salespeople, fund-raisers, advertisers, recruiters), Robert Cialdini (2001) identified several principles explaining why people comply with requests. First, the principle of *reciprocity* suggests that people should return favors. A person who has received a favor is likely to feel indebted and, in turn, comply with a request for a return favor. Second, the principle of *scarcity* states that people value things that are in short supply. According to this principle, if shoppers believe that the items they are examining are limited, they would be more anxious to purchase the items. The third principle, *consistency/commitment*, suggests that once people become committed to some idea or cause, they are likely to behave consistently with it. For instance, a person who was committed to Mac computers would be unlikely to buy a PC. The fourth and fifth principles—*authority* and *similarity/liking*—suggest that we are more likely to comply with requests from credible sources who are likable and similar to us. The next principle, *contrast*, suggests that judgments are relative to one another. For instance, a \$3,000 diamond ring may seem expensive when compared with a \$100 ring but cheap when compared with a \$40,000 ring. Finally, the principle of *social proof* suggests that we are more likely to respond favorably to popular items (e.g., best-selling books) than to unpopular ones. We will discuss this notion in more detail later.

Sequential Persuasion

Although using a direct request is probably the most common approach to compliance gaining, compliance-gaining attempts are often more elaborate. A large body of research illustrates that successful compliance gaining often occurs in stages. In this section, we discuss four commonly studied sequential approaches to compliance gaining.

The two sequential approaches to seeking compliance that have probably received the most research attention are the *foot-in-the-door* (FITD) and the *door-in-the-face* (DITF) tactics, which are essentially mirror images of one another. Specifically, in the first (FITD), a persuader follows a small request, which must be agreed to, with a larger one; in the second (DITF), a persuader follows a large request, which is denied, with a smaller one. In both

cases, exposure to the initial request makes one much more likely to comply with a subsequent request. A common explanation for the FITD effect is that people who comply with the small request perceive themselves as being helpful, agreeable, or altruistic. To remain consistent, they go along with the second request. In contrast, the reciprocity and contrast principles are common explanations for the DITF effect. Specifically, if the larger, second request is perceived as a concession, persuadees may feel obligated to reciprocate by agreeing to the second request. On the other hand, people may comply with the follow-up request because, when contrasted with the initial request, it seems smaller than it normally would have.

Two additional sequential compliance-gaining tactics are the *lowball* and the *bait-and-switch*. Both of these ethically unsavory tactics work by first getting persuadees to commit to something that seems desirable but then changing the deal, ultimately getting them to agree to something that is less desirable. In the lowball procedure, once people agree to perform some behavior (e.g., buy a computer for \$1,000), they are asked to perform the same behavior at a higher cost (e.g., buy the same computer for \$2,000).

In the bait-and-switch procedure, once people agree to perform some behavior (e.g., buy a stereo for \$1,000), they are asked to perform a different, less desirable behavior (e.g., buy a different, inferior computer for \$1,000). A common explanation for both procedures is that once people agree to the initial request, they become psychologically committed and have difficulty altering their decision.

Buzz Marketing

Earlier, we mentioned the principle of social proof, which suggests that we use other people's behavior as evidence when making decisions about how we will behave. In other words, if other people have behaved in a certain way, we tend to follow suit. Although this idea is not new, recently it has become the basis of a common marketing strategy often referred to as "buzz marketing" or "viral marketing." In his best-selling book *The Tipping Point*, Gladwell (2002) explained that in the same way a contagious person can spread an epidemic, small groups of influential people can cause fashion trends or increase the popularity of a new product. Based on this assumption, companies hire people to create a buzz about their products. For example, attractive people might be hired as "poseurs" to hang out in trendy bars and clubs and say nice things about a particular brand of beer. These "undercover" consumers are trained to make the product seem exciting while adapting their communication to whoever they are persuading. This approach to persuasion is also well suited to the Internet. For example, personal blogs provide an opportunity for everyday persuaders to reach more potential consumers about new products. We predict that such approaches will be an important, fertile ground for new research on persuasion.

The Future of Persuasion Research

Persuasion research has a long and venerable history. Although it is difficult to know what the future holds, some educated guesses can be made about likely research avenues for the next decade or so. Just as the concept of tipping points influenced the past decade, the concept of *microtrends* may shape the next decade. Penn and Zalesne (2007) have stressed the importance of looking at distinctive niche groups to predict societal trends. These include "extreme commuters," "cougers," "vegan children," and "archery moms," among others. Even small trends, including countertrends, can have a powerful effect on society.

Persuasion on the Internet holds considerable promise as a topic of research. Studies on the impact of blogging and social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook are already under way. And because people are increasingly reliant on cellphones (via voice, texting, and images) research on the nature and impact of "mobile persuasion" would seem fruitful.

Visual persuasion is becoming an important area of investigation as well. As more people view, rather than read, persuasion messages, visual influence is becoming a vital arena for research. A phenomenon dubbed the *Streisand Effect* has already sparked attention. Similar to the scarcity principle, when demands are made to remove videos or documents on the Web, hits for those materials increase dramatically. It seems a "forbidden fruit" is all the more attractive. The Streisand Effect is so named because the singer-actress filed a lawsuit, which was denied, against a photographer who took aerial photos of the Malibu coastline, including her estate.

Physiological measures of persuasion also may play a prominent role in future research. During the last Superbowl, researchers conducted brain scans of viewers watching Doritos and Emerald Nuts commercials. The Doritos spots elicited much more brain activity. Brain scans may become as popular as focus groups now are for marketing.

We believe that no matter what direction(s) the study of persuasion takes, it will remain a fascinating field of inquiry. A good deal is known about persuasion, but it is hardly an exact science. Many questions remain to be answered, and some important questions have to be asked.

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IDENTITY AS CONSTITUTED IN COMMUNICATION

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“**W**ho am I?” From ancient Greek philosophers who emphasized the importance of “know[ing] thyself” to well-known intellectuals in the 20th century, scholars have wrestled with theoretical, empirical, and practical questions about identity (Carbaugh, 1996; Eisenberg, 2001; Mead, 1934, 1936; Strauss, 1956). Questions about identity challenge each of us individually, in our web of social relationships with family and friends, and in our workplaces and communities. Scholars from communication studies have joined scholars from other disciplines including philosophy, sociology, and social psychology in studying identity.

A number of these scholars have engaged in ongoing conversations around the notion that the construction of individual, relational, and group identities is an ongoing process that occurs in social interaction. Our goal in this chapter is to explore how this scholarly conversation about identity as constructed in relationship with others has evolved over the past century and how identity construction is being studied as a communication phenomenon at the beginning of the 21st century. The conversation starts with comparing the idea of identity as constituted in communication with other perspectives of identity.

The Study of Identity

The psychological concept of identity has generally been synonymous with self-definition, or the question “Who am I?” (Baumeister, 1987; Eisenberg, 2001; Gergen, 1971; Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). Because persons in the Western world think of themselves as “individuals,” one’s identity is commonly thought to be located somewhere within one’s inner being or psyche. Baumeister (1987) described this “inner nature of selfhood” as being characteristic of “modern psychological thought” (p. 165). Carbaugh (1996) explained the psychologically based concept of identity as follows: “The individual has a ‘self’ or something inside of himself or herself that is special, unique, yet rather stable across scenes and times” (p. 28). Thus, an individual’s identity is not only characteristic of a unique person but is expected to be somewhat consistent over time, as illustrated by the Latin etymology for the word *identity*, meaning “sameness” (Halsey, 1983). Psychologically based perspectives on identity have had a great deal of influence on how the average American thinks about his or her own identity.

Carbaugh (1996) characterized the modern American search for identity as “the serious task of digging deeper into their own and others’ ‘core’ selves” (p. 194). Carbaugh

explained three popular “discourses of identity” in 20th-century American culture: (1) the discourse of biology, (2) the discourse of psychology, and (3) the discourse of cultural and social identity. The discourse of biology centers on identity as reflecting one’s biological makeup with regard to race, ethnicity, and/or sexuality. For example, your authors both identify as Anglo, heterosexual females. The discourse of psychology refers to identity in terms of a person’s internal psychological attributes or personality traits, characterizing ourselves and others as “outgoing,” “shy,” “intellectual,” or “having a great sense of humor.” The third discourse, of cultural and social identity, discusses individuals’ identities in relation to their membership in particular groups. For example, your authors would identify as “upper middle class” and “academics.” A common thread running through each of these three popular discourses of identity is their emphasis on identity as located within individuals, or, as Eisenberg (2001) characterized it, “the idea of an independent, fixed, unitary self” (p. 536).

An interaction that one of us had with a student in our undergraduate interpersonal communication classroom last semester illustrates this pervasive notion of identity as internal and individual. The student objected when presented with the idea of self being constructed in interaction with others. The student suggested that *mature* adult persons should not allow others to influence their self-concepts! When asked by the professor, “How do you know what you look like?” she initially responded with a puzzled expression. After a bit of thought, she responded, “Because we can look in a mirror and see ourselves.” Ah-ha. Just as we need a mirror to know what we look like physically, we need the mirror of other people’s reactions to us to gain insight into “who we are.” This example with the student highlights Herbert Cooley’s concept of the “looking glass self” (1902), perhaps one of the most well-known early-20th-century articulations of the social construction of self.

Over the course of the 20th century and into the 21st century, the perspective that our identities are constructed through our interactions and relationships with others has been further theorized, clarified, and refined. Our purpose in the remainder of this chapter is threefold: (1) to discuss the intellectual heritage of the idea that identities are constituted in communication; (2) to examine how communication theorists have integrated this foundational scholarship into communication approaches; and (3) to explore four different theoretical perspectives for studying identity, providing examples of how communication scholars have used each of these theories in empirical research. Finally, we end by briefly offering some suggestions for additional perspectives that might be profitably used by communication scholars studying issues of identity. We begin the following section by tracing the development of the idea that identity is located in social interaction through the process of communication.

Communication-Based Explanations of Identity

The notion that the identities of self and others are constructed through interaction has been addressed by scholars across several disciplines, including communication studies. The communication scholar Donal Carbaugh (1996) explained, “Social identities are not just inside a self, but *enacted* in scenes; communication is not just a revelation of self, but its *formative fashioning* [italics added]” (p. xiv). Three scholars in the first half of the 20th century who had primary roles in identifying communication as the way we construct identity were George Herbert Mead, Kenneth Burke, and Erving Goffman. Midcentury, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann based their theoretical perspective of the social construction of reality (including the construction of selves) on the foundations laid by these earlier scholars. Diverse contemporary communication theorists have built on these earlier intellectual traditions, as we shall see. We begin with Mead, who coherently articulated the relationship between communication and the construction of identity in the early part of the 20th century.

The Intellectual Heritage of Mead, Burke, and Goffman

The philosopher George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) tried to make sense of the relationship between individuals, their thought processes, and the broader social structure, leading to his book *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934). One of Mead’s important contributions was his conception of selves and society as being created in a continually evolving process.

Mead explained his thinking about identity in an essay titled “The Problem of Society: How We Become Selves” (1936). Mead’s answer to how the self comes into existence was summarized at the conclusion of that essay. “A self can arise only where there is a social process within which this self has had its initiation. It arises within that process. For that process, the communication and participation . . . is essential” (as cited in Strauss, 1956, p. 42). Mead (1934) believed that selves were created through the process of social interaction. Both one’s self (identity) and one’s mind (the ability to use language to symbolize thought) were acquired through communication with others (Mead, 1934; Meltzer, 1967). Because language is symbolic and requires social interaction with others, Mead’s theoretical perspective has become known as “Symbolic Interaction.” Because Mead’s theory of identity construction is based on the use of language and social interaction, he has been a significant influence on many communication scholars as well as those in sociology and psychology.

There is ample evidence that Kenneth Burke (1897–1993) was influenced by the ideas of Mead (McLemee, 2001). Burke was a rhetorician and has been influential for communication scholars. Burke grappled with issues of language, identity, and power. Burke's (1966) overarching concern with language is reflected in his well-known definition of [hu]man: "*Being bodies that learn language thereby becoming wordlings; humans are the symbol-making, symbol-using, symbol-misusing animal.*" Following Mead, Burke saw language as the way human beings interface with society and thus construct identities in an ongoing process. Burke's conceptualization of identity, like Mead's, hinged on the belief that individuals do not have identities apart from their interaction with others. Burke (1937) derided the idea that "an individual's 'identity' is something private, peculiar to himself" (p. 263). Burke believed that there was no such thing as a "core self" and that "the self, divorced from the social bases of experience which constitute identity, is a void" (Branaman, 1994).

Burke emphasized the importance of focusing attention on the language choices people make. In another oft-quoted statement, Burke (1966) pointed out that the language we *select* simultaneously *reflects* one portion of reality while it *deflects* another portion of reality (p. 45). The implications for identity are obvious: As we call attention to one aspect of our identity, we deflect attention away from other aspects of our identity. Burke saw language primarily as a rhetorical strategy for social change, and thus, his work has been central for rhetorical and critical scholars (Branaman, 1994). Burke's scholarship has been influential for others also, including Goffman.

Erving Goffman (1922–1982) was a sociologist who, like Mead and Burke, emphasized the essential role of social interaction in identity formation. The title of Goffman's well-known book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) emphasized the performative perspective of identity, which he often referred to as "impression management." Goffman's thesis was that people are generally predisposed to present themselves in a positive manner consistent with their desired image. This "presentation" is done through communication in social interaction.

While Goffman (1959) used dramaturgical metaphors of the stage (e.g., "actors," "role," "performing"), he was clear that the "presentation of self" is not just an act for others' benefit. He cited Park (1950), who pointed out, "It is probably no historical accident that the word person, in its first meaning is a mask. It is rather recognition of the fact that everyone is always and everywhere, more or less consciously, playing a role" (p. 249). Goffman (1959) went on to say that "so far as this mask represents the conception we have formed of ourselves—the role we are striving to live up to—this mask *is* our truer self, *the self we would like to be* [italics added]" (p. 19). Goffman

emphasized that rather than being located within the individual, the self is located in interaction with others, the "product of a scene that comes off" and "something of collaborative manufacture" (pp. 252–253). Like both Mead and Burke before him, Goffman rejected the notion of a preexisting essential core self.

A particularly valuable contribution from Goffman was his contention that identities are not validated until they are recognized and supported by others. The identities we want to claim for ourselves, as well as how we behave, are influenced by our interactions with others. Individuals do not just get to be who they want to be; their desired identities must be accepted and supported by others (Carbaugh, 1996; Goffman, 1963). This is the basis for arguing that identities are *negotiated* in social interaction.

In the early part of the 20th century, Mead, Burke, and Goffman contributed to our foundational understandings of identity as constructed in social interaction with others, before the discipline's current focus on social science and communication theory became prominent. There was one other important contribution to this body of scholarship on the construction of identity that we should acknowledge—Berger and Luckmann.

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) were sociologists who were significantly influenced by Mead and the symbolic-interactionist approach, as well as by Goffman, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and others. At the center of their classic book *The Social Construction of Reality* was the assertion that *all* human experience, including identity, is socially constructed as a subjective reality. Identity is "a phenomenon that emerges from the dialectic between individual and society" (p. 174). Like Mead, Goffman, and Burke, Berger and Luckmann contended that the concept of "self" is meaningless without social interaction. Berger and Luckmann emphasized the essential role of interaction with "significant others" in developing and maintaining personal identities, as well as the role of others in society.

Like the earlier scholars, Berger and Luckmann (1966) recognized that language—more specifically, face-to-face conversation—is the "vehicle" that maintains social reality and identity. "The reality of everyday life further presents itself to me as an intersubjective world, a world that I share with others . . . Indeed, I cannot exist in everyday life without continually interacting and communicating with others" (pp. 22–23). Like Goffman, Berger and Luckmann recognized that social processes and structures are also necessary for maintaining desired identities.

Berger and Luckmann's (1966) theoretical perspective has had great import for the study of identity by communication scholars for at least two reasons: First, these authors were able to synthesize and integrate much of the previous thinking on the essential role of communication and social interaction in identity processes. Second, by coining the

phrase “the social construction of reality,” they were able to give us a vocabulary with which to discuss identity issues.

In summary, the intellectual heritage of Mead, Burke, Goffman, and Berger and Luckmann rejected the idea of a preformed self coming into the social world. They all saw the answer to the question of identity (“Who am I?”) as being communicatively constructed in social interaction with others. As communication scholars started studying identity issues in social and personal relationships, they turned to this body of scholarship for theoretical grounding.

Communication Approaches to the Study of Identity

Early in the 20th century, what we now know as communication studies focused on the study of rhetoric and public speaking. In the second half of the century, the focus of the discipline broadened to include a social scientific, primarily logical-empirical research approach to communication issues (Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006). These scholars, particularly those in interpersonal communication, took up the study of identity based on the scholarship we discussed above. Three direct legacies of these earlier scholars were (1) rules-based approaches, (2) cultural communication approaches, and (3) postmodern approaches.

Rules-Based Approaches

Mead and Burke influenced the work of communication theorists such as Cushman, Pearce, and their colleagues in the 1970s and 1980s (Carbaugh, 1996). Cushman’s (1977) rules-based perspective on communication sprang from the premise that “interpersonal communication has as its principal goal the coordination of human activity in regard to the development, presentation, and validation of individual self-concepts” (p. 39). The coordinated management of meaning (CMM) theory (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Cronen, 1980) provided a theoretical response to the question “What are they [people] making together?” Thus, the CMM theory asserted that *identities*, as well as episodes, relationships, and cultures, were created by the interaction between persons, a “process of co-construction, of being made by the joint action of multiple persons” (Pearce, 2004, p. 43). Although they acknowledged identities as being co-constructed through communication, researchers using the CMM and other rules-based theories have tended to focus on communicative outcomes such as the resolution of conflicts rather than identity issues per se, and the CMM theory has been used by organizational communication scholars more than those studying interpersonal communication (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008). A second communication approach growing out of the earlier foundational work on identity was cultural communication.

Cultural Communication Approaches

The work of Carbaugh and Philipsen in the 1990s exemplifies the cultural communication approach growing out of the heritage of Mead, Burke, and Goffman. Carbaugh’s (1996) primary interest has been studying identity as communicatively constructed in specific sociocultural contexts. Carbaugh based his study of communication and social identity on the twin perspectives of identity constructed through communication and cultural ethnography. He articulated that identities are not only *socially constructed* through communication practices but are situated firmly in specific cultural and historical settings. Thus, individuals have not just “an identity” but rather multiple identities across situated social contexts, a notion that has been taken up by postmodern scholars (e.g., Eisenberg, 2001; Gergen, 2000).

Following Burke’s contention that individuals’ choices of words were important clues to their identities, Carbaugh theorized that communication researchers could investigate the construction of social identities by attending to the *symbols*, *forms*, and *meanings* in situated social interactions. For example, in his study of marital naming practices and women’s marital identities, Carbaugh (1996) found that women’s choices about their surnames after marriage reflected and constructed particular attitudes, values, and beliefs they had about themselves and their marital relationships.

Similarly influenced by Burke, Philipsen (1992) looked at particular ways of speaking in speech communities (such as his classic study of Teamsterville, a working-class industrial community in Chicago). Using a theoretical perspective he called the “ethnography of speaking,” Philipsen claimed that “personal identity, social reality, and social actions are constituted in—created, negotiated, and transformed, as well as reflected in—the communicative conduct of which speaking is a part” (p. 15). Operating from the assumptions that ways of speaking are structured, socially and culturally distinctive, and based in social life, Philipsen observed individuals’ use of language and analyzed these ways of speaking and their attendant meanings, premises, and rules to formulate *speech codes*. Philipsen’s main goal was to examine culturally situated language-in-use to discover the ways in which speech communities create and transmit cultural identities.

Cultural communication scholars such as Carbaugh and Philipsen have helped communication scholars to realize that to answer questions of identity we must not ask just “Who am I?” but “When, where, and how am I?” (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). Postmodern communication approaches further extend the idea of identities as complex and shifting phenomena.

Postmodern Communication Approaches

Postmodern communication approaches view individuals as having multiple identities constituted in communication but also influenced by webs of relational, cultural,

biological, and environmental factors. The communication scholar Eric Eisenberg (2001) proposed a model of communication and identity that takes into account multiple factors that interact dynamically to construct identities. His model highlighted the interwoven nature of individuals' communication with others; their personal narratives and moods; along with the influences of society, culture, interpersonal relationships, biology, economics, and religion that construct multiple and ever-changing identities.

Both Eisenberg (2001) and Gergen (2000) have viewed identity as relational and dynamic; far from being a fixed core, identities are fluid and change with situated contexts. Eisenberg (2001) contended that we all have a "multiplicity of selves," and Gergen (2000) asserted, "One's identity is continuously emergent, re-formed, and redirected as one moves through the sea of everchanging relationships" (p. 139). Because the word *identity* seems to invoke the notion of an "independent, fixed, unitary self" (Eisenberg, 2001), thinking about individuals having "multiple identities" is an important linguistic move. Gergen (2000) called for a "new vocabulary of being" that "de-objectifies the individual self" (p. 242) and "recognize[s] the extent of our relational embeddedness" (p. 254). Communication scholars should certainly be at the fore in creating this new vocabulary of identity.

Leslie Baxter has talked about socially constructed identities as "constituted in communication." Baxter (2004b) described what it means to take a "constitutive" view of communication: "A constitutive approach to communication asks how communication defines, or constructs, the social world, including our selves and our personal relationships" (p. 3). Baxter's approach to viewing identities as "constituted in communication" calls attention to the unique contribution that communication scholars can make to research on identity, distinguishing it from work in other disciplines.

While Baxter (2004a, 2004b) positions her current work within Bakhtin's postmodern dialogic theory, there are commonalities between Baxter's perspective and the intellectual heritage of the other scholars discussed in this chapter. First, similar to Mead and Cooley, Baxter (2004b) described the way we come to know our "selves" as the result of interaction with others: "An individual knows self only from the outside, as he or she conceives others see him or her. The self, then, is invisible to itself and dependent for its existence on the other" (pp. 3–4). Second, Baxter rejects the notion of a "monadic self" in favor of a "dialogic self." Baxter (2004b) argued, "Self cannot be a unitary, monadic phenomenon, according to dialogism; instead it is a fluid and dynamic relation between self and other. Bakhtin's metaphor for this relation is a dialogue" (p. 4). Thus, when we are in dialogue with another, we are engaged in the process of identity construction—simultaneously constructing our identities as "selves" and our relational identities with others. Third, Baxter talks about the process of "selves *becoming*"—not unlike the ongoing process articulated by Mead, Burke,

and others. In Baxter's dialogic perspective, this process of selves becoming involves the relational pair negotiating integration and separation.

Baxter emphasizes that adopting a "dialogic perspective" does not mean simply dialogue between two relational partners with one-dimensional identities. Rather, dialogism is characterized by the dynamic interplay of the voices of multiple identities in the ongoing, "unfinalizable" conversation of social interaction. Bringing a dialogic perspective to the study of identity recognizes the ongoing creation of selves and relationships and the multiple identities created in interaction.

In summary, a number of communication theorists have refined and extended the earlier intellectual traditions. Although there are important differences in the way these theorists have approached the study of identity, all agree that identity is a relational phenomenon, constructed in social interaction. In the next section, we will look at several theoretical perspectives that have been frequently used by relational communication scholars to study identity.

Theoretical Perspectives in Communication and Identity Research

Contemporary communication scholars have used a number of theoretical perspectives to study identity issues. Each theory provides a different lens for the camera, allowing scholars to understand different aspects of communication and identity. Three theoretical perspectives that help us understand how communication constructs identity are symbolic interaction/social construction, facework, and relational dialectics/dialogism. We describe each theory briefly and provide selected examples of research on communication and identity based on each theory.

Symbolic Interaction/Social Construction

Symbolic interaction (Mead, 1934; Meltzer, 1967) and social construction (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) have similar premises; they both focus on how people create meaning of themselves and the world around them through social interaction (Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006). Scholars using both theoretical perspectives believe that identities and relationships are mutually constituted in communication with others (Carbaugh, 1996; Leeds-Hurwitz, 2006). Leeds-Hurwitz (2006) recognized the similarities and overlap between the two theoretical perspectives, explaining that they have "different intellectual histories and different emphases in practice" (p. 229). We do not find these distinctions of great import for our purposes here. While their vocabulary is somewhat different, the two perspectives share very similar views on the role of language and social interaction in the construction of identity. We summarize the main tenets of both perspectives, followed by examples of how communication scholars are using these theories to inform their research on identity.

Symbolic Interaction

Mead believed that both one's self (identity) and one's mind (the ability to use language to symbolize thought) are acquired through communication (Mead, 1934; Meltzer, 1967). The identities we want to claim for ourselves are created in interactions with others (Carbaugh, 1996; Goffman, 1963). Julia Wood (1994a, 1994b), for example, used the symbolic-interaction perspective to explain how persons construct gender identity. Wood (1994b) used symbolic interaction to explain the identity transformation of her own mother, who, as a married woman with two children, took great pride working as a stockbroker during the 1950s, when most middle-class women were stay-at-home mothers. When a family move forced Wood's mother to quit her career, she re-created herself as the epitome of the stereotypical housewife and mother, absorbing the expectations of both significant and generalized others and became what others around her expected her to be.

In research examining the nontraditional identity construction of commuting wives living apart from their husbands to pursue careers, Bergen (2006) found that these wives employed "accounts" to explain their commuting arrangement to others. Social network members often challenged commuter wives' identities by asking questions about their marital arrangement and expressing sympathy for their husbands and children. Commuter wives responded to these identity challenges by providing accounts. For example, one wife who reported being asked who prepared her husband's meals felt obligated to explain that her husband had always done much of the cooking during their marriage, as a way of responding to the unspoken suggestion that she was neglecting her wifely duties. Bergen's analysis of the stories of these women sheds light on how identities are negotiated in social interaction.

In their study of committed lesbian couples with children conceived by donor insemination, Bergen, Suter, and Daas (2006) also used symbolic interaction to investigate how co-mothers attempted to construct an identity of legitimate parenthood for the nonbiological mother. They found that co-mothers used address terms acknowledging motherhood for the nonbiological mother, hyphenated children's last names, and drafted legal documents including the nonbiological mother's name in efforts to persuade others to accept the nonbiological mother as a legitimate parent. These naming practices showed how symbols such as referents and address terms are an important part of constructing identity. Bergen and colleagues' study also illustrated that the desired identities are not always accepted by others and that validation by others is an essential part of the process.

Social Construction

Like symbolic interaction, social construction operates from the assumption that people make sense of the world and themselves through language (Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006). The construction metaphor suggests that relational functions such as repair, maintenance, and change are

carried out through the use of language (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2006); thus, studying identity from the lens of social construction mandates examining discourse in social contexts.

For example, in her study of how U.S. families with adopted children from China construct their familial identities, Elizabeth Suter (2008) used social construction along with Galvin's (2006) concept of discourse-dependent families. By focusing on the discursive processes of these families as they interacted with members of the extended family, social networks, and community institutions, Suter found that family identity was challenged by questions and comments that assumed that adoptive family relations are inferior to biological family ties and/or remarked on the visible dissimilarity between the parents and their adopted children. For example, people would ask Caucasian parents of a Chinese child, "Is he/she yours?" Suter discovered that adoptive parents used discursive strategies such as challenging comments, educating others, answering directly, or sharing something positive about their family to assert their family status to others. Suter's study illustrated how language in the form of discursive strategies can function as a resource in constructing and validating family identity. We now turn to a second major theoretical framework that has been used by communication scholars studying identity.

Facework (Face Theory)

Goffman (1959, 1971) suggested that individuals communicate with others to establish a desired identity. We seek to maintain this "face," or the public image that we present in social interaction, by expecting others to treat us in a manner consistent with our desired identity (Metts & Cupach, 2008). The communicative strategies used in making and maintaining these identity claims formed the basis for Goffman's theoretical perspective of "facework," or face theory. While Goffman was primarily concerned with public interactions, Cupach and Metts (1994) extended face theory by applying it to the study of interpersonal interactions in close relationships.

McBride (2003) contributed to the literature by studying facework in ongoing real-life situations. McBride interviewed participants who had broken up with their relational partner following a serious relational transgression (e.g., an affair or serious drug use) and later reconciled with the partner. McBride wanted to know how persons who had told family members about their partner's transgression communicatively managed the face needs of themselves, their partner, and their relationship, as well as the face needs of their family members. He found that participants often initially used strategies that protected the desired identities of all parties by managing *what* they told and *who* they told about their romantic relationship problems; they used strategies of keeping family members up-to-date (or not) on their ongoing contact with the former partner and providing accounts to (or avoiding telling) family members to manage the face threats that occurred after the reconciliation with the partner. McBride's

findings are an important addition to facework research because they illustrate the interplay of multiple persons' multiple identities within social networks and in ongoing personal relationships.

Other communication researchers have used facework to study how identity concerns are salient to interactions between teachers and students (e.g., Bergen, 2002; Kerssen-Griep, 2001). Bergen (2002) found that experienced female college instructors tended to use proactive facework strategies to establish and maintain their professional identities in the college classroom. She also found that instructors were reluctant to use face-threatening strategies in problematic situations and tried to allow students to maintain a positive image. Kerssen-Griep (2001) found that college students who had instructors sensitive to their face needs reported being more motivated to accept their instructors' authority, as well as more invested in their learning process. Metts and Cupach (2008) noted that in all social interactions, "a performance is designed, consciously or unconsciously, to create an impression for others of who we are—an idealized self that fits appropriately into the requirements of the context" (p. 205). The theoretical perspective of facework has enabled these communication scholars to learn more about the ways persons negotiate multiple identities within specific situated relational contexts. Next, we turn to a third theoretical lens that has been useful to communication scholars studying identity—relational dialectics.

Relational Dialectics/Dialogism

Over the past 20-plus years, Baxter has developed and used the theoretical perspective of relational dialectics (for a review, see Baxter 2004b; Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008). The core contention of relational dialectics is that all relationships involve a "dynamic interplay" between unified yet contradictory tensions. This dynamic interplay occurs in communication in everyday interaction. These tensions may be experienced *internally* between relational partners or *externally* between the relational dyad and their social network. Three recurring pairs of contradictory tensions found most often by researchers are integration-separation, expression-nonexpression, and stability-change. Baxter and her colleagues, however, have cautioned that these three categories are not exhaustive and each of these three major "unified opposites" has multiple-nuanced variations.

In her articulation of "second generation relational dialectics," Baxter (2004a) emphasized the *dialogic* nature of social life as "a process of contradictory discourses" (p. 182) and stressed that dialogue is not limited to two voices but rather should be thought of as multiple voices striving to be heard simultaneously. In this dialogic process, Baxter says, "selves and relationships are constituted in the jointly enacted communication events of the relationship parties" (p. 184). Thus, relational dialectics is a perspective tailor-made for examining identity as constituted in the communication between relational partners and has been used extensively by interpretive researchers who study communication and identity issues.

Baxter, Braithwaite, and various colleagues have used relational dialectics as a lens in different contexts. For example, they studied the changing personal and marital identities of elderly women whose spouses with dementia live in nursing homes. (Baxter, Braithwaite, Golish, & Olson, 2002). These women lived the altered identity of "married widows" as they negotiated the contradictions experienced in interacting with husbands who were present physically and absent cognitively and emotionally. They examined the ways these wives communicatively negotiated the web of contradictions as they redefined what it meant to have a marital relationship. Baxter and Braithwaite (1995) studied couples who participated in vow renewal ceremonies and how they discursively managed identity as a pair and as part of a larger social web.

Toller (2007) used relational dialectics to examine how parents negotiated changes in identity after the death of a child. She found that the death of a child affected spouses' personal identities, parental identities, and marital identities. One of the primary dialectical tensions that Toller found was presence-absence: "feeling like a parent/not having a child to parent" and "feeling like an outsider/feeling like an insider." Toller's research illustrates how multi-vocal variants of the primary dialectical tension of integration-separation come into play as parents reconstruct their personal, parental, and marital identities after the death of a child.

Marko (2006) investigated the dialectical tensions experienced by the parents of visibly different adopted children (children from different cultures) as they attempted to construct their familial, parental, and children's identities in interaction. For example, she found that parents negotiated the dialectic of similarity and difference by telling their adopted children, "We are a family like any other" and "We are unique and different." In examining the process of constructing identities, Marko (2006) illustrated Baxter's (2004b) recent "dialogic turn" by portraying the communicative construction of identity as a complex process that involves multiple, often contradictory meanings.

Future Research

We believe that there are several other theoretical perspectives that could enrich our understandings of how identities are constituted in communication. Thus, we base our suggestions for future researchers by calling on communication scholars to consider studying identity construction through the lenses of narrative, symbolic-convergence theory, and critical-feminist perspectives.

Narrative

Narrative scholars argue that narratives are the way in which human beings make sense of their lived experience and identities (e.g., Somers, 1994). While rhetoricians have long realized the link between narrative and identity (Burke, 1966, defined man as "the story-telling animal"), social

scientific communication researchers have only relatively recently begun to use varied narrative approaches to identity (Koenig Kellas, 2008). In spite of the great potential of narrative perspectives for studying how identities are socially constructed, to date, few communication researchers have used a narrative lens to guide their work (Koenig Kellas, 2008). One exception is Koenig Kellas (2005), who used a narrative perspective to study identity construction within relational and family contexts by examining family storytelling. A related perspective, Weick's "sensemaking" (1995), is being used by organizational and work-life communication scholars to study identity construction. For example, Buzzanell and colleagues (2005) used a sense-making lens to study managerial women's narratives in order to learn how they constructed identities as "good working mothers." We believe that narrative and sense making will be central to future identity research.

Symbolic-Convergence Theory

Another theoretical perspective that we believe holds more potential for relational communication scholars studying identity is Bormann's symbolic-convergence theory (Bormann, 1981; Braithwaite, Schrod, & Koenig Kellas, 2006). Through sharing stories, inside jokes, and other interactions out of the here and now, persons in relationships and collectives engage in shared fantasies and create a rhetorical vision of their identity and culture. For example, Golden (2002) used symbolic-convergence theory to study how couples interacted and created a shared parental identity and rhetorical vision of managing work and parenting.

Critical-Feminist Perspectives

Wood (1995) urged interpersonal communication scholars to integrate a critical-feminist perspective into their study of personal relationships. She contended that the communication processes in interpersonal relationships cannot be understood apart from the considerations of gender that influence interactions. Wood's own study of women and caregiving (1994) used such a critical-feminist perspective. Communication work-life literature has also incorporated recognition of gendered power dynamics both in and out of the workplace. Interpersonal communication research, however, has been slow to integrate critical-feminist perspectives (Braithwaite & Baxter, 2008).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have maintained that rather than being a singular, unchanging phenomenon located within the individual, our identities are multiple, fluid, and created in interaction with others. As communication scholars, we owe our intellectual heritage of communication-based explanations of identity in large part to Mead, Burke, and Goffman. Over the past 30 years or so, communication

theorists have extended and refined the basic notion that identities are constituted in communication. While the perspectives used by communication scholars to study identity have provided theoretically rich frameworks to explore identity construction in social and personal relationships, we suggest that understanding of identity construction will be enriched even further by additional empirical research and the use of more diverse perspectives.

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PART IV

FORMS AND TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

CONVERSATION, DIALOGUE, AND DISCOURSE

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Conversation, dialogue, discourse. Each of these terms names a form of communication in everyday life, yet each directs our attention in different ways. *Conversation*, ordinarily understood as informal, free-flowing talk, is what we do with friends, family, and coworkers when we have meals together, do joint tasks, or talk on the phone. Conversation is a descriptive term; it captures one kind of talking that is an alternative to others, such as interviewing, being in a meeting, or giving a speech.

Dialogue is both a descriptive term and an evaluative one. As a descriptive term, dialogue is a synonym for conversation. This descriptive meaning traces its roots to the scholarship of Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian scholar who wrote in the first half of the 20th century. Every utterance, the basic and fundamental unit of talk, is dialogic: responding to what was said before and at the same time offering something new. By Bakhtin's definition, conversation is inherently dialogic. In communication studies, the more common meanings for dialogue are the evaluative ones that have been developed by Martin Buber, Carl Rogers, and others. As an evaluative term, dialogue is not just any stretch of conversation; it is a stretch in which people exhibit an openness to hear others, often on personal or difficult topics (Anderson, Baxter, & Cissna, 2004). Dialogues are communicative achievements, something only a small percentage of conversations deserve to be labeled as.

Discourse, the last term, is also descriptive. In contrast to conversation, it is much broader, including speeches, interrogations, and meetings, as well as conversation. Simply put, discourse is any type of *talk*. Drawing on discourse as the central term, this chapter addresses three issues. The chapter's first section describes several of the key units of discourse and their usual social functions. Then, the chapter overviews how discourse is made "study-able" and analyzed. The final sections focus on an especially significant function of talk—to build and maintain identities. After the process of "identity-work" is explained generally, the chapter examines two studies of law enforcement discourse to illustrate the subtleties with which discourse accomplishes identity-work.

Key Units of Discourse

Just as a "pizza" can be divided into slices or squares of different sizes or become a single big unit—a "calzone"—the unitizing possibilities for discourse are many and affected by an analyzer's purposes. Linguistics, a field also interested in discourse, and especially its written forms, treats discourse as an umbrella term to reference spoken or written units of language that are larger than a sentence. Language has semantic units (words such as *smile* and

word endings such as past-tense markers, as in “smiled”), phonemic units (the sounds that go with meaningful distinctions: *r* and *l* distinguish the word *rave* from *lave*), and syntactic rules (about how words may be ordered to make meaningful sentences). In linguistics, *discourse* refers to units that are bigger than sentences (e.g., paragraphs, stories) or the social and practical functions to which a stretch of language is put.

In the field of communication, the central interest is in spoken discourse and the purposes to which it is put. For this reason, unitizing begins with the utterance, which is the smallest unit of speech (e.g., “Hi,” “Sure, no problem”). A basic and important kind of utterance is the *speech act*. In the mid-20th century, the issue about speech to which scholars gave the most attention concerned how well a stretch of speech represented a state of affairs in the world. Speech that was not a true, accurate representation of what existed was asserted to be meaningless. The language philosopher John Austin (1962) regarded this view as missing what was crucial about speech in social life. Speech does not simply represent the world, he argued. It performs social actions. When people speak, their utterances compliment, warn, advise, promise, command, or perform any number of other actions.

John Searle (1969), a student of Austin’s, went on to distinguish among five categories of speech acts. Speech acts may be (1) directives—acts that suggest, guide, or direct a person to do something; (2) representatives—acts that assert what is taken to be true in the world; (3) commissives—acts that commit a speaker to a future course of action; (4) expressives—acts that make a speaker’s feelings visible; and (5) declaratives—speech that has the power to transform people from one state to another, as happens when a minister pronounces two people to be married. Not everyone agrees with Searle’s typology of speech acts, but his typology begins to make visible the varied purposes to which speech is actually put.

One type of speech act that has been extensively studied is the “account.” As Scott and Lyman (1968) defined it, an account is “a statement made by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behavior” (p. 47). People offer accounts when they are late for a meeting, speak in a thoughtless fashion to a friend, or eat more than they think they should. They also offer accounts for highly consequential matters, such as when they violate a law (e.g., explaining to a police officer why they were speeding) or transgress a significant relational norm (e.g., sexual infidelity). Although people can offer accounts out of the blue, they more typically occur within a conversational sequence in which they are a response to an act of reproaching. Reproaches, as is the case with accounts, occur in different flavors. Just as accounts may justify why individuals did what they did or point to circumstances that made their action not entirely under their control, reproaches may range in tone from direct and hostile (“What the hell do you think you are doing?”) to indirect and subtle, which could be seen in sarcastic compliments or a speaker muttering a

comment under his or her breath that is hearable (“Hmmm, I wonder what’s going on here”).

Directives and apologies are two other speech acts that have received considerable attention (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989). Both of these acts are socially sensitive to perform and have relational repercussions. To direct another invariably raises the issue of who has the right to tell whom to do what. Similarly, speakers who apologize often want to accept that they did a wrong but minimize the wrong’s scope or elicit a counterapology.

A second unit of discourse is what Tracy (2002) referred to as *naming practices*. Naming practices include both the words and the phrases used to address particular others and the terms that are used to reference, label, and categorize people. Forms of address include first and last names, nicknames, titles (e.g., “Ms.,” “Professor”) and general terms of endearment (e.g., “babe”). Choosing among possible forms of address conveys what the speaker takes to be the formality or closeness of a relationship. To address a person using his or her title and last name (e.g., “Dr. Jones”) constructs a relationship as a distant one; in contrast, calling that person by a nickname, especially if it is an exclusive one known only by a select few, constructs two people as close. Speakers also combine forms to build relationships that mix respectful distance with friendliness, as seen in the rather common practice of children calling adults by their title and first name (e.g., “Dr. Joe,” “Miss Jane”).

Not only do speakers directly address others by a selected name, they also refer to others in relational terms (e.g. “My friend will be joining us” vs. “An acquaintance from work will be joining us) and by categories (group memberships, such as “Shriner” or “Catholic”; job categories, such as “librarian” or “office manager”; and race and ethnicity, such as “African American” or “black,” “Hispanic” or “Latino/a”). Debates about how to refer to people have become the focus of controversies in the larger society. One such debate that led to significant change in speaking and writing in the communication and other social science fields has been over the use of gender-neutral terms. On one side of the argument are people advocating that mixed-sex groups be referred to as “he and she” rather than the generic “he” and that forms such as “postal worker” or “police officer” should be preferred over “mailman” and “policeman” because the former terms are more inclusive of women. On the other side of the argument are people who regard these changes as unimportant, a matter of being “politically correct” (Aufderheide, 1992). In communication studies, there is consensus that, at least in its weak form, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis captures a truth about meaning making. Edwin Sapir and his student Benjamin Whorf argued that the semantic and grammatical distinctions available in a particular language, whether the language be English, Hopi, or Portuguese, shape how people make sense and understand possibilities for action. Names matter. Although names do not determine what a person may think, they channel thought, making some interpretations and associations more (or less) likely.

Two more complicated units of discourse deserve mention. The first, *direct/indirect conversational style*, includes a large set of talk features, often going together, that speakers use to convey meanings either straightforwardly or through hints and subtle cues (Tracy, 2002). A relatively direct conversational style is one in which words convey a speaker's intended meaning straightforwardly; an indirect style requires a listener to arrive at a speaker's likely meaning by considering what was said in light of the topic and how it is viewed in society, the speech situation, and the relationship between conversational partners. Being direct involves saying what one thinks without softeners, bluntly and noneuphemistically. Being indirect involves using more words to convey a message; it is accomplished by hinting at what one might want, fishing for information, softening opinions, or avoiding certain expressions entirely.

A central way in which speakers vary their level of directness is through the use of politeness tokens (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Politeness is not just about saying "please" and "thank you"; it refers to language practices that soften potential threats to others. If a communicator wanted to borrow fifty dollars from a friend, the request could be made directly without regard for the other's desires ("Hey, can I borrow fifty dollars?"). The request could also be made less directly by attending to the other's need for social acceptance and approval, what Brown and Levinson call people's "positive face wants," using devices such as compliments and friendly forms of address (e.g., "Hey buddy, be a pal and loan me fifty dollars."). An even more indirect move, the negative-politeness strategy, would give attention to the partner's desire to be free from imposition and obligation (e.g., "I hate to be a burden by asking you this, but do you think you could loan me fifty dollars?"). Negative-politeness forms include verbal markers that mitigate the intensity of the speaker's request (e.g., "I was wondering," "Would it be at all possible"). The most indirect form, barring not making the request at all, would be for a speaker to hint at needing money in the hope that the other will offer it ("Oh gosh, looks like I'm going to be fifty dollars short for my rent"). In an extensive study of requests, Craig, Tracy, and Spisak (1986) found that people do not typically use only a single form but mix politeness strategies in skillful ways.

The directness style a communicator uses will have interpersonal consequences. The use of a relatively direct style can cue that a speaker is sincere and outspoken, a person who prefers to "get down to business." At the same time, the usage of a direct style may be interpreted as showing aggressiveness and insensitivity to others. Conversely, an indirect strategy could cue tactfulness and "people skills," but it also could seem indecisive, shifty, or untrustworthy. There are no simple positive/negative assessments that go with being indirect or direct. Most speakers use a mix of both styles, which vary with the kind of situation in which they find themselves. To complicate matters further, national and ethnic communities have sharply different notions about the most reasonable conversational style in particular situations.

Stance indicators is a second complex bundle of talk features to which people regularly attend in conversation. A speaker's stance—his or her in-the-moment attitude toward the topic of talk, the other, or the situation—is conveyed through linguistic, vocal, and gestural cues. In everyday life, people make judgments about whether their partner is an expert or novice on the subject, friendly or hostile toward them, and involved or bored with the situation. These "stances" are cued by sets of indicators. In Tannen's (2005) examination of conversations among friends, she found that when speakers talk loudly and fast, make large hand gestures, pause only briefly, and vary their pitch extensively, they will be assumed to be involved and interested in the topic.

A second example of a stance indicator has to do with belief and skepticism. When speakers respond to what another has said, they implicitly convey whether they believe or are skeptical of what their conversational partner said (Pomerantz, 1989/1990). When people believe a person, they will report it to others straightforwardly (e.g., "Arnie can't come to the party tonight because he hurt his back"). The stance indicators that cue skepticism include adding phrases such as "According to Arnie . . .," "Arnie claims that . . .," and "Arnie's story is that . . ." Thus, when speakers report what a person said, they not only provide a sense of the message's content, but they also reveal their stance to what the other has said.

These four discourse units—speech acts, naming practices, direct/indirect conversational style, and stance indicators—are but a small set of possible discourse units; there are many more. For instance, speech acts often occur in pairs (e.g., greeting-greeting, question-answer), creating demands for how the first part of a pair should be responded to or generating inferences about the respondent if that expected second part is not forthcoming. Not returning a greeting does happen, but when a return greeting is absent, marked inferences will be made (e.g., the spoken-to party is completely distracted, or the greeter is being snubbed by the spoken-to other). Units of discourse may also be quite large and include smaller interaction practices. An example is a story; stories usually include strings of speech acts and multiple reports of what various people in the story's social world have said—a discourse device referred to as "reported speech" (e.g., "Mary said, 'No, don't go.' And I said . . .") (Buttny, 2004). Jointly, these discourse units and others occur in scenes within social life and perform a variety of interpersonal functions. Before examining more closely the identity-work functions of talk, let us consider how discourse is studied to arrive at the claims that research forwards.

How Discourse Is Studied

The analysis of discourse began in earnest as audio- and video-recording technologies became commonplace and as the idea that ordinary exchanges between people in family

and work life deserved as much systematic attention as had previously only been given to “big” events such as a politician’s speech took root. It has been the work of the sociologist Harvey Sacks (1992) in the late 1960s, which strongly influenced a large range of distinct discourse analysis traditions. Working in a crisis call center in Los Angeles, he began taping, transcribing, and studying these telephone calls, as well as doing the same with phone calls between family members and friends. In disagreement with Noam Chomsky, an influential linguist of the time who thought that language was too messy to study in actual occasions of talk, Sacks argued for the value of looking closely at the social world and at conversational exchanges in particular. “From close looking at the world,” Sacks stated, “you can find things that we couldn’t by imagination assert were there: One wouldn’t know that they were typical, one might not know that they even happened” (p. 420).

Over time, conventions developed in communication as to the best way to represent features of spoken discourse in written form. The transcription system that is most often employed today is the one developed by Gail Jefferson, commonly referred to as the CA (conversation analysis) transcription system. Symbols in the CA system capture (a) the actual pronunciation and contractions of words (e.g., “y’know,” “got ’em goin’”), repetitions, and word cutoffs; (b) intonation patterns of utterances and word stress; and (c) utterance timing, including pauses and where one person’s speech overlaps another’s. Table 20.1 includes the most common meanings of the symbols used in transcripts.

An obvious question to pose is why bother with so much detail; is it useful for understanding discourse better? Communication scholars who analyze discourse, although they have disagreements with each other about the appropriate level of transcript detail, would all agree that a careful record of what has been said is an important first step to building interesting claims about communication.

An example of a CA transcript and how it led to an insightful understanding of communication is seen in Excerpt 1. This excerpt comes from a study by Staske (2002). Staske was interested in how romantic partners’ talk reflected and further solidified closeness in their relationships—something talk in intimate relationships was assumed to do, but how this was accomplished through talk was not well understood. Her study recorded romantic partners having conversations with each other, created transcripts of the exchanges, and then repeatedly looked at the transcripts while listening to the exchanges. Following this intense immersion with the discourse materials, she was able to name and describe a conversational practice that relational partners regularly used. It is a practice for doing intimacy. The practice, which Staske labeled “claims of intimate partner knowledge,” or CIPKs for short, tended to occur when partners were discussing relational problems.

.	(period) Falling intonation
?	(question mark) Rising intonation
,	(comma) Continuing intonation
-	(hyphen) Marks an abrupt cutoff
::	(colon[s]) Prolonging of sound
<u>never</u>	(underlining) Stressed syllable or word
WORD	(all caps) Loud speech
°word°	(degree symbols) Quiet speech
>word<	(more than and less than) Quicker speech
<word>	(less than more than) Slowed speech
hh	(series of <i>hs</i>) Aspiration or laughter
.hh	(<i>hs</i> preceded by dot) Inhalation
[]	(brackets) Simultaneous or overlapping speech
=	(equals sign) Contiguous utterances
(2.4)	(number in parentheses) Length of a silence
(.)	(period in parentheses) Micropause, 2/10 second or less
()	(empty parentheses) Nontranscribable segment of talk
(word)	(word or phrase in parentheses) Transcriptionist’s doubt
((gazing toward the ceiling))	(double parentheses) Description of nonspeech activity

Table 20.1 The Basic CA Transcription Symbols

Excerpt 1

- 1 M: Why does what affect us?
- 2 F: Our differences in our personalities. Do you
- 3 think this affects us? Do think it’s
- 4 [something that just [bothers us all the time
- 5 M: [Because [you: a
- 6 F: Listen to you. I knew you would say that. That
- 7 you’d say it was all my fault
- 8 M: No:: I’m not saying it’s your fault
- 9 F: Aren’t you admitting
- 10 M: I’m just saying you blew a lot of things way
- 11 outta proportion

Line 6 is an example of a CIPK. The vocal emphasis specifically on “knew” cues the speaker’s certainty about predicting what her partner would likely say at that moment. This is interesting because M’s utterance in Line 5 is broken and unfinished; nonetheless, F claims that she knows what M would say even though he barely said anything at all. In Line 8, M denies F’s CIPK, although his final comment (lines 10 and 11) frames F as not being completely off base. Stating that she “blows things way outta proportion” does imply blame. His utterance, then, partially confirms her CIPK. Claims that a speaker knows what the other will say is one discourse practice through which people enact themselves as close. This is true even if, as happens in Excerpt 1, the partner disputes the specific content of the claim.

The analysis of discourse is an inductive research enterprise. As Sacks formulated it so aptly, communication scholars doing discourse analysis are committed to discovering interesting features of social life by studying talk closely. One particularly interesting issue in social life that analysis of discourse has been used to further is the study of identity enactment.

Discourse and Identity-Work

When people talk, they present a version of self to others. The sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) used a dramaturgical metaphor to understand this presentation process. People in ordinary exchanges are “actors” and, as in the theater, they are expected to know their lines, have the right costume, and make their actions appropriate and believable to the role they are playing. Other communicators in a social situation, “the audience,” are expected to respond appropriately to the actor’s performance, applauding, laughing, and crying at appropriate moments. Because not all performances go smoothly, actors and audiences have practices they employ to respond to errors and glitches. Communicators in the actor role use “defensive practices,” such as when they have to “wing it” or “fake it.” Similarly, “protective practices,” such as listening or showing interest, are used by communicators in audience member roles to ratify that the actor has done a reasonable job.

Although the dramaturgical metaphor ably captures a part of what people experience as they meet, greet, and talk with others, it also introduces elements that are problematic. People do not change who they understand themselves to be (i.e., their identities) as quickly and easily as the theater metaphor implies; for that reason, we use the term *identity-work* to describe the work talk accomplishes during the presentation of self. A second advantage of identity-work as the key frame for understanding what discourse does is that it draws attention to another aspect of the discourse-identity process besides self-presentation. At the same time that a person’s talk is presenting a self, it is also altercasting.

Altercasting refers to the process through which talk casts the conversational partner in a particular role (Tracy, 2007).

Imagine a student stopping by a professor’s office to get help in understanding a theory (“the systems perspective”) that was presented during a lecture and requesting help in one of two ways:

Request A: Excuse me Dr. Trintash, I was wondering if you could go over the systems perspective with me again. I wasn’t feeling well in class the other day and didn’t listen as closely as I should have.

Request B: Hi Jean, how’s it goin? I was getting lost in class when you were talking about the systems perspective. Could you explain it to me one more time?

The person-referencing practices used in Request A, title and last name, imply a nonclose relationship in which the teacher has a higher status. In contrast Request B, by virtue of the first-name form of address, casts the teacher as an informal, friendly other. Request A also uses a more tentative, negative-politeness strategy (“I was wondering if . . .”) that treats the request for help as a favor rather than a matter-of-fact right to which the student is entitled. Part of the sense that B is treating the request as a right is cued by the account that the speaker gives for why she did not understand. Describing the reason for needing clarification as “I was getting lost” subtly justifies the student’s having trouble and makes relevant the possibility that the teacher did not give a clear explanation. In contrast, the student in Request A accounts for her request by saying that she “didn’t feel well” and she “didn’t listen closely,” suggesting that her inability to understand was a result of her own state rather than the teacher’s failure. In essence, Requests A and B altercast the teacher in markedly different ways. At the same time, the requests present the speaker differently. Request A portrays the student as a deferential person who sees self as responsible for mastering class material; Request B presents the speaker as a friendly, informal sort of student who sees self as entitled to receiving clear explanations of course ideas.

Another way to explain identity-work is with Goffman’s (1955) notion of face. Around the same time when Goffman was developing his dramaturgical view of social life, he introduced the idea of “face.” “Face may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes” (Goffman, 1967, p. 5). Face is the identity that a person desires in a particular social situation; it is not something over which a speaker has total control. Rather, face is granted by the people with whom a person interacts. The face that a speaker desires will always be situation specific. In work situations, people often want to be seen as “responsible,” “competent,” or “loyal.” In friendships, people may want to be seen as experts on a topic, “fun,” “funny,” or “trustworthy.” People also do work to avoid being seen in negative ways—for example as boring, incompetent, or autocratic. It is discourse practices that maintain face, ward off possible threats, or save face after it

is lost. Face is an umbrella term that references a large set of desired personal identities.

It is important to note that identities have many layers, some of which become more relevant than others in a particular situation. One layer of identity pertains to the broad social and cultural groups people belong to (such as race, nationality, age, gender, or religion). Another is the personality-style characteristics people possess (such as being friendly, rude, generous, or opinionated). A third kind of identity relates to the institutional roles that people hold at work and in families, and the last relates to the interactional style with which people act in workplace and intimate relationships (e.g., laidback vs. uptight teacher, close vs. distant friend). Stemming from the fact that people are usually considered to uphold multiple identities, they often work to give attention to more than one goal at a time. In making a request, for instance, the requestor can be seen as having the goals of (a) convincing the other person to comply with the request, (b) preserving the conversational partner's face, and (c) preserving the self's own face.

What makes communication difficult is that interactional goals may be incompatible with each other. Attending to one identity goal can endanger another one. For instance, a common practice in most academic departments is for graduate students and faculty to meet and discuss the research projects that a student or faculty member is working on (Tracy, 1997). In this kind of discussion group, which includes institutional members of different ranks (i.e., beginning and advanced graduate students, junior and senior faculty), presenting ideas and asking questions is likely to challenge multiple identities of the participants. Discussants, for instance, often desire to be seen as intellectually competent—accomplished through asking tough questions, and at the same time they desire to be judged supportive and tactful—accomplished through posing easily answerable questions. Participants typically recognize the importance of distinguishing among fellow members' expertise levels (i.e., a graduate student and a faculty member are not equally expert), but at the same time they believe that for the discussion to go well, it is important to minimize status differences and develop a climate of equality.

To summarize, identity-work is the simultaneous presentation of self and altercasting of others and is accomplished through discourse practices. As identity is multilayered and interaction goals can be in tension with each other, identity-work is a complicated and uncertain process.

Two Extended Examples of Identity-Work

The first example of identity-work to be examined occurred in a call a citizen made to the police/9-1-1. People call 9-1-1 for a variety of reasons, many of which are at odds with ordinary notions of "emergency." When people have troubles they want help solving and there is no obvious other person or agency to intervene, they will turn to the police. One

kind of situation in which this happens is when a person has problems with someone with whom there is a connection. If we seek to describe the likely face/identity wants that a person with this type of trouble would have, three are probable. First, we can expect that callers would like to get their trouble resolved, whether it is getting a piece of property back or getting another to stop engaging in harassing actions. Second, we would expect that callers would want to be perceived by the police agents with whom they talk as reasonable, or at least not unreasonable given the trouble they are experiencing. Third, in some cases, albeit not necessarily all, callers may want to accomplish the first two goals without strongly implying that the person with whom they have the trouble is so blameworthy that he or she should be arrested. Of note, these likely self-presentation and altercasting goals are in tension with each other.

Tracy and Anderson (1999) examined a small set of police calls in which citizens had these kinds of "connection-to-people-they-knew" troubles. One call involved a woman whose car had been taken. Consider how the caller initially describes her trouble.

Excerpt 2

- 1 CT1: Citywest Police?
- 2 C: Um, yeah, I need to file a complaint about my
- 3 car being taken?
- 4 CT1: (.) It was stolen?
- 5 C: Well .hhhhh a friend borrowed it and h- he
- 6 never brought it back.
- 7 CT1: How long's he had it?
- 8 C: Uh:m close to forty-eight hours.

By looking closely at these calls, Tracy and Anderson identified the discourse practices citizens use to manage conflicting identity goals. A first practice was for citizen callers to formulate a problem as agent-less. The caller does this in lines 2 and 3, where she identifies no agent who "took" the car. This agent-less formulation can be seen as attentive to not accusing a particular other and getting that person in trouble with the police. At the same time, it causes difficulty because it leads the call taker to infer that the caller has no knowledge of who took the car (line 4), thereby making relevant a police bulletin seeking to apprehend and arrest whoever was driving her car. As the caller knows the person who took her car, this agent-less formulation causes confusion.

As noted previously, naming practices reflect closeness and distance. A second strategy callers use to preserve their identity as reasonable people is to label an intimate sexual partner a "friend" and trade on the ambiguity of the term. "Friend," for instance, can be used as a polite term to refer to an acquaintance, or it can reference an ability to talk easily and openly with an intimate (My dad is one of my best friends). Most often, though, it is used as a contrast term

with intimate (“just a friend”). To refer to someone as a friend will typically be heard as distinguishing them from a sexual partner. Following a lengthy exchange, the first call taker refers the caller to auto fraud, and the following exchange occurs. Note how in lines 7 to 8 in Excerpt 3, the second call taker probes the meaning behind the caller’s description of the car taker as a “friend.”

Excerpt 3

- 1 C: Uhm yeah I don’t know what to do. A friend of
- 2 mine uhmm was using my car while I was in the
- 3 hospital? And he’s been gone now for, well, it’s
- 4 been, gosh, about 36 hours. And I haven’t been able
- 5 to get in touch with him. He doesn’t have a local
- 6 phone number, and I don’t know what to do.
- 7 CT2: Okay a friend of yours, meaning an acquaintance
- 8 friend? Or a friend, a boyfriend?
- 9 C: He’s staying with me.
- 10 CT2: Pardon? A boyfriend?
- 11 C: Yeah

With the call taker’s probing, the “friend” label looks like a downgrade from the close type of relationship the caller ends up admitting. What this exchange makes visible is the delicacy in police calls, and presumably other kinds of institutional encounters, in selecting forms of reference. Each form sets in motion different inferences about the caller and the kind of relationship he or she will be taken as having with the called-about person.

A second complex example of identity-work, also from a law enforcement context, illustrates how an FBI negotiator in a crisis situation failed to establish his superiority and his right to tell a law breaker what he should do (Excerpt 4; Agne & Tracy, 2001). Inequality is not necessarily preestablished, as it often is in parent/young-child relationships or in job interviews where the parent or the interviewer (respectively) is regarded as higher ranking before talk even begins. Talk often upholds the expected relational picture, but sometimes it reframes what would be situationally expected, turning nonequals into equals or making the superior the subordinate. Such a reframing is illustrated in the hostage negotiations that took place in 1993 between FBI agents and David Koresh, the leader of a religious group called the Branch Davidians, who were living in a compound outside Waco, Texas. The crisis situation started when the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms tried to arrest David Koresh on charges of abusing the children of his followers and illegally stockpiling weapons. The attempted arrest led to gunfire and killing of several people on both sides; it was followed by a 51-day standoff between the FBI and the Davidians, in which FBI agents and Koresh and several other key Davidians spoke regularly on the telephone.

During the telephone negotiations, both sides worked to assume authority over the other. The FBI saw themselves as the enforcers of the law, expecting all citizens to abide by their directives regardless of a citizen’s religious affiliation. Koresh, in contrast, believed that he was the Lamb of God prophesized in the Book of Revelation to open the Seven Seals and usher in the Apocalypse and Judgment Day. As a result, Koresh saw himself as justified to resist “the government.” In the following exchange, the FBI negotiator (Sage) and Koresh construct an asymmetrical relationship. Using discourse practices, most likely out of conscious awareness, Sage altercasts Koresh as more knowledgeable (and hence superior). At the same time, Koresh constructs himself as an expert teacher and altercasts Sage as a novice student. Consider the discourse practices in a short exchange that contributed to these identities.

Excerpt 4

- 1 Sage: I’m not claiming to be anywhere near as well
- 2 versed in word and quotation as you are and I
- 3 respect that capability. But I find in that book
- 4 (.) that that book says the only person (.) the
- 5 only person (.) the only entity that can open
- 6 those Seven Seals is the Lamb of God.
- 7 Koresh: Exactly
- 8 (six lines omitted)
- 9 Sage: It’s garbage it’s a false hope and [you know that.
- 10 Koresh: [No it’s not,
- 11 on the contrary. These people remain here
- 12 because I have thoroughly opened to them
- 13 the Seven Seals see if you had [understood.
- 14 Sage: [Well then you
- 15 have a message that’s extremely valuable
- 16 that you need to share with the rest of
- 17 this world. The only way you can do that
- 18 David is if we can get this matter resolved
- 19 when when you come out you will be provided
- 20 with that opportunity and I’ll be in the front of
- 21 the line to listen to it
- 22 Koresh: That’s where you remain ignorant it’s not your
- 23 fault I do not hold you contemptible for that
- 24 but you remain ignorant to understand what is
- 25 actually being applied at this very time (.) see
- 26 (.) when it says in twenty two when I come
- 27 my reward is me it very clearly identifies that

28 when Christ comes the identifying mark will
29 be the knowledge of those Seven Seals.

There are several discourse practices that invoke a teacher identity for Koresh, therein establishing his expertise, and frame Sage as not so knowledgeable. First, the confirmation, “Exactly” in line 7 acknowledges some part of Sage’s statements (lines 1–6), whether it be that Sage is not “near as well versed,” that only the Lamb of God can open the Seven Seals, or both. “Exactly” is used much as a teacher does when validating a student’s response as correct; in fact, the remark has the flavor of a teacher giving a gold star for superlative work. Sage’s “garbage” comment in line 9 diffuses Koresh’s positive assessment, and in lines 10 to 13 Koresh straightforwardly disagrees with Sage (“No it’s not, on the contrary”) and explains why he is wrong (“I have thoroughly opened to them the Seven Seals”).

Koresh also sounds like a teacher in lines 22 to 29. By emphasizing Sage’s lack of understanding (“but you remain ignorant to understand . . .”) followed by a lesson on where in the Bible the identity of the one to open the Seven Seals is revealed, he underscores Sage’s limited knowledge. Saying, “in twenty-two” instead of “in Revelation, chapter twenty-two,” establishes Koresh as an expert who uses the biblical text so often that shorthand jargon is called for. In addition, when in line 27, the phrase “very clearly” is stressed, Koresh conveys his view that the lesson he is conveying is an easy one to comprehend. Notice, too, the very short but noticeable pauses between words (signaled by (.)). These micropauses before and after “see” cue that a speaker is about to say something that he has said many times before.

At the same time that Koresh is presenting himself as a teacher and altercasting Sage as a novice, Sage’s talk is confirming rather than resisting this relational identity. His disclaimer in lines 1 and 2 (“I’m not claiming to be anywhere near as well versed in word and quotation as you are”) positions himself as a novice; in addition, Sage saying that he “respects that capability” positions Koresh as the recognized expert. The FBI agent’s talk in this call was adhering to one kind of advice that negotiators are trained to consider in crisis negotiations: It gave attention to Koresh’s face wants to be seen as competent. In not adequately thinking through their complex interactional goals, however, the FBI did not give adequate attention to discursively building their rank as legitimately higher, with its attendant right to have their directives obeyed.

Negotiating equality and inequality is difficult not just because people struggle to attain one or the other in a given relationship but because the two are related in such a way that the pursuit of one necessarily involves the other. Tannen (1986) describes this as the paradox of power and solidarity in relationships. The desire to establish rapport or equal footing in a relationship is accomplished through discourse moves that if done only by one person (e.g., using first names, patting another on the shoulder) will enact an unequal

relationship. At the same time, refraining from doing friendly gestures to avoid the possibility of being seen as claiming a higher status identity could be taken as simple unfriendliness.

This chapter has described several of the basic units of discourse and the identity-work process, examined how discourse practices do identity-work, and considered how communication researchers interested in discourse arrive at claims about social life. In 2007, a new journal, *Discourse and Communication*, was launched. Its mission is to promote research that furthers connections between what Gee (1999) called Big-D and little-d discourse, that is, larger social and institutional issues and the specifics of talk and texts. The felt need for this new journal points to one rapidly growing discourse research arena: studies that investigate how talk is designed and structured to achieve or avoid certain ends in business contexts, media institutions, health care organizations, governance bodies, volunteer groups, and social-movement organizations. The audio and video recorders in these new institutional areas are rolling. It is now up to future scholars to transcribe, study carefully, and create insights into these previously unexamined stretches of conversational life.

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INTERVIEWING

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When we hear the word *interviewing*, we are likely to think of a journalist asking questions at the scene of an accident or a recruiter asking questions of an applicant. It is a simple one-way contact in which one person, usually a professional of some sort, asks questions and the other, usually a witness, sports fan, job applicant, or patient, answers them. This narrow and simplistic view of interviewing resulted historically in few interviewing courses in colleges, a handful of textbooks on interviewing, and little research beyond the study of recruiting and counseling interviews.

Fortunately, as times have changed and our understanding of human communication has become more sophisticated, interviewing courses have become commonplace, textbooks and articles treating many types or special types of interviews vie for our attention, and research has become abundant in areas such as health care, journalism, counseling, recruiting, performance review, and surveys. We have come to realize that interviews are the most common form of serious, purposeful, planned interpersonal communication that ranges from formal to informal, simple to intricate, minimally structured to highly structured, brief to lengthy.

This chapter begins with a definition of interviewing so that we can develop a firm understanding of what is and is not an interview. The definition is followed by a focus on the interview as a deceptively complex communication process. This leads to a discussion of the methods interviewers and interviewees employ in interviews, including approaches, questions and answers, and structure. The chapter closes with a discussion of growing areas of concern and focus, examining the increasing use of electronic means of interviewing (cell phones, the Internet, and videoconferencing), and a summary. Reading suggestions are offered to those

who wish to delve more deeply into the types and uses of interviews.

Interviewing Defined

Writers and researchers have defined interviewing in a variety of ways, but regardless of the specific wording, there are essential terms or concepts that distinguish the interview from other forms of communication. Let us start with perhaps the most important.

Each interview is a dyadic form of communication between *two parties*. Although one or both parties may consist of two or more people (two recruiters from an organization interviewing a college senior or one reporter interviewing three family members at the scene of an accident), there are two distinct parties, an interviewer party and an interviewee party. If three or more identifiable parties are present, they are taking part in *small-group* communication, not an interview.

The interview is *interactional* in nature, meaning that it is a process in which both parties are interdependent and communication is reciprocal. It is a mutual activity done with, not to, another party. If one party does all the talking and the other all the listening, a *speech* to an audience of one is taking place, not an interview. The parties both speak and listen from time to time; share feelings, beliefs, and attitudes; and exchange information and responsibilities. Each party brings something of importance to the interview and must be an active participant.

At least one of the two parties in each interview has a *pre-determined* and *serious purpose* other than mere enjoyment in the process and outcome. This characteristic denotes a

degree of seriousness, advance planning, and structure, which sets the interview apart from *social conversation*. At the same time, however, a good interview has many of the qualities of conversations, such as friendliness, sharing, listening, ease of speaking, and mutual satisfaction.

The use of *questions* is an integral, often dominant feature of most interviews. It would be difficult to imagine an interview without questions and answers. A question is any verbal or nonverbal expression that invites a verbal response and need not be an interrogatory and formally worded sentence. “Uh-huh,” “Um-hm,” “And?” or “Then?” may be effective questions that elicit important responses. A simple head nod or silence may encourage a party to continue with or modify an answer. Most interviews (particularly surveys, and recruiting and journalistic interviews) cannot exist without questions and overt responses. They are the tools both parties use to obtain information, check for accuracy, verify understanding, and provoke or challenge feelings and thoughts.

The interview is *relational* because both parties are connected interpersonally with varying degrees of interest in the outcome of the interview. They are interdependent because the interview is done with, not to, another party and neither can go it alone. John Stewart and Carole Logan (1998) and Stephen Littlejohn (1996) write that parties in interpersonal interactions have a relational history and memory created or re-created prior to, during, and following each interaction, which may be close or distant, formal or informal, casual or professional, friendly or hostile. Our relationships change over time and are essentially altered (created or re-created) in important ways each time we interact with one another. Important relational dimensions include perceived and real similarities between the parties; how much each desires to take part in an interaction; the degree of liking or affection; how the parties share control; and, perhaps most important, how much they trust one another, particularly at a specific time, during a specific situation, and in a specific setting. The degree of trust may determine if, when, where, and how an interview takes place and its outcome.

The Interview as a Communication Process

This definition of interviewing indicates that each interview is a deceptively complex communication process. As a *process*, the interview is a dynamic, ever-changing, continuing interaction of many variables, not merely asking and answering questions, giving or getting information. The word *process* also denotes a degree of structure and progression toward a chosen end or goal. Like processes, once an interview commences, it is impossible for the parties not to communicate as long as they are in sight and sound of one another.

Two Parties

John Stewart (2006) writes that interviewing is a process of “sending and receiving simultaneously” between two unique and complex parties. Members of each party are *unique products* and *sums* of their culture, environment, education, training, and experiences, and they adhere to specific beliefs, attitudes, and values. They have unique personalities and personas that they project in public arenas and are motivated by expectations, desires, needs, motives, and interests.

Somehow, these unique parties must *interact together* to bring about results that are satisfying to each: a filled vacancy and a position, an item for the evening news and an opportunity to tell one’s side of the story, helping and being helped in a counseling situation, selling and purchasing a computer. Both parties must be active participants from start to finish.

Exchanging Roles

Working together means *exchanging roles* of interviewer and interviewee during the interview when it is appropriate for the status and expertise of the parties, the interview in which they are taking part, and the atmosphere of the interaction. Although the setting—a journalist questioning an eyewitness, a physician giving information to a patient, a recruiter meeting with an applicant, a counselor discussing a problem with a student—may determine the primary role of interviewer or interviewee, the parties usually switch roles from time to time. They will speak and listen, question and answer, challenge and be challenged, motivate and be motivated. For instance, if a counselor asks a question and the counselee seeks clarification or objects to its wording, the counselee takes on the role of interviewer for the moment. When a recruiter invites the applicant to ask questions, the recruiter becomes the interviewee. How often and to what extent roles are exchanged depends on the interview type and setting. A survey taker may play the role of interviewer 90% of the time, while a physician may play the role of interviewer only half of the time. A job applicant may spend 70% of the time answering questions, while a person purchasing a suit may talk only 10% of the time.

Levels of Interactions

The nature and frequency of interactions are significantly affected by each party’s *perceptions* of self, the other, and the situation. How does each party see itself (self-concept) and value itself (self-esteem) and its possibility of success (self-confidence)? How does each party see itself in this situation as patient, subordinate, student, or client? Poor or exalted self-perceptions can do harm to or enhance the outcome of an interview. Perceptions of the other may be influenced by similar and different associations, cultures, genders, ages, ethnic groups, dress, and personal attractiveness. How

the parties view the situation (threatening or supportive, rewarding or punitive, constructive or destructive, safe or dangerous, pleasant or painful) will have a major impact on the communication interactions that take place.

Charles Stewart and William Cash (2006) identify interactions as *levels of communication* that take place during interviews. For instance, *Level 1* interactions tend to be safe, nonthreatening, socially acceptable, comfortable, and ambiguous, much like the following:

Interviewer: How are you doing?

Interviewee: Okay, thanks.

Level 1 interactions are common during the opening minutes of interviews, when both parties are sizing up one another, there is little relational history to serve as a guide, and the interview is between a superior and a subordinate.

Level 2 interactions tend to be half-safe and half-revealing because at least one party is willing to take some risk and the parties have a generally positive relational history. How an interview is arranged and by whom may determine if *Level 2* interactions take place. A *Level 2* interaction might go like this:

Interviewer: How's the project coming along?

Interviewee: Not bad, but we're a little behind schedule.

The interviewee is willing to disclose a little but not enough to pose serious risk, at least not yet.

Level 3 interactions are open, with full self-disclosure of feelings, attitudes, and perceptions. Trust is high, perhaps because of a strong and lengthy relational history between the parties, so the interviewee feels safe to interact openly. A *Level 3* interaction might go like this:

Interviewer: How are things at the Summerville facility?

Interviewee: Not very good at the moment. I'm having trouble between design and engineering on the new transmission and may have to make some difficult decisions about replacing some long-time supervisors.

Levels of interaction are critical to interviews. If an interview starts and remains at *Level 1*, the parties will share little information and few insights into attitudes, perceptions, problems, or solutions. It may be a pleasant but ineffective exchange of safe and ambiguous thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Both parties must strive to reach *Levels 2* and *3*, but their ability and willingness to do so may depend on their status in the interview (superior or subordinate), the climate of the interview (threatening or supportive), and their demographic makeup. For instance, women tend to disclose more than men, are better listeners, and are more responsive, particularly in woman-to-woman interactions. European Americans tend to disclose more about a wide range of topics, particularly about their careers, than do

those of Asian descent. Older Americans tend to be more reluctant to challenge authority and tend to respect status and place in the social or professional hierarchy. Disclosure is often difficult in the intimate interview because, as Laura Guerrero, Peter Andersen, and Walid Afifi (2005) write, "People face a constant struggle between wanting to do whatever they want . . . and wanting to do what makes them look good to others." (p. 35) Interviews tend to involve *our* actions, thoughts, feelings, careers, and futures.

Verbal Interactions

Verbal symbols, although merely arbitrary connections of letters into words, form questions, answers, and information exchange that enable both parties to identify, describe, and frame people, places, things, attitudes, ideas, and points of view. There can be no interview without them, but they often pose as many problems as solutions. For starters, many "English speakers" do not know the meaning of simple or apparently well-known words such as *impetus*, *lucid*, *advocate*, *overt*, *tumor*, and *brevity*.

Words tend to have *many meanings*. For instance, *to apologize* may mean to express sorrow or to defend oneself, *retreat* may mean to withdraw or a private place, and *silence* can mean the state of being reduced to silence or restraining from expression. Other words are *ambiguous* and allow us to assign different meanings according to our experiences and attitudes. An *adequate salary* to one may mean \$25,000 and to another \$250,000. *Middle-aged* may mean 35 to one person and 55 to another, depending on their ages and knowledge. A *small* high school may mean less than 100 students to one and less than 1,000 to another. Not only do identical words have many meanings, but they may confuse because they *sound alike*, such as *to* and *two*, *there* and *their*, and *be* and *bee*. Other words have positive and negative *connotations*. Years ago, many car dealers stopped using the word *used*, which connoted secondhand and wear and tear, and substituted *pre-owned*, which emphasized ownership and a like-new auto. What were known as "row houses" for decades became "town houses" in the 1970s and are now advertised as "town homes," with an emphasis on ownership and comfortable living. We are more disposed toward *inexpensive* products than *cheap* products. While the word *persuasion* has positive connotations, such as inspire and motivate, many see only negative connotations. For instance, some claim that persuasion connotes violence and should not be taught in colleges. A physician recently asked the author if his persuasion course taught "spin-doctoring."

Verbal symbols are often confusing because we create them for social, professional, and persuasive purposes. Nearly every profession creates *jargon* that only its members or "educated" others fully understand. For instance, "invasive procedure" means surgery, a "wood interdental stimulator" is a toothpick, a "vehicular control device" is a stoplight. *Slang* is a kind of unofficial jargon used to communicate primarily with the in-group. When a sportscaster excitedly proclaims that "Jones just hit a tater" or a basketball player was "dialed

in,” baseball and basketball fans may know exactly what the sportscaster means, while others think he is talking a foreign language. *Euphemisms* are better-sounding substitutions for common words, such as “powder room” for *toilet*, “gone to heaven” for *death*, “lifelike” Christmas tree for *artificial* Christmas tree, and “discomfort” for *pain*. *Naming* or *labeling* attempts to change the way we see reality. In our history books, we learn about the “Boston massacre,” not the Boston shooting or incident. In supermarkets, we see meat that is 85% lean, not 15% fat. We no longer speak of policemen but police officers, to signify that many members of police departments are now women.

Obviously, language can confuse as easily as communicate effectively. There are a number of ways to reduce language problems and enhance communication between interview parties. Each party should choose and adapt language carefully. The goal is to *communicate with* not *past* one another. Each should work at expanding vocabulary, including common euphemisms and slang, professional jargon, and connotations. Look for slight changes in words that change meanings and implications. Be aware of how those of different sex, age, race, culture, and ethnic group use and understand language. We may insult the other party and not know it.

Nonverbal Interactions

Most interviews take place face-to-face, with the parties only a few feet apart, so nonverbal communication is pervasive. Dress and appearance, touches, handshakes, silence, posture, and head nods may send intended or unintended messages. The extent of and changes in eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and glances away or at another person in a party may alter the interactions between the parties and affect their relationship.

Be aware of the messages you may be sending nonverbally and how you can avoid unintended signals and misunderstandings. We often indicate positions of power or authority and who will direct and be in charge during an interview through our dress, physical appearance, the place we select for the interview, where and how we sit or stand, eye contact, body movements, and touch. Research indicates that nonverbal communication (how we say something) may be more important than verbal communication (what we say in words). If the verbal and nonverbal seem to conflict, we are likely to focus on the nonverbal as more accurate and honest. Often, of course, the two are so intricately bound to one another that it is nearly impossible to separate them.

When interpreting nonverbal communication with another, be aware of differences in how genders, races, ethnic groups, and cultures communicate. For example, women place more importance on facial expressions, pauses, and gestures than do men. The deeper voices of males tend to be seen as more credible than the higher-pitched voices of women. Black Americans tend to be more animated than white Americans. Africans are taught to avoid eye contact while listening to another. Japanese are taught to mask

negative feelings with smiles and laughter. Those living in Mediterranean countries encourage direct physical contact. Arabs tend to speak louder than do Westerners.

Feedback

Feedback is emphasized in all forms of communication, but it is often indirect or delayed, such as replies to e-mail messages, letters to the editor, applause or questions after a speech is completed, and written reports or evaluations. The proximity of interview parties means that feedback is magnified, immediate, two-way, direct, and continual in the form of questions, answers, stated agreements or disagreements, gestures, facial expressions, head movements, and sitting up straight or leaning forward. It is important to detect and assess feedback by observing and listening to verbal and nonverbal signals without allowing an overactive imagination to read what is not there. A person may fidget not because of boredom or disagreement but because of an uncomfortable seat or nervousness about events that are to take place following the interview. Poor eye contact may indicate shyness or deference to an authority figure rather than evasiveness or dishonesty.

Listening is critical in every interview, and there are several forms of listening from which to choose. *Listening for comprehension* is best when receiving, understanding, and remembering messages accurately and completely for future recall and use. It requires keen concentration on what, how, and why information, beliefs, and feelings are exchanged. Be patient, take notes, ask questions, and observe nonverbal cues.

Listening for empathy is best when trying to communicate concern, feelings, understanding, and involvement. Its traits are reassurance, comfort, warmth, and regard. It is expressing not merely sympathy but also true understanding. Express concern or empathy verbally and nonverbally, do not interrupt, be tactful, and avoid being judgmental. Empathic listening requires us to be comfortable with displays of anger, fear, sadness, and affection.

Listening for evaluation is best when it is necessary to evaluate, assess, or judge what is being said and how. If we are to evaluate accurately and fairly, however, it is essential that we comprehend “the what” and “the how” and be able to feel empathy for the other party. Listening for evaluation requires us to listen carefully and insightfully to every question and answer, observe nonverbal signals perceptively, ask for clarification, seek feedback, and try to avoid defensiveness or anger.

Listening for resolution, what John Stewart (2006) calls *dialogic listening*, is best when the intent of both interview parties is to resolve a mutual problem. Stewart likens it to adding clay to a mold to affect the shape and content of the end product, such as a production, group homework, sales, or a health care course of action or solution. Listening for resolution requires each party to encourage interchanges, trust in the competency of the other, focus on the present rather than the past, and focus on the problem rather than personalities or hierarchy.

Situational Variables

We have been focusing on the two parties in the interview, but they do not interact in a vacuum devoid of time and space. Every interview occurs at a specific time; on a specific date; in a specific place; and in proximity to immediate surroundings such as objects, pictures, decorations, furniture, and models. The time of the interview, such as morning, afternoon, or evening, may affect how each party communicates and their energy and motivational levels. For instance, few sales associates are happy to see customers just before closing time. An interview may commence at 7:30 a.m., with one party being a morning person and the other being an afternoon or late-night person. Dates such as early in a semester, just prior to spring break, or right after final examinations may affect interview focus, content, and motivation. Place brings in *territoriality*. On whose turf will the interview take place? Sarah Trenholm and Arthur Jensen (2004) use the term *personal space* to describe the “imaginary bubble” in which we operate and consider “almost as private as the body itself.” Pictures portraying tooth decay, neck or back models, and large charts showing the intricacies of the eye may interest or frighten a patient. Seating arrangement is a way to make a person feel at ease or comfortable, establish hierarchy and authority, and enhance communication.

Noise can disrupt an interview or make it very difficult for parties to hear, listen, or concentrate. At the very least, noise such as cell phones, foot and auto traffic, machinery, others talking, loud music, and doors closing can be distracting. Limit distractions by selecting private and quiet locations or turning off telephones, television sets, and CD players; closing doors and windows; and preventing interruptions by others. Avoid a physical or psychological kind of noise by not coming to an interview tired, angry, hungry, depressed, or focusing on the next interview or task.

Be aware that both parties may not see (perceive) the situation in the same way. Some supervisors may see their offices as safe, neutral locations, while their subordinates may see them as threatening, places where people are reprimanded and fired. One person may see Thanksgiving as a great family time, while a single or elderly person may see it as a lonely time or one that holds sad memories. Simple seating arrangements may signal superiority or equality, perhaps depending on which party is sitting in the big chair behind the big desk. Some individuals, such as recruiters, physicians, or police officers, may see a situation as routine (something they do every day), while others may see the same situation as a major event (one they do infrequently and with positive or negative consequences).

Interviewing Methods

Interview parties have a variety of methods at their disposal to make each interview a success, including approaches, questions, openings, closings, guides, schedules, and sequences.

The first decision concerns how much control each party will have over the interview.

Directive and Nondirective Approaches

After carefully analyzing self, the other party, the interview type, and the situation, the interviewer must determine whether to employ a directive, a nondirective, or a combination approach. A *directive approach* enables the interviewer to determine the purpose of the interview and its subject matter, structure, pace, interactions, and level of formality. The interviewee is mainly a respondent, provider of information, and reactant, with a modest amount of control. This approach is most appropriate for information giving, surveys and opinion polls, employee recruiting, and sales interviews, in which the interviewer must be in charge.

In a *nondirective approach*, the interviewer enables the interviewee to control the structure, topics, length of answers, formality, and pace of the interview. The interviewer listens, observes, and encourages. This approach is most appropriate for interviews such as information-getting interviews (journalistic interviews, oral history, and investigations), counseling, performance reviews, and problem-solving interviews.

In a *combination approach*, interviewers alternate directive and nondirective approaches when most appropriate for what is taking place during the interview. For instance, a recruiter may begin with questions, proceed to giving information about the position and organization, and then answer the applicant's questions. A counselor may begin with a nondirective approach to encourage the counselee to talk and reveal concerns and then move to a more directive approach when giving information or advice on courses of action.

Question Types and Uses

Questions are the tools of the trade for interview parties. Jamie McKenzie, an expert on the uses of technology, claims that “questions may be the most powerful technology we have ever created” because “they are tools that lead to insight and understanding” (Valenza, 2006). These question tools have names and perform unique and important functions for both interview parties.

There are a few fundamental types of questions. They may be *open-ended*, such as “Tell me about your trip to New Zealand,” or *closed-ended*, such as “When were you in New Zealand?” These are comparable to large and small screwdrivers or wrenches. Open questions encourage interviewees to talk, and their lengthy answers reveal what interviewees think is important and encourages them to volunteer information. They are also easier to answer and are less threatening. On the other hand, closed questions enable the interviewer to control the length of responses and lead to desired information. Interviewers can ask more questions, and interviewees expend little energy in providing short answers.

Questions may be *initial* or *follow-up*. Initial questions begin interviews, topics, issues, or concerns and can make sense when they stand alone, such as “What interests you in this position?” or “Tell me about the courses you are taking.” Questions may be follow-up in nature if they probe into a response and do not make sense out of context, such as “Why does that interest you?” or “Explain that to me in lay terms.” These questions may be lengthy or simple, such as “And?” or “Uh-huh?” Silence may provoke an interviewee into replying further or amending an answer. Follow-up questions probe deeper into areas of interest; encourage interviewees to elaborate on and explain answers that may be vague, superficial, or unclear; and elicit more meaningful answers from respondents who are reluctant or being purposely vague or obscure.

Questions may be *neutral*, in that the interviewer does not indicate the answer desired, such as “What did you think of the concert?” The intent is to avoid any influence on how the interviewee will answer. Or a question may be *leading*, suggesting the desired answer, such as “Don’t you think the concert dragged on too long?” Leading questions are most useful in persuasive interviews, in which the interviewer is more interested in obtaining agreement than in getting accurate, uninfluenced answers. The interviewer may want to see how a person answers under stress or how easily the person can be swayed by simple words or nonverbal cues. Counselors and others may use a strongly worded leading question, often called a *loaded question*, to reveal that all answers are acceptable, such as “Under what circumstances have you cheated on exams?” or “When was the last time you were legally drunk?”

There are a number of special types of questions, most of them follow-ups or probes, designed to fulfill specific purposes. For instance, a *clearinghouse* probe is designed to make sure all important information has been covered, such as “Is there anything else I need to know about the trip to Kenya?” *Informational* probes are designed to obtain further information or explanations, such as “And then what did you do?” A *restatement* probe basically repeats a question because an interviewee did not answer it directly or satisfactorily. A *reflective* probe reflects an answer and attempts to clarify or verify the information received, such as “Are you saying that you’re quitting as coach?” A *mirror* probe summarizes a series of answers to ensure accurate understanding between the parties. The ability to ask insightful and appropriate follow-up questions separates the skilled from the unskilled interviewer. Anyone can ask a series of initial questions and note the answers, but it takes skill to listen carefully and know when follow-up questions are needed and the most appropriate type to use.

Structure

Interviews, unlike conversations, must have a predetermined purpose and a degree of structure. The degree of structure will depend on interview type and purpose. For instance, a survey interview will be highly structured, a recruiting or journalistic interview moderately structured,

and a counseling interview minimally structured. Regardless of degree of structure, the opening is a critical first step in every interview.

Opening

The *opening* of interviews is critical, first, because it sets the tone and climate of the interview. It signals whether the interview will be serious or lighthearted, formal or informal, relaxed or tense, professional or nonprofessional, friendly or hostile, nonthreatening or threatening. What we say and do not say at the opening directly affects whether an interview will continue or end abruptly and the willingness of both parties to communicate beyond Level 1, superficial interactions. Small talk, humor, and compliments may help to establish a relationship or build on a relational history, but all three should be used in moderation. Too much, and they may “turn off” the other party, particularly if the talk, humor, and compliments seem forced or insincere. If a relationship is just beginning, beware of using the other party’s first name or nickname or touching beyond a handshake, particularly in a formal setting. Nonverbal actions such as voice, eye contact, facial expressions, handshaking, and dress may communicate the tone of the interview, while territoriality, seating arrangement, and physical setting may communicate the climate of the interview. Be aware of differences in the way sex, age, culture, and ethnicity may affect how the parties interact nonverbally. For instance, Lillian Glass has identified 105 “talk differences” between men and women in the United States, including touch, facial language, and voice patterns.

Second, the opening serves an *orientation function*, essential in motivating both parties to communicate freely and accurately. Orientation is critical when there is little relational history or the purpose and nature of the interview is unclear, particularly when interviews are taking place over the telephone. As interviewers, we might state our purposes; identify ourselves and who we represent; and indicate what we want, why we want it, and what will happen following the interview. We might explain the nature of a problem, how it was discovered, and both why and how we selected this interviewee at this time. An important goal of orientation is to reduce *relational uncertainty* so that interviewees come to understand their roles and purposes and to trust the interviewer to conduct a nonthreatening exchange and to use the information received for the stated purpose.

The opening must be a *dialogue* between two parties, not a *monologue* the interviewer recites. The less the other party is involved in this all-important stage, the less likely this party will be to communicate freely and accurately at Levels 2 and 3. Do not rush through the opening; be sure that the interviewee is ready to communicate. Some 90% of “cold calls” over the telephone fail because of a failed opening.

Closing

Too often, the closing is seen by both parties as merely a stopping point or way of saying goodbye, an unimportant

appendage to the interview. The closing, however, is as important as the opening. An abrupt, brief, seemingly uncaring closing may destroy the relationship established or enhanced during the interview and affect future interactions, assuming that there will be future interactions. An interviewee may feel unappreciated or used, only important until the interviewer obtains information, a sale, or help.

Both parties should know when the interview is coming to an end. Signals may be simple verbal cues such as “Well” or “Okay.” Mark Knapp and his colleagues cataloged a variety of nonverbal ways to communicate the closing of interviews. These include straightening up in our seats, leaning forward, breaking eye contact, standing up, or offering a handshake. Obviously, the interview parties must be aware of what each is saying and how each is acting to detect when a closing is commencing, but they must not read too much into simple nonverbal actions. For instance, a person may straighten up to become more comfortable, lean forward because of interest in what is being said, or break eye contact to think of a follow-up question or a carefully reasoned-out response.

The function of the closing is to end an interaction effectively while not precluding or harming future interactions. Be sincere in what you say, express appreciation, and be supportive. Like the opening, closings must be dialogues, not monologues. The interviewer might offer to answer questions, make personal or professional inquiries, or state satisfaction. If this interview is one in a series (a screening interview for a position, a performance review, a health care checkup), summarize agreements, explain the next step, and set a date.

The Body of the Interview

The body of the interview must be carefully structured and adapted to the purpose of the interview and the other party. It is tempting to begin preparation by jotting down a series of questions to ask, but we cannot prepare insightful questions if we have yet to determine what information, input, or reactions we want from *this* interaction. After all, it may be merely one of several planned contacts with this party. Many purposes are achieved only after several interactions between recruiters and applicants, physicians and patients, performance reviewers and employees, counselors and those with problems, sales representatives and clients.

With a clear purpose in mind, begin preparation by developing an *interview guide*, an outline of the information, data, and actions needed. First, list the major areas, then list subareas under each, and finally subareas under subareas. Draw on previous training in outlining to create a well-organized, logical list that will serve as a guide. Common patterns or sequences include topical, time, space, cause-to-effect, and problem-to-solution. The traditional journalistic guide will work for many interviews: who, what, when, where, how, and why.

If the interview is to be simple and brief, such as an exchange with a professor concerning a field project or internship, we may operate from a guide or *nonscheduled* interview. The major problem with this simple format is that

we will need to create every question on the spot, a difficult task for an inexperienced, emotionally involved, or nervous interviewer. A *moderately scheduled* format turns the major areas in a guide into carefully phrased questions and may include a few planned follow-up questions. A *highly scheduled* format turns all parts of a guide into questions and requires little deviation or instant creation of follow-up questions. A *highly scheduled standardized* format includes all questions, including planned follow-ups, and answer options for ease of recording answers. This format is used most often in surveys and polls, in which each interview must be identical to the previous one. Choose the format most suitable to purpose, skill level, situation, and interviewee.

Future Directions of Interviewing

Continuing theory, research, and practice in critical areas of the interviewing process focus, for instance, on the relational and interactional nature of interviewing and the sharing of roles. It is no longer acceptable to address only the interviewer. In the performance review interview, referred to not long ago as the “appraisal” interview, the emphasis is on interviewers as “coaches” who enable interviewees to succeed and reach their potentials by helping rather than evaluating or judging, focusing on the future rather than the past and on mutually agreed-on courses of action rather than problems. With the aging of American society and the emphasis on preventative medicine, the health care interview has become the focus of much study and research. Health care professionals and patients alike are addressing the need for effective interpersonal communication, including information gathering, information giving, and compliance with prescribed medications and regimens. “Behavior-based” interviewing, in which the questions require applicants to exhibit position-related skills and experiences, is dominating the literature on employment interviewing. There is a growing concern over ethics in all types of interviews, particularly in employment and persuasive interviews, in which there is growing evidence of dishonesty in resumes, answers by recruiters and applicants, and sales tactics.

While research continues to be done on the interviewing process and on specialized forms of interviewing such as opinion surveys, recruiting, performance review, counseling, and health care, important new research is focusing on electronic interviews via the telephone, cell phones, videoconferencing, and the Internet. Electronic devices may revolutionize the setting and the interactions in interviews.

Although the interview has traditionally indicated a face-to-face interaction with parties being in close proximity, the invention of the *telephone* more than a century ago made distance interviewing possible. The use of the telephone has become widespread, particularly in surveys, sales, and recruiting, because it is less expensive, is easy to use, saves time, reduces staffing needs, and covers long distances. But users of the telephone note the lack of presence of the parties and the limitation of critical nonverbal communication to voice. The interview becomes ear-to-ear

instead of face-to-face. Many interviewers do not like the impersonal nature of the telephone interview, while many interviewees do not trust interactions with someone they cannot see. Turn taking, so important in the interactive interview, is often difficult because the parties cannot see cues such as leaning forward, facial expressions, and gestures, which have traditionally aided turn taking. John Stewart (2006) calls turn taking “nexting” and claims that it may be the most important communication tool.

The advent of the *cell phone* has created a new world of possibilities for the telephone because interviews can take place anywhere at any time, including airports, classrooms, theaters, and restaurants. Interview parties are no longer tied to places such as the office, home, medical facility, or recruiting center. The cell phone also has video capabilities, which will add an important nonverbal dimension to telephone interviews. Privacy concerns will grow as parties carry on important interactions in public places, often where noise interrupts or interferes with hearing and listening. In fact, as we observe people walking down streets talking seemingly without pause, we wonder if it is not a one-way process rather than a true interaction.

Videoconferencing technology became widely available in the 1990s and is growing in use because multiple people in distant locations can both see and hear one another. It is particularly popular in recruiting, where several members of an organization can interview an applicant at the same time, and in problem-solving interviews, in which staff from around the country or globe can discuss a problem. Many of these interactions are small-group rather than interview interactions. While parties can see one another, the shots tend to be head, upper-body, or group shots, which are not nearly as helpful as face-to-face exchanges. Since there are fewer nonverbal cues, there tend to be fewer interruptions and less frequent turn taking. Research indicates that both parties prefer the traditional interview to the videoconference.

With the advent of the *Internet*, some interviews have gone from face-to-face or ear-to-ear to finger-to-finger. The electronic exchanging of messages can take place at any time of the day or night, can reach parties thousands of miles apart, and provides a record of messages sent and received. On the other hand, such “interviews” have no nonverbal element and are not interactions in real time. The Internet is no more interactive than e-mail or letters, and parties are unlikely to reply at length as they do easily in face-to-face interviews.

Conclusion

The interview is a dyadic form of communication between two distinct parties, at least one of whom has a predetermined and serious purpose. It is interactional in that both parties speak and listen from time to time and may share roles of interviewer and interviewee. It is relational because both parties are connected interpersonally and have varying degrees of interest in taking part and influencing the outcome of the interview. It typically involves questions

designed to elicit information; verify accuracy and understanding; heighten self-disclosure; and influence feelings, thoughts, and attitudes. It is a communication process that is a dynamic, ever-changing, and continuing interaction of many variables between two complex parties, often with differing backgrounds, motives, and goals. The close proximity of parties in interviews magnifies the verbal and nonverbal messages, sent and received, and enhances the importance of situational variables such as time, seating arrangement, physical surroundings, and noise.

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PUBLIC SPEAKING

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In everyday language, *public speaking* refers to the communication practice of a speaker sharing ideas with an audience primarily through speech. The term encompasses a great many communication contexts, including events as different as delivering an oral report on company profits to a closed meeting of a board of trustees, addressing millions of listeners around the globe during a U.S. presidential inauguration ceremony, and giving a toast at a wedding. The fundamental notion underlying public speaking as a form of communication is that it is an embodied and oral act. Associated expectations that signal that a communication interaction is an example of public speaking are that the oral communication is shared with more than one listener and there is one person in the interaction who does most of the communicating. Like written communication, public speaking is complicated because sharing meanings with others through language is difficult. The challenges of public speaking are heightened, however, since the speaker shares meaning not only through words but also through body, voice, and visuals. Furthermore, the public-speaking experience, traditionally, is transitory; a speaker has only one opportunity to accomplish his or her goal—to be understood by the listeners. While readers can re-read documents until they understand the gist of the message, listeners, typically, cannot hear a speech again. Another challenge particular to the public-speaking experience is anxiety. In fact, 70% to 75% of the U.S. population report experiencing public-speaking anxiety (McCroskey, 2000; Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). Challenges such as these make public speaking a communication practice that continues to interest researchers and everyday practitioners and have made public-speaking classes a common requirement for undergraduate degrees

and public-speaking titles popular in the self-help sections of bookstores.

It is perhaps surprising that the demand for public speakers persists in our increasingly mediated age. While information can be shared through many other means and persuasive appeals are pervasive on television, billboards, and the Internet, there remains a significant role for public speaking as a means for sharing ideas and motivating others. Political speaking is particularly visible in U.S. culture as we watch candidates participate in debates and see legislators and citizens speak about civic affairs on news shows, C-Span, community access television, and Internet sites such as YouTube. Public speaking also happens at pep assemblies; in board rooms; during parents' night at public schools; in assembly halls and civic centers; at state fairs and trade shows; as part of award shows such as the Oscars; at commencements; at religious gatherings, inaugurations, and weddings; in classrooms, prisons, and legislatures; and even during meetings of 4-H or Rotary Clubs. U.S. culture is rife with contexts that call for public speaking.

Organizations such as the All American Speaker's Bureau arrange for celebrities and professional speakers to address audiences at corporate meetings, trade shows, conventions, and major community events. Though sometimes these appearances may include a chance to shake hands or get an autograph, their central purpose is to arrange to have someone with significant understanding of an issue, someone with a deep passion for a cause, or someone with a fascinating experience to share speak before an audience. The speakers' bureau understands the potential impact of this speaking situation for listeners and for the organization arranging the event and knows its market value. Groups will pay speaking fees ranging from around \$5,000, to hear, for

example, Amy Henry from NBC's *The Apprentice*, to more than \$200,000, to hear Donald Trump himself. Another organization, TED, originally devoted to sharing ideas about Technology, Entertainment, and Design, meets annually to showcase 50 speakers, who address a crowd of 1,000 for about 18 minutes each. These speakers share their exceptional ideas on topics ranging from open-source textbooks for college classrooms to innovations in wind power, to how the mind works, to the nature of romantic love. The 4-day conference regularly sells out a year in advance, but the speeches are digitally captured and the best are posted at www.ted.com. The organizers adopted the slogan "ideas worth spreading" and devote significant resources to their goal of "giving everyone on-demand access to the world's most inspiring voices." Such examples underscore the fact that public speaking remains a significant mode of communication in contemporary culture.

Public speaking has evolved as a form of communication, and it overlaps many of the other types of communication discussed in this handbook. Individuals engaged in the specific tasks of interviewing, deliberating, debating, mediating conflict, demonstrating, or communicating with visuals are likely to engage in public speaking as well. This chapter, therefore, will focus on the fundamental concepts of public speaking as a type of communication. While public-speaking theory and pedagogy are deeply rooted in the classical period, it is important to recognize how cultural developments, ways of understanding communicative processes, and even theories of language have revitalized and complicated the classical concepts. Even as U.S. cultural expectations have expanded such that today there is a belief that all citizens should be prepared to express themselves through public speaking, the ideas about how public speaking functions have grown increasingly complex. As a result, it has become clear that public speaking, like other complex skills, is one that can continue to develop across a lifetime. Though technological developments bring new challenges as well as opportunities, there are a handful of primary concepts that can guide public speakers to success in the 21st century.

Public-Speaking Goals

Public speaking is a form of communication that seeks an outcome; public speakers seek not simply to express themselves but to have an effect on their listeners. Humans have long sought to understand more about the ways language can shape circumstances and help them accomplish their goals. The first formal discussions on communication and public speaking in the Western tradition emerged in the 5th century BCE in Greece, though more ancient texts of Chinese and Jewish origin as well as the works of Homer indicate an even earlier interest in effective speech making. In Western cultures, public-speaking instructors were among the first people to be paid to share their knowledge with others. Early legal systems required citizens to speak

on their own behalf when presenting arguments on issues such as property ownership. Those who listened to these speeches and saw their varying levels of effectiveness began to codify the strategies that were most successful in particular situations. In Greece, ancient teachers of what was commonly known as "rhetoric" included well-known figures such as Gorgias and Aristotle in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, respectively. In Rome, the first systematic rhetoric handbook, the *Ad Herennium*, dates to the 1st century BCE.

These early texts identify three central goals related to the different contexts for public speaking: to persuade judges to support your position in a court of law (known as forensic discourse, as in "I am not guilty of murder"); to persuade decision makers to support your position about what action should be taken by the community or state (known as deliberative discourse, as in "We should build a new wall for the city"); and to persuade people with arguments that a person or event is worthy of either praise or blame (known as epideictic discourse, as in "Helen of Troy's beauty is beyond all comparison"). These goals were related by their common goal or outcome: the persuasion of a listener.

According to Aristotle, the differences among these goals emerged in large part due to the specific context within which the speech took place and the role played by the audience during the exchange. Forensic discourse referred to the speeches given in legal settings where listeners would judge whether someone was guilty of a crime or whether a wrong was done in the past that required redress. Deliberative discourse was the discourse that took place in the senate, within bodies of decision makers for the state, who argued for certain policies, inviting listeners to judge whether such policies should be implemented in the future. Epideictic discourse took place in public spaces before popular audiences who made judgments about the object of praise or blame and also rendered judgments about the talents of the speakers. The situation within which speakers shared their ideas determined the kinds of materials, arguments, vocabulary, and delivery that were appropriate. For this reason, early rhetoric handbooks often divided their guidelines into chapters devoted to each different context.

In the 100 years preceding and following the beginning of the Common Era, debate about the goals of public speaking was vigorous. As the Roman theorist Quintilian summarized the issue in his landmark work the *Institutes of Oratory* (95 CE), which is the most detailed account of the education of a public speaker from the ancient world, what began as a debate about whether a speech of praise was significantly different from a speech of blame soon developed into claims that the goals of speaking were innumerable:

Indeed, if we distinguish praising and blaming in the third part of oratory, in what kind of oratory shall we be said to employ ourselves when we complain, console, appease, excite, alarm, encourage, direct, explain obscure expressions, narrate, entreat, offer thanks, congratulate, reproach, attack, describe, command, retract, express wishes or opinions, and speak in a thousand other ways? (Quintilian, 2006, Book 3, chap. 4, para. 1)

But if the goals of speakers were as numerous as the goals any individual speaker might set for himself or herself, there would be no way to generalize about the skills needed by a speaker, and it would become impossible to teach others to be successful in addressing audiences.

Some agreement about the genres of discourse became necessary as a way to identify what public speakers needed to know and what they needed to be able to do in order to be successful. The categories of forensic, deliberative, and epideictic speech remain salient today; but they fail to encompass other essential functions of public discourse within a culture. By the 5th century, rhetoric handbooks, such as Book IV of Augustine's (1958) *On Christian Doctrine*, encouraged teachers and students of rhetoric to accept a broad set of three goals for public speaking: to teach, to please, and to persuade. Today the majority of public speaking textbooks concentrate on the same three central goals of public speaking to inform, to entertain and to persuade an audience. Persuasive speaking is the most complex of the goals and remains an umbrella term for diverse discourses such as those aiming to change belief, to move to action, to inspire, to sell, to convert, and to motivate. In response to recent critiques of the fundamentally coercive nature of these kinds of persuasive speeches, whose aim is to change listeners, some theorists are exploring a new genre called "invitational speaking." This alternative goal for public speakers aims to initiate dialogues with listeners about issues and aims to share perspectives. The goal is to invite consideration of change rather than speaking with the intention of changing audience members (Foss & Griffin, 1995; Griffin, 2009).

Identifying the genre or the general goal of a speech within a particular situation helps a speaker understand a great deal about the strategies available to achieve the outcome for that kind of speaking situation. Informative speeches rely on clarity and thoroughness so that listeners can remember the information. Persuasive speeches are built on the speaker's credibility, the use of evidence and reasoning, as well as engaging the emotions of the audience to produce change. Invitational speeches aim to establish and sustain conditions of equality, value, and self-determination with listeners. Speeches to entertain rely on strategies that use humor to make their point. While these broadly defined goals govern the study of the discipline of public speaking, each speaker also needs to determine his particular goal within a particular speech situation. Those goals, like the long list developed by Quintilian, are innumerable, and identifying those goals requires careful consideration of many factors. While technology has expanded the potential impact of public speaking and added complications to the communicative process, the fundamental concerns and resources of the public speaker have remained remarkably consistent over time.

Fundamental Principles: The Dynamic Process of Public Speaking

Mid-20th-century efforts to visualize the components and processes of communication were dominated by what is called the transmission model (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). This was an information transfer model that seemed to suggest that communicators send information across some medium (such as telephone wires) to a receiver, who takes in the information as sent unless some kind of noise interferes to make the transmission problematic. This understanding of the public communication model has changed over time and is currently being influenced by postmodernists, who point out the indeterminacy of each of the parts of the model. Nevertheless, most teachers and public-speaking practitioners continue to find value in thinking about the distinct parts of the communication process to better accomplish their communicative goals. There are seven essential parts to the model: speaker, audience, message, channel, feedback, interference, and context.

Speaker

The speaker is perhaps the most obvious part of the public-speaking transaction, but there are complexities in the role that must not be overlooked. Communication begins within the mind of the speaker as he or she perceives and processes his or her own experiences and learning and makes decisions about the goal(s) of a speech and the strategies best suited to accomplishing those tasks. In fact, Aristotle does not define rhetoric as a product. It is not a speech or a specific strategy; it is not the outcome or effect a speaker has on an audience. Rhetoric, he says, is "the faculty of observing, in any given case, the available means of persuasion." Developing one's rhetorical skill, then, is about training the mind to see all the possibilities for persuasion or, in contemporary theory, to see all the possibilities for engaging audiences. Much of the work of a successful public-speaking interaction is the mental work of the speaker, who must sift through the possible goals, materials, information, and organizational and delivery strategies to select the best for a particular speaking context.

In addition, from the listener's point of view, the presence of the speaker is meaningful even before the speaker begins a presentation. The very fact that a presidential candidate chose to speak at a particular event conveys a message about the value of that event to that audience and to the listener as well as to those looking at the event from outside the immediate situation. The reputation of the speaker, his ethos or credibility, may also be known to the listener before the start of the speech. Announcements about the speech, the speech of introduction before a presentation or audience knowledge about earlier speeches, books or appearances by the speaker all serve to help listeners construct ideas about the speaker before the talk. These preexisting attitudes about the speaker can support or interfere with the speaker's goals depending on the listener.

Listener/Audience

The presence of an audience is essential to the public-speaking situation. Philosophers may debate the nature of “sound” when arguing about whether a tree falling in the forest makes a sound if no one is there to hear it, but theorists agree that the communicative act of public speaking requires the presence of a listener to be meaningful. Listeners bring their own experiences, languages, expectations, and ways of making meaning into the public-speaking interaction. The meanings taken away from a public-speaking presentation depend on the audience member’s work in creating them. The more researchers investigate the ways people learn, the more it becomes clear that complex biological and social processes are at work as audience members construct their own meanings in communication contexts. Public communication is a participatory process; a speaker cannot make himself or herself understood without the willing participation of the listener in the process. The complexities of the mental landscapes of audience members—individually and as groups—is part of what makes public speaking a creative challenge that is never fully mastered.

Message

A third complex feature of the public-speaking process is the message itself. By definition, the message is the meaning received and understood by the members of the audience. In general, the closer the message received is to the message intended by the speaker, the more effective the presentation. For this reason, public-speaking instruction is typically focused on the construction of the speaker’s message—such as the content, the structure, the word choices, but it is also the case that audience members are actively engaged in constructing their own sense of the message. The messages from which they construct meanings are intentional and unintentional, verbal and nonverbal. As individuals, listeners have varying degrees of attentiveness; still, the speaker must assume that audience members are constructing impressions of the speaker’s character, beliefs, age, class, race, gender, and even sexual orientation even before the speaker begins to address them orally. Contemporary public speakers are increasingly aware of this and work to manage these impressions to the best of their ability.

Channel

The intended and unintended messages projected by speakers come to listeners through some line of communication that we typically call a channel or medium. In the public-speaking context, air is the typical carrier of our verbal cues, and lines of sight carry nonverbal cues. These channels can be complicated by the presence of something that amplifies the sound, such as a microphone (as in a presidential state-of-the-union address) or a bull horn (as when President Bush stood in the rubble of the 9/11 attacks and

addressed the rescue workers). Even poor stage lighting or a podium too large for the speaker can make it more difficult to “read” the visual cues. In recent decades, public speeches have become increasingly mediated, such that one speech may be available through various channels. Today, not only are speech texts, such as the Gettysburg Address, available to new readers who are separated from the context by many years, but complete recordings of speeches are available to be viewed by individuals and groups around the globe. New technologies have also expanded the kinds of channels available to speakers to share their messages; whether using PowerPoint and embedding videos in presentations or publishing presentations via YouTube or blogs, today’s speakers have new challenges and opportunities when considering the media through which their messages are created and shared.

Feedback

Feedback is the element of the communication process that makes it a transactional experience. Rather than messages running only one way, from speaker to listener, theorists conceptualize public-speaking interactions as having a feedback loop. Parallel to the messages speakers communicate, feedback messages can be verbal and nonverbal, intentional and unintentional. Successful public speakers must be able to take in these messages and adapt to them. Audience members may communicate their enthusiasm or anger, the trouble they are having hearing or understanding, their agreement or disagreement, their willingness to give their attention or to ignore, and they may show their appreciation of the presentation with applause. Responding to feedback by restating, rephrasing, or elaborating a point; speaking up; slowing down; or even moving to an interactive moment of the speech to regain audience attention are all marks of the mature public speaker who is aware of the importance of audience feedback as a way to gauge whether an audience is continuing to work with the speaker to create shared meanings.

Within the immediate speaking situation, feedback is simultaneous with the delivery of the speaker’s message. However, in colloquial use, feedback also refers to information solicited by public speakers after public-speaking events. In classrooms, peers and instructors may offer feedback to a speaker about a presentation, asking questions or commenting on the public-speaking choices made. Mediated public messages, such as a speech posted on YouTube, will collect feedback by way of comments posted. Audience researchers can use new technologies to measure the feedback responses of listeners. During a presidential debate, focus groups may press triggers to indicate their level of agreement or how much they like a candidate at any particular moment in the debate. Processing such data helps political advisers and speech writers capture a glimpse of the meaning-making process at work within listeners so that later efforts to communicate similar messages can be made more successful.

Interference

When something prevents our messages from reaching those with whom we are communicating, interference is the culprit. In the transmission model of communication, this idea is typically conceived of as literal noise. For example, a public speaker's message might not get through to listeners if there was a baby crying in the room, a bus passing by the rally at the park, or a conversation being carried on among some members of the audience. This part of the model is based on the analogy that compares such noise with the kind of static that can interfere with a phone connection. Certainly such noise can make it hard for a speaker's message to be heard, thus, at a very fundamental level, preventing meanings from being shared with audiences.

As our conceptualization of speech making has shifted from the simplistic notion of transmitting sound from one person to an audience, so has the understanding of interference become much more complex. Hearing, listening, and understanding are different physiological and psychological tasks that we ask of audiences, and while public speakers are rightly concerned about being heard, they are also deeply concerned with being understood. An expanded notion of interference for the 21st-century speaker can include a wide range of possible distractions for audiences that can block, or make it harder for, messages to be understood. Today's speakers continue to be concerned about external distractions, such as noisy speaking venues or cell phone interruptions. In addition, new research about brain processing demonstrates the special challenges facing a speaker who is addressing listeners experiencing a sugar low or audience members who are present but are preoccupied with worries about needing to catch a plane, finish a project, or repair a relationship strained by an argument earlier that day. These internal distractions are usually outside the control of speakers, but the challenges they present to the success of a presentation are real and demand creative responses. Some points of internal interference in listeners can be unwittingly encouraged by speakers. Speakers who commit a faux pas, whether it be dressing inappropriately for the occasion, mispronouncing the name of the person who introduced them, or using terms unfamiliar to the audience, can send unintentional messages that interfere with the audience's ability or willingness to construct the meaning intended by the speakers. Similarly, speakers who incorporate poor visual aids, weak evidence, or a provocative word choice can invite listeners in whole or in part to disregard the rest of the presentation or to engage in a mental debate that interferes with their ability to understand what follows.

Context

In its most specific sense, context refers to the situation within which the public-speaking exchange occurs. This situation involves the reason the group constituting the audience is called together, whether it is a political convention where the room is filled with credentialed delegates, a

monthly meeting of the Rotary club, or a rally to protest a decision to cut funding for a university program. It also involves the actual setting for the speech—a comfortable, climate-controlled board room; an overheated, crowded schoolboard meeting running late into the night; or an outdoor rally where it is hoped that the audience will grow during the presentation. Within the setting, speakers also consider the size of the audience, the arrangement of space, the presence or absence of means of amplification, the visual aid support available, and even whether there will be other speakers at the event. Understanding the situation is paramount for the speaker to make decisions that will lead to a successful presentation.

Context issues, however, extend beyond the specifics of the particular speaking situation. Cultural and institutionalized differences will affect the norms of the speaker-audience relationship. U.S. senators know that their presentations on the floor of Congress will be listened to politely, though sometimes by only a handful of fellow senators. Members of the British Parliament, in contrast, can expect colleagues to make their agreement and disagreement clear throughout the speech with shouts, feet stomping, or hisses. The conventions governing delivery and language use vary widely among cultures and subcultures, complicating the challenge facing speakers as they aim to adapt to those norms. Professional speakers know that every new speaking situation requires some adjustment if their message is to be successful.

Public speaking is a radically situated communicative act. Delivered to a particular audience at a particular time in a particular space, speeches have been recognized as among the most transitory of the arts. Prior to the invention of recording technologies, a speech might persist as a written text, but that text represented a mere shadow of the experience of the speech as delivered. Though a speech can now experience an extended life span through recording, it remains, in the nature of public speaking, fundamentally linked to the context that called it into being, what Lloyd Bitzer (1968) called the rhetorical situation. Though listeners around the world continue to view Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" address, their understanding of the speech and the meanings they construct are not identical to those constructed by the listeners at the march or by people watching television coverage of the event. While some of the meanings of the speech persist over time and are shared by the millions of listeners who experience the speech today through various channels and in many different contexts, each listener lends his or her own life experiences and interpretive lenses to the meaning-making process. When listeners have the opportunity to add a deep understanding of the historical context within which the speech was given, their interpretive lenses change and new possible meanings of the text begin to emerge. Context persists as one of the most powerful influences on the public communication process, and our understanding of its significance continues to evolve.

Fundamental Principles: Effective Characteristics of Speakers

Speakers have various tools with which to respond to the dynamic complexities of the parts of the public-speaking interaction. Significantly, the skills required to respond effectively have not changed dramatically since the earliest theories of public speaking were being set forth. When today's students are asked what public speakers need to know in order to succeed, their responses are very similar to the ideas set forth in what communication educators call the Roman rhetorical canon. These five areas of instruction for public speakers have governed the topics studied in classrooms and mastered by remarkable speakers across the centuries. They include invention (creating the materials of the speech), arrangement (creating the order of the ideas in the speech), style (creating the expression of the ideas of the speech), delivery (embodying and speaking the ideas of the speech), and memory (strategies for recalling the ideas of the speech during delivery). In addition, today's students will often list more abstract concepts such as "confidence" as essential for the successful public speaker. Public-speaking instruction is typically founded on the assumption that mastery of the elements in the rhetorical canon added to experience will support the development of speaker confidence.

Invention, Arrangement, and Style Generate Ideas to Foster Connections With Audiences

While often treated as distinct areas of study, these first three parts of the rhetorical canon are coming to be understood as integrated because each of them lends generative power to the speaker. Invention includes tasks such as setting goals for a speech, identifying the major ideas the speaker hopes to convey, doing the research work necessary to select and develop those ideas, creating lines of thought and reasoning to powerfully attach the main ideas to the evidence at hand, considering ways to engage the particular audience to be addressed, and imagining points of opposition or confusion and ways to overcome those challenges. In other words, invention has long been recognized as the area of study concerned with creating and identifying the heart of the public speaker's message.

Arrangement, in contrast, has often been understood to involve the somewhat mechanical task of outlining the ideas and materials gathered and created in the inventional process. Distinct tasks such as structuring the main points; connecting the main ideas to one another; and understanding the conventions necessary to develop a good introduction, body, and conclusion for a particular situation are often taught as the fundamental aspects of this canon. In practice, the work of arrangement is dynamically linked with invention. For any particular speech topic, the consideration of strategies for organizing the speech to enhance its impact on listeners will lead to insights about engaging

those listeners, responding to objections, or refining the goal of the presentation. A speaker addressing recycling efforts in the community would produce a very different speech if he or she used a chronological structure (which would require addressing the steps in the process or offering a historical perspective) than if a topical structure was used (which might lead to an exploration of current options for local citizens or addressing the advantages and disadvantages of competing proposals). In this way, arrangement becomes more than putting together the pieces in the puzzle of a speech; it becomes a way to determine the very shape and look of the puzzle in its final form.

Similarly, current work at the intersection of linguistics, psychology, and communication identifies the deep impact that stylistic choices—speakers' ways of expressing themselves, or their use of style—are often constrained by habits of the mind and worldviews that have dramatic effects on the inventional process. Theorists such as Michael Osborn (1967) have identified the important ways in which metaphor functions not simply as a stylistic device that is used to clothe the thoughts of speakers but as a mode of thought that shapes our ideas and ways of thinking. Kenneth Burke (1966) explored the notion of terministic screens, arguing that a choice of terminology is "a selection of reality" and so, in some way, also functions to deflect us from some other perspective on reality (p. 45). Public speakers have long been aware that the connotations words carry have great power. The terms *prolife* and *antichoice* ostensibly refer to the same social movement, but the use of one term or the other offers an important insight into the attitudes of the speaker and may attract or repel listeners as a result. Linguists such as George Lakoff (2004) press the point further, arguing that connotations of words are not just suggestive but can constrain the ways in which we see the world. One example he offers is the phrase *tax relief*. When people hear the word *relief*, he argues, a mental frame is triggered. This frame, or way of understanding the world, sees relief as something good, something necessary for one to escape an affliction. When the frame of relief is brought together with the word *tax*, then that word is understood to be the source of the affliction and whoever can bring tax relief is understood to be a hero. Lakoff argues that discussions about tax policies would be significantly different if the term *tax* triggered a frame related to paying dues or to making an investment. Debates over the nature of language and its effects on the brain are ongoing, but successful public speakers of the 21st century must become increasingly aware of the power of language choices and the ways they influence not only audiences but the speakers' own ways of understanding the world.

Delivery and Memory Guide Nonverbal Connections With Audiences

The canons of delivery and memory address what, for many, are the most anxiety-provoking aspects of public speaking. The dynamic communication process relies on the speaker prompting the interaction by orally and visually

sharing the ideas generated through the processes of invention, arrangement, and stylistic considerations. Giving an embodied presence to these ideas is the only way public speakers have to initiate the meaning-making process with their audience, and it has an impact on the audience's ability and willingness to share in that process. Since a large part of the public speaker's success depends on the speaker's ability to use his or her voice and body and visual aids to project the message, teachers of public speaking have long invested energy in identifying and offering training in the factors that contribute to successful delivery. Eye contact, gesture, stance, facial expression, posture, appearance, volume, rate, pitch, and inflection all play significant roles in the delivery of the presentation and affect the success of the message. Indeed, if listeners cannot hear the message because the speaker is too soft or cannot understand the message because the speaker rushes, no appropriate meaning can be shared. Besides a few fundamental guidelines such as doing nothing that will prevent the audience from hearing and understanding the message, there are few delivery rules that enjoy universal application. Even direct eye contact between speaker and audience, which in mainstream U.S. culture is typically considered an essential feature of successful public speaking, would be considered inappropriate in some other cultures. Since there is no one-size-fits-all practice of delivery suitable for all speakers in all situations, wise speakers take constant note of the successful choices of the speakers they see and work to integrate those behaviors into their own repertoire, reinterpreting a choice to fit their own style and so expanding the possibilities for their delivery in future presentations.

Likewise, strategies for recall during delivery vary widely from speaker to speaker. While there has always been a tradition of impromptu speaking—training speakers to competently deliver ideas with little or no time for preparation, the classical tradition emphasized the need for the orator to develop a knack for memorizing speeches and reciting them as planned. In the United States, writing speeches and committing them to memory or delivering them from a manuscript remained a common practice well into the 20th century. While those kinds of preparation behaviors persist—most often supported by technology such as a teleprompter, other strategies such as outlining and focusing on key words and ideas have a strong following today. Current communication norms put a high premium on the authenticity of speakers. A conversational delivery style supported by brief notes, a rarely consulted outline, and, in some situations, a PowerPoint slide show that blends words and visuals is the most commonly implemented set of delivery and memory strategies.

Evolutions of Public Speaking in the 21st Century

Conceptualizations of public speaking have evolved over time. Today's speakers recognize that they do not simply transfer words and ideas to listeners but rather are engaged in

a complex process of attempting to share meanings among diverse members of an audience. This collaborative process means that public speakers must surrender the belief that they exercise entire control over the meanings constructed by audience members. The greatest challenge facing the contemporary public speaker is to adapt to the changing expectations and needs of their audiences. Emerging technologies are creating new opportunities for speakers to adapt to audiences, but they may also be changing the way audiences process information and create meanings.

The mental landscape of today's audience members has been shaped by regular interaction with a wide range of electronic technologies that may be altering their expectations of public speakers. In industrialized nations, a generation of multitaskers with fragmented attention spans that embrace distractions has come of age; it is also a generation accustomed to easy electronic information access and sophisticated visuals. This is a group whose members have constructed their own homepages and social networking pages with personalized links and in doing so have exercised great power in determining the information, communication styles, and worldviews they see. There is research to suggest that developing strong multitasking skills has both costs and benefits and that immersion in technology affects how people access and process information. For example, a recent study (Adam, Edmonds, & Quinn, 2007) looked at news-reading habits and discovered that today's consumers of online news read as much as the traditional newspaper reader, but they read very differently. The online readers gravitated to innovative structures of information; they were more apt to read a question-and-answer column or a set of bullet points; they also tended to jump from place to place on the screen and follow links. In this way, they created their own narratives from the information rather than taking in the narrative structures created by the reporters. These new habits of mind may mean that speakers need new organizational skills to adapt to listeners who want to, and who have learned to, process information less linearly.

Public speakers also need to develop new strategies for gaining and maintaining audience attention. Integrating more visual elements and more audience interaction into their presentations will help public speakers accomplish their goals. Instead of just talking about the structure of the pyramids of ancient Egypt, today's speakers can offer something like a guided tour to audiences by using a series of images along with oral descriptions. In his lectures on global warming, Al Gore doesn't use a long list of statistics to indicate the historical relationship between carbon in the atmosphere and temperature changes; instead, he illustrates a suggestive relationship with animated lines that are drawn on a screen before the very eyes of his listeners. Anyone with an MP3 player and speakers can incorporate sound to help an audience of naturalists learn to distinguish between the calls of the barred owl and the great horned owl. Asking for a show of hands, using call-and-response strategies, or having listeners participate in other ways will help speakers engage audiences, increasing the

likelihood that the message they are trying to share will be understood.

With so many avenues for gathering information and for communicating ideas open to the citizens of the 21st century, the central questions for an aspiring speaker must be “What is the added value of using public speaking as the means of communication for a particular message? What is it that public speaking can offer that would be absent from a documentary, a narrated PowerPoint slide show, an e-mail, or a blog or vlog posting?” The answer, of course, is the presence of the speaker. There is high demand for the opportunity to experience firsthand the ideas, voice, facial expressions, gestures, energy, and, in a sense, the character of a speaker through the public-speaking context. The physical presence of a speaker conveys a level of attention of the speaker for that particular audience, which is a gift every bit as desired as is the attention that audience is offering to the speaker. The possibility of an authentic connection continues to bring audiences together. In professional contexts, the possibility of interaction with the speaker, through comments or a question-and-answer session, adds value to the presentations of a sales or research team. In civic contexts, the transitory moment of public speaking, though changing somewhat with the advent of recordings and rebroadcasts, remains a real thing for the audience present in the room, who, by sharing the physical space with the speaker and other listeners at that moment, experience something that cannot be re-created. Live public speaking is no more likely to disappear than live music concerts or movie theaters. Despite YouTube, concert videos, DVDs, and home theater systems, the community-building exercise of sharing the experience of a speech, music, or a film is likely to persist.

Technology has and will continue to influence the choices of public speakers and the impact potential of public speaking in various ways. Whether using technology to engage audiences or eschewing it entirely to stand out as a different and still compelling presenter, speakers will continue to exercise a wide range of rhetorical choices. With audience research tools, demographic data, online surveys, and even opinion polling data all at the fingertips of the contemporary public speaker, there have never been more opportunities to “know” things about the audience a speaker intends to address. But making use of this information continues to depend both on training in the fundamental skills of the rhetorical canon and on developing what Aristotle called the faculty of mind that can see the various options for building bridges of meaning between speakers and listeners.

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DELIBERATION, DEBATE, AND DECISION MAKING

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Among the greatest powers of communication is the magnified wisdom and comfort of human choice that comes through disciplined rational interaction. The power to make decisions with others comes from many sources. There is the invoked influence of the rich disparity of experiences and perspectives brought to the communication. There is the variety of observation that comes from different eyes focused on a given moment. There is the variety of interests that makes our choices responsive to the values, wishes, and desires of others. But there are also qualities inherent in the processes that improve decisions: the testing of ideas, the challenging of faith, the exploration of alternatives, and the reaching of consensus. These rich advantages of choice through communication are the products of deliberation, debate, and decision making.

The three terms of this article's title are interrelated. The root of the term *deliberation* is a Latin verb meaning to weigh, to balance. It emphasizes the quality that comes from a systematic approach to choice. Deliberations are also deliberate; that is, they take time, and they proceed carefully. *Debate* emphasizes the testing that characterizes successful deliberation. Today's vernacular use of the term *debate* sometimes invokes a sense of combat, of stressful exchange, and indeed, the word's origin is in a medieval word for "to beat down." But fruitful meanings of the term are broader. They emphasize the responsibility of those engaged in debate to respectfully examine the intricacies of their own ideas and the ideas of others to refine individual experience into a communal product of greater worth. Debate, in this sense, is a productive art in which the ability to sift the quality of ideas is the hallmark of effective deliberation.

Deliberation by debate is also more structured, often with formal rules and often taking place within formal institutions such as Congress or at a monthly meeting of a civic organization. *Decision making* emphasizes the concluding of the process in choice. Decision making through a rich process of deliberation is the focus of this chapter.

The Historical Roots of Deliberation, Debate, and Decision Making

There seems little doubt that shortly after humans acquired the gift of speech, differences of opinion gave rise to choice and the disagreements that often precede it. But in the trail of human development, we mark the emergence of deliberation later. The best research in the Western tradition indicates that systematic study of deliberation emerged in the Greek city-state of Syracuse on the island of Sicily in the 5th century BCE. The citizens of Syracuse threw off a tyrant and founded an early republican form of government. They made deliberation an essential element of democracy. Citizens of Syracuse would gather together and address each other toward making decisions about their lives. They founded basic forms of what we today call courts of law, where issues such as land ownership could be resolved peacefully through a formal process of communication. This emergence of a communicative republican government then gave rise to the essential traditions for our purposes: the systemization or theory of our subject and the teaching of that subject. The theorist/teacher of Syracuse was Corax, who is credited as the first teacher of rhetoric.

Corax studied the process of decision making in Syracuse and advised his student-clients on how to further their and Syracuse's purposes in the assembly and the courts.

But the great systemitizer of decision making was the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BCE). Aristotle wrote a treatise, *Rhetoric*, that systematically described the role of language in successful human deliberation. Among his great contributions was a tripartite division of the arenas of speaking: the deliberative, the forensic, and the epideictic. The deliberative, Aristotle said, occurs in public assemblies and decides which action is best adopted. It is concerned with the future and addresses the desirability or undesirability of the action at issue. The forensic occurs most obviously in the law courts. It is concerned with the past and attacks or defends someone or seeks to establish the justice or injustice of some action. The epideictic, as Aristotle viewed it, is a ceremonial rhetoric and beyond this article's purview in studying deliberation, debate, and decision making. So powerful was Aristotle's overall view of rhetoric that it dominated the teaching of the subject into the 20th century.

Through the centuries following the classical age, rhetoric turned away from systems of decision making toward other problems. The resurrection of this interest came with the growth of democracy after the 17th century. At its core, democracy requires that communication among citizens be the mode through which society chooses action. Thus, deliberation is privileged, debate is framed within democratic institutions, and decision making is viewed as a public activity. The history outlined above maps this same rise of democracy from the overthrowing of the tyrant of Syracuse through the democracy of Athens. As democracy was reborn in the modern era, it is little surprise that many of the ideas about systematic decision making returned to the classical writings.

As democratic sensitivities spread, so did the prominence of deliberation. By the late 19th century, there was a great burgeoning of organizations in the United States. Civic organizations flourished in small towns and cities across the nation. Business organizations grew with corporate structure spreading throughout the economy. In such venues, meeting and deliberating to reach decisions became an important activity. As a result, interest in the techniques of discussion and debate grew. The first textbooks devoted to debating appeared during this time. Literary societies intensified their debating activities in American colleges.

By the early 20th century, deliberation was a focus of academic interest. John Dewey's (1910) book *How We Think* developed the process of deliberation as a natural human activity. By the 1920s and 1930s, the tradition of debating in literary societies had grown into interscholastic and intercollegiate competition. Debating became a central part of training for leadership. After World War II, deliberation in all its forms—discussion and debating, public and organizational—became an important focus in the study and teaching of communication. Like many subjects in communication, this activity stimulated both research and teaching, and the teaching was both theoretical and practical. Systems

for understanding deliberation and for conducting efficient and effective deliberation became central concerns. The goal of this article is to summarize contemporary ideas that are a product of this long history.

Principles of Democratic Deliberation

Deliberation is a pattern of communication tailored to provide a particular outcome: wise and accepted choice. For that pattern to yield its intended result, certain principles have been defined. Of course, deliberation does function short of full implementation of these principles, but the farther the process strays from their operation, the less satisfying the result. Thus, the principles provide benchmarks for satisfactory deliberation.

Contingent or Probable Choices. Deliberations do not operate with mathematical precision, nor are they appropriate when problems present but one solution. Deliberations occur when there is more than one option, with each option presenting some advantage over others or some probability of outcome that others do not have. In addition, deliberations are richer when different people have different opinions and knowledge relating to the subject at hand. Deliberations, in other words, happen in the presence of doubt or disagreement. Deliberation is a process of creative thinking and critical testing as well as a method for choosing alternatives.

Maximum Access to Participation. Several principles define the conditions of access to deliberation. Obviously, artificial barriers to participation that deprive the interaction of a variety of viewpoints are counterproductive. But in a more positive sense, deliberation is facilitated by the participation of people from varied backgrounds, with varied interests, and with varied experiences. In addition, except for a moderator or presiding officer, the authority of participants should be level to ensure open discussion of issues at hand.

Critical Respect and Cooperative Attitude. Those who participate in discussion on a regular basis know the advantages of comity. This requires respect for the process in which the participants engage and for the participants engaged in the process. Respect for the participants does not mean continual agreement. Indeed, respect requires recognition of the value of probative inquiry, and even disagreement, in the service of the deliberation's goals. Under conditions of comity, exchanges are richly textured with agreement and disagreement, with inquiry into ideas replacing personal sensitivities.

Assumption of Responsibilities in Deliberation. At the heart of deliberation lies a responsibility to critical inquiry. In turn, this critical inquiry necessitates participants assuming the burden of proof and the burden of rebuttal. The former

suggests that opinions expressed should be supplemented with reasons for those opinions. Where appropriate, deliberations should be based in facts relevant to the question at hand. Values and preferences underlying particular positions should be explained as well. The burden of rebuttal affirms that when satisfactory reasons are provided, there is a counterresponsibility to probe the reasons. Thus, the two burdens define the texture of exchange in deliberation.

Pooling of Judgment. Deliberations are defined by a commitment to an outcome shared by the participants. Participants may themselves have objectives in the deliberation; indeed, strenuous advocacy for a position often improves the likelihood of achieving the shared goal. But participants also recognize the primacy of a successful outcome to the purposes of deliberation.

In some cases, particularly in a structured debate, these principles may be formally instantiated into rules of conduct. But even when no formal rules dictate the following of these principles, acknowledgment of their influence on the quality of the deliberation marks the participation of discussants who contribute the most to successful deliberation.

A Vocabulary of Deliberation, Debate, and Decision Making

Deliberation, debate, and decision making are communicative patterns of everyday human experience. They are stylized accomplishments. That is, those who participate in deliberation do so in anticipated, coordinated patterns toward a specific end. To understand this process, perhaps the best avenue is to explore the specialized vocabulary that describes and structures the interaction.

Characterizing the Interaction

Deliberation. The term *deliberation* describes the process in which communicative exchange refines human understanding and leads to human choices. Deliberation is marked more by its goal than by its style. A wide range of specific behaviors contribute to accomplishing the goal.

Debate. Debate is a heavily structured style of deliberation. A strict set of rules defines the sequences and limits of interaction. Debates are often structured as a two-way pro-and-con deliberation over a defined proposition, in the debate context often called “the resolution.” The parties to the debate may be assigned responsibility for supporting or opposing the resolution that structures the debate. Typically, debaters take turns presenting arguments for or against the proposition. The speaker who is appropriately speaking at a given time in the debate is said to “have the floor.” The order of speaking may be decided or assigned and times designated for each speaker before the debate begins. Rules may or may not permit others to interrupt the

speaker who has the floor. There may also be opportunities structured into the format for the debaters and/or their audience to question other debaters. Often, debates will have a moderator or a chair, whose responsibility is to remain an unbiased enforcer of the rules.

There are different forums that are characterized by debate. One of the best known is governmental deliberative bodies such as Congress, state legislatures, or local councils. In these, debates typically revolve around a proposed law, policy, or resolution that the body is considering. Members may support or oppose adoption. Rules of procedure are well-defined, often beginning with general rules of parliamentary procedure, which are then supplemented or refined by the body itself. Whether there are time limits for having the floor and restrictions on the order of speaking depends on the rules of the assembly. Arguments in these debates are addressed to the chair, who presides and enforces the rules of the assembly. Only at the local level is interaction with nonmembers of the body permitted in the communicative exchange, and at that level, it is often limited. Following the debate, the members of the assembly cast votes on the policy or resolution before the body.

Another notable forum for debate is competitive academic debate. Such debates are conducted before a judge, who decides at the end of the exchange “who has done the better job of debating.” Speeches alternate between those supporting and those opposing the resolution. Sometimes debaters are permitted to question each other or are asked to address questions generated by their audience. Time limits are typically strictly applied. Speeches by the debaters may be separated into *constructive* speeches, in which the debaters present reasons for or against the resolution, and *rebuttal* speeches, in which no new arguments may be presented, only responses and challenges to the arguments of the opposing debaters and reestablishment of one’s own arguments.

Since 1960, with only three exceptions, candidates for president of the United States have engaged in debates. The practice has penetrated to lower governmental elections as well. These debates are highly structured affairs with rules established in negotiations between or among candidates, with varying imposition of the rules by members of a sponsoring organization. Often, commentators question whether these exchanges are debates at all. They typically pass from issue to issue in the course of the debate without having a single proposition at their center unless, of course, it is the tacit proposition that “[the candidate speaking] should be elected.” Candidates may address a moderator or those asking questions, but rules typically do not restrict speeches to the questions being asked. Debates often occur several times in the course of the campaign, and the deliberative judgment consequent to the debate is the election of one of the candidates to the office contested.

There are variations on all these forums. Often, a sponsoring group will organize a debate with pro and con speakers on their chosen topic simply for the benefit of public education. In 1993, for example, the television interviewer Larry

King organized a debate between Vice President Al Gore and the businessman and former presidential candidate H. Ross Perot. The Vice President supported and Perot opposed the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Such forums have public education as their primary purpose, although certainly the example given here had an indirect purpose of influencing congressional approval of the agreement.

Discussion. Discussion is a less structured style of deliberation. At its extreme, there are few rules beyond tacit understandings to hear out the opinions of others, and even those tacit understandings are sometimes violated. In many cases, discussions are spontaneous, without preliminary agreement on propositions or issues. Such loose discussions often lack focus, and their classification as deliberation may even be in doubt.

More formal discussions may be organized when understanding of some situation has not reached the clarity to formulate a specific policy for debate. For example, a parent-teacher association may gather to discuss the following: Are there behavioral problems in our school? And, if so, what should we do about them? Such a discussion may be carefully guided to sequentially consider the following: Is there a problem? If so, what is its nature? If so, what are some alternative approaches to address it? And which of these would be a better approach?

At some point, the ideas behind discussions and debates merge, with the defined focus and the extent of rule-governed procedure defining the frontier between them. The choice of term to apply to the deliberation may, in fact, be a response to the pejorative use of the term *debate*. Some proponents of deliberation seeking to open the process to better achieve some of the principles of deliberation employ *debate* as a counterpoint and prefer *discussion* as the term to describe the rules of interaction that they establish. Thus, the differentiated use of these terms may not be strictly descriptive of distinctions in the process of deliberation but may become part of a strategy for imposing particular rules for the exchange.

Decision and Decision Making. Typically, *decision* points to the achievement of the choice that is the objective of the deliberation process. “Decision making” fixes the character of the deliberation as a process with the decision as the product.

Defining the Responsibilities in Deliberation

Once the character of the deliberation is defined, additional terms help guide participants in understanding their responsibilities in such an exchange.

Advocacy. If deliberation is to be an expansive, encouraging, and critical environment for ideas, the participants in the interaction must engage fully. This responsibility to present and provide reasons for judgments and beliefs is advocacy. At times, this responsibility may be taken to an extreme—to

do whatever is necessary to achieve one’s own prejudged outcome—but a more satisfactory conceptualization recognizes that the responsibility is to the interaction and that the advocates’ responsibility is to maximize the values of the interaction, including fully engaged support for various positions by each advocate. Only with all advocates in a deliberation engaged are the advantages of deliberation sustained.

Burden of Proof. The responsibility entailed in the burden of proof is often stated as “he who asserts must prove”; that is, the responsibility of an advocate is not merely to offer claims and opinions about the subject but to provide reasons for those statements targeted to persuade others in the interaction. The burden of proof grows from the responsibilities of participation in full deliberation.

Burden of Rebuttal or Response. The responsibility entailed in the burden of rebuttal is the critical responsibility. Participants in the interaction share a responsibility to fully test and expand the positions introduced into the deliberation. Deliberations require engagement. This obligation extends beyond the responsibility to tell others when they are wrong. It demands more subtle exploration of probability and desirability to locate the nature and extent of an issue as fully as possible. Successful exercise of the burden of rebuttal then establishes a burden of response as the deliberation moves forward. Together, these burdens of proof, rebuttal, and response define the necessity for full engagement by participants in a deliberation.

Guiding the Structure of Deliberation

I have introduced some terms in the definitions above that provide productive as well as analytic value. When used in deliberation, such terms establish a process for productively structuring the *content* of deliberations.

Questions or Propositions. Deliberation operates most efficiently to achieve its goals when the process is focused. One way of defining that focus is by defining, as a first step, the question to be answered through the deliberation—for example, Is the evidence for global warming sufficient to require public attention? Often such a question is defined by those who organize the deliberation or by a subset of the deliberators. For example, typically legislative bodies have rules to restrict debate to the bill or resolution before the body. Another variation presents the question in the form of a *proposition*, a short unambiguous statement of fact, value, policy, or judgment to be tested through the deliberations—for example, Offshore drilling for oil on the continental shelf should be resumed. In contested academic debates, the limitations on debate are defined by a *resolution*: Resolved, that federal policy should encourage the development of alternative sources of energy. In all cases, the focus provides an orientation that limits deliberations to germane matters.

Once the question or proposition is defined, a typology of propositions helps guide the deliberation. A proposition of *fact* turns on an empirical dispute susceptible to resolution by collecting and testing pertinent evidence—for example, Carbon-based gases in the atmosphere are having a significant influence on the world's climate. To be advanced by deliberation, such propositions must have a complexity that requires more sophistication than mere sensory observation. The example benefits from careful consideration of various interpretations of climate and of the relationship of natural cycles and man-made effects and from different opinions about the tipping point of global warming. In short, contingency and probability are debated by informed participants to further understanding of the proposition.

A proposition of *definition* turns on a question of how words are to be used—for example, Pluto should not be considered a planet. These propositions recognize the ways in which vocabulary organizes various human activities—in our example, astronomy—and refines definitions that guide communication within those activities. This proposition was debated by the International Astronomical Union in 2006 to clarify how planets would be defined. In the end, this body clarified the definition of *planet* and reclassified Pluto from planet to dwarf planet.

A proposition of *value* turns on a question of the importance of principles of morality in a context—for example, A spirit of community enhances the quality of life. These propositions go to questions of right and wrong, the desirable and undesirable, the important and unimportant, and similar choices. Often, debates over questions of value attain their importance not from a final resolution of the propositional content but from the understanding and clarification they provide in the terms they explore. In the example, the debate may foster appreciation for the value of community or greater understanding of what quality of life represents.

A proposition of *policy* or *action* turns on whether following a particular policy or taking a particular action is beneficial—for example, The federal government should provide health insurance to all citizens regardless of employment status. Policy propositions are the most complex of propositions, entailing facts and values as part of the process of reason giving. In a debate, a well-formed proposition of policy usually names an actor and specifies the action to be taken. The terms *should* or *ought to* are signs of such propositions. Questions for discussion may focus more on problems and have less specified actors or actions than is typical in debate. For example, a discussion of food-vending policies in a school may not even begin with a presumption that there is a problem, although the fact that the discussion will occur indicates that someone believed so. But the discussion will take it up as an early issue whether or not there is, in fact, a problem. The purpose of such a discussion rests at the stage of developing and legitimating a public concern.

The types of propositions do not affect the function of the proposition—providing a focus for the discussion—but

do become important in identifying the issues that guide deliberations.

Issues. The term *issues* is a common vernacular term in disputes. The meaning in deliberation is no different from the everyday definition. The interaction between a proposition and its subject matter provides natural seams where deliberation develops. These are called *potential issues*. Such issues are potential because they may or may not be disputed in a particular deliberation. For example, a deliberation over the health insurance proposition cited above has the following among its potential issues: Are there citizens who do not now have insurance of some kind? Are their numbers significant? Is insurance the proper way to provide access to medical care? Should the federal government establish an insurance program or facilitate its provision through private sources? Can the federal government afford to provide such insurance? How will it do so? Will such a system significantly improve the nation's health? Note that the issues are posed in terms of questions that can be answered in deliberations. This is a common way of expressing issues.

One of the ways in which potential issues are identified is through a system known as *stock issues*. The use of stock issues begins by identifying the type of proposition at dispute: fact, definition, value, or policy. Then, a set of generally stated questions specific to that type are applied to the specific subject matter of the proposition to indicate potential issues. For example, one scheme of stock issues for policy propositions poses the following general questions: Is there a problem? Is the problem significant enough to deserve attention? Is there an action that will remedy the problem? How significantly will the action remedy the problem? Are there other reasons the remedy should not be followed? These stock issues generated the potential issues specified in the example of the health insurance proposition above.

Typically, deliberations do not exhaustively treat the issues on a proposition. Positions on some issues are easily agreed to by all in the deliberation. Other issues take on such importance that the time limits place a premium on those issues over others as the deliberation proceeds. The issues that, in fact, mark a deliberation are referred to as *actual issues*. Thus, actual issues are a subset of potential issues. The concept is central to the participants in the interaction because the actual issues define the topics that require attention in a particular deliberation. A useful classical term for these actual issues is *stasis*: the points of dispute on which the decision turns.

Issues function in several ways in managing deliberation. Perhaps most important, issues, like propositions, provide a focus to the deliberation. Where propositions help define its relevance, issues organize it by identifying points of focus to be tracked through the deliberation. The speakers participating in the deliberation typically identify the issue that they are addressing as they move through a presentation. Thus, issues become a kind of signpost for advocates to organize their presentations, which is particularly effective because

issues tie directly to the deciding factors in the deliberation. Within the texture of a deliberation, issues also assist in differentiating the importance of various arguments. In a sense, issues are the units within a deliberation on which questions of importance turn.

Issues also help organize a deliberation vertically. That is, we have not only issues but also *subissues* in a deliberation. The relationship between issues and subissues is the same as the relationship between propositions and issues: The outcome of issues turns on the subissues defined as potential or actual and is often determined by a scheme of stock issues.

Finally, issues are useful as a bridge between deliberation and decision making. They help bring the various arguments within a debate into an overall pattern that permits a decisive outcome. Except for the statement of the question or proposition, no element of a deliberation is as central to orderly and efficient deliberation as management of issues.

Terms Managing the Structure of an Argument

A final set of terms invoked in deliberation manages the presentation of ideas, the provision of reasons for supporting an idea, and the testing of those reasons.

Position. A position is a particular claim about an issue. Any particular issue may lend itself to one, two, or many different positions. Typically, a position is a declarative statement that articulates an advocate's belief or conclusion on the issue. Positions, in turn, define the actual issues in a deliberation. The impact of effective statements of position is to clarify the issues that differentiate the various possible outcomes.

Argument. The term *argument* has several vernacular meanings. One is a heated exchange among people—"having an argument." Full deliberation is, in fact, an argument among people. Orderly argument may lack the anger but not the intensity of this meaning. The other major meaning is to give reasons for something—"making an argument." It is this sense in which arguments are the basic unit of deliberation. Responsible advocates present arguments in the deliberation.

An argument consists of a claim and its explication. The *claim* is a succinct statement of the advocate's belief or judgment. The claim is what the advocate seeks to prove. Typically, a speaker opens presentation of an argument with a short, succinct statement of the claim. The *explication* follows. The explication is an appropriate combination of four different responses to the need to prove an argument. The *significance* of the argument explains why the argument is important to the issue at dispute. The *explanation* provides the elaboration of the ideas necessary to make the argument clear to those engaged in the deliberation. Explanations may illustrate, define terms, divide the question, or make other moves that help to clarify. The *proof* provides reasons for believing the claim. A well-constructed argument then ends with a statement of what has been established through the

presentation of the argument. This final step is often called the *clinch*. Consider the following example:

Our current system of health care leaves a large number of citizens without the advantages of health insurance. According to the Health Insurance Association of America, 43 million Americans now lack an insurance mechanism, through individual purchase, an employer, or a government program. Certainly so many of our fellow citizens, uninsured and forced in the face of health problems to choose care or some other consumer commodity, deserve our public concern.

This argument opens with a statement of the claim. The second sentence provides proof, in this case a combination of authority and statistical proof. The statement reporting the statistics ends with an explanation of the meaning of "without insurance," a recitation of the various ways citizens can acquire insurance. The final statement not only clinches the argument but also asserts the significance of the argument to the issues—indeed, to the proposition—by posing the choice faced by the uninsured.

Proof. The notion of proving one's assertion is so basic to deliberation that additional terminology governs exchanges over the sufficiency of proof. Those who study argumentation identify several characteristic ways to give reasons for, or prove, claims. Some of the most important are as follows:

Example. Examples have more impact as illustration than as proof. When Congress was deliberating health care, one common strategy was to provide an example of Americans who found themselves requiring treatment, not having insurance, and suffering long-term economic hardship in addition to their health difficulties. These narrative accounts often contained much emotion and stimulated empathy for the subject of the narrative, thus helping prove the reasons why health care was needed. As proof, examples are only as strong as the typicality of their content.

Analogy. An analogy is a comparison between two situations designed to carry the known qualities of one situation into another. Analogies between the Canadian and American health care systems, for example, may be called on to support or oppose government programs. As proof, analogies are only as strong as the degree and essentialness of similarity between the compared instances. Deliberations in which analogy is central often turn on the details of such similarities.

Authority. Authority relies for its power to prove on the expertness of the source of the information. The argument in the example above about the number of Americans without insurance relied on the authority of the Health Insurance Association of America. Proof by authority often evolves the issue under deliberation to the expertness of the source or the source's degree of knowledge of the situation.

Principle or Generalized Fact. This strategy of argument relies on reasoning from the general to the more specific.

For example, an argument in favor of banning smoking in restaurants may use the health risks of secondhand smoke as a reason for supporting the ban. The strength of such proof relies on the belief in the principle or generalized fact.

Evidence. Evidence is specific information brought into the deliberation and related to the claim in the process of giving reasons. In a sense, the various forms of proof listed above differ because they have different types of evidence at their root. The details of an example are the evidence for the argument from example; the details of an analogous situation for the argument by analogy; the statement of the expert for the argument by authority; the principle or generalization for the argument from principle or generalized fact. Thus, one scheme by which evidence is differentiated is the type of information employed in the argument.

There is a second important distinction in types of evidence: Direct evidence, sometimes called experiential or enthymatic evidence, has its power because the participants in the deliberation have experienced the fact personally. In a technical sense, such argument is not argument by authority, since the power of the argument turns on direct experience. Primary evidence is, however, an argument from the authority of the speaker. The evidence is primary when the speaker reports his or her own observations. Secondary evidence is an additional step removed, the speaker cites someone else as an authority for the proof. Generally, the closer the evidence is to those in the deliberation, the stronger it will be as proof, although this principle is modified by the relative authority of the sources.

One other type of evidence worthy of attention is statistical evidence. Typically, statistical evidence is coupled with authority proof, as it was in the example above, which combined a figure on the number of Americans without health insurance and the authority of the Health Insurance Association of America to provide proof. Statistics may be descriptive or inferential. Descriptive statistics merely describe the dimensions of a problem. Indicating that 43 million Americans lack health insurance is an example of descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics are a form of proof of relationships. For example, a report analyzing how exposure to secondhand smoke raises the incidence of cancer uses statistical procedures to support a link between the smoke and cancer.

The above terms provide a texture for describing and participating in deliberative processes. They are not merely terms useful for studying the phenomenon but are key strategic resources in shaping the deliberation toward the objective of a decision. They form a metalayer of the process, apart from the subject matter, that directs and organizes the activity. Thus, they are an essential component of deliberation.

Recent Research in Argumentation

In the late 20th century, few areas of communication research have been as active as argumentation. Argumentation studies

focus on the role of reason in human communication, and thus on the processes of deliberation, debate, and decision making. Several approaches interact in this research tradition.

Historical and Critical Studies of Public Deliberation. Historical studies investigate the origins of the positions and issues that have marked the turns of national and local history. Critical studies seek to enhance understanding of the role that deliberation plays in modern public issues. For example, since 2001, interest has been high in the role of argument in historical deliberations about war, with particular attention to the justification for the war in Iraq (see, e.g., essays in Riley, 2007).

Public-Sphere Studies. Jürgen Habermas's work in argument has stimulated research on the preconditions and processes for healthy public participation in governing society. Habermas's original work (1962/1989) located the central place of the public sphere in the emergence of democratic forms of government in post-Renaissance Europe. This work stimulated a number of critiques revolving around the exclusions that became a part of the history of democratic deliberation (see, e.g., essays in Calhoun, 1992). Feminist critiques (Fraser, 1992) and critiques of the exclusion of minorities (Black Public Sphere Collective, 1995) led to an understanding of how a political system is composed of multiple public spheres in which citizens acquire a voice that they take to deliberation. Meanwhile, Habermas's work turned toward a project to develop a normative theory of deliberation (1981/1987, 1988). He was interested in developing a mapping of the assumptions and procedures that define what has been called "emancipatory discourse." Habermas's normative theory seeks to connect the democratic goals of deliberation with the institutions of contemporary society.

Argumentation Theory. The late 20th century was a time of great flowering in the study of the ways in which people make arguments to prove claims and weave those arguments into a texture of everyday life. Spurred by seminal work by Stephen Toulmin (1958) and Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958/1969), Aristotelian notions of argument gave way to more sophisticated understandings of argument throughout the institutions of society. Toulmin's work contrasted the understanding of formal logic with what he called "working logic." Toulmin worked on a theory of the latter, and by 2000, his model for argument, featuring the key terms of his layout of argument—data, warrant, and claim, dominated teaching in argumentation. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca stressed the role of audience in argument. They portrayed argument as less a response to subject matters and more a response to those whom arguers seek to persuade. An important branch of argumentation theory has been informal logic, a branch of logical studies grounded in Toulmin's distinction of a working logic, thus

the logical moves with which humans craft arguments to influence others.

Pragma-Dialectics. European work on argumentation has been particularly influential in developing this branch of argumentation research. Pragma-dialectics stands out for its methods of study, seeking to develop a set of rules that, taken as a total system, describe the process of argumentation (Grootendorst & van Eemeren, 2003). In their search for normal modes of argument, pragma-dialectics share a perspective with Habermas's later work toward a normative theory of deliberative argument.

Social Scientific Study of Argument. In the United States, a growing circle of social scientists have been studying the modes and methods of the human accomplishment of argument. Their work approaches the problems of resolving conflict and achieving influence through argument as a human accomplishment to be understood in relationship to a theory of action. In many cases, they borrow concepts and ideas from traditional theories of argument and study the influence of those concepts on the argumentative texture of people's lives. In other cases, they begin their study in the performance of argument itself, seeking to understand how arguers conduct the natural process of making arguments. (For examples, see Riley, 2007.)

Pedagogic Studies in Debate Training. A final approach to argumentation works to map the direction of contemporary approaches to teaching deliberation and debate and to refine that process. For example, one recent work studied the influence of new technologies on the practices of academic debating (Voth, 2005).

The vitality of research in argumentation comes from the many strands of research that come together to focus on the processes of deliberation, debate, and decision making. The theory that has shaped our understanding of this practice comes under review not only to refine traditional approaches but also to question the basic approaches that have been instrumental in its development and seek new ways of understanding the process. The practice of deliberation, both historical and contemporary, comes under scrutiny to understand the process of rational decision making and also to map the ways in which deliberation has shaped political and social history. And the techniques with which we have sought to teach the skills of deliberation have come under scrutiny to understand their limitations and to suggest alternative methods for approaching the task of passing the skills of rational decision making to a new generation.

The Venues for Deliberation, Debate, and Decision Making

At the heart of the prominence of deliberation is a democratic spirit. The democratic ideal expresses faith in the

benefits of people coming together to pool their knowledge and judgment in the service of better and more accepted decisions. Obviously, then, one of the most prominent places where deliberation, discussion, and debate form a texture of decision making is in the public business of democratic government. In the idealized New England town meeting, citizens gather to make the decisions that govern their lives in a well-defined and historic institution. Representative bodies, from school boards to Congress, are more common venues for democratic governing. Nearly all such bodies are guided by rules that structure an open, democratic deliberative process. Even when supplemented by cloak room or executive sessions, there is a public dimension to such meetings.

But deliberation in a democracy extends beyond the formal venues of democratic bodies. Local schoolboards, planning boards, councils, commissions, and task forces conduct hearings where advocates present positions bearing on the question before the body. Parents may gather in a school auditorium to explore the behavioral problems at their school, the food served in the school cafeteria, or even the importance of sports or the arts to their children's education. Democracy spawns a large number of venues in which citizen input is structured through variations in the process of deliberation to ultimately influence governmental decision making.

But the spirit of democracy has infiltrated beyond formal governments. Deliberative processes are an important part of business organizations. Meetings are held every minute throughout business institutions in which the processes of deliberation are guiding the decision-making process. Even in instances where the decisions themselves are not democratic, where a leader assumes ultimate responsibility, wise leaders organize deliberation to inform their judgment. Public corporations ultimately report to stockholders' meetings, which, although often formalities, can on occasion become lively venues for deliberation. In between the small working group and the stockholders' meetings are layers of meetings with various degrees of openness in which deliberation proceeds and decisions are shaped.

Alexis de Tocqueville observed during his visit to the United States in the 1830s that Americans were joiners. A patchwork of voluntary organizations infiltrates all aspects of American life, from service organizations, such as the Lions or Kiwanis, to associations of bird watchers to nongovernmental advocacy groups, such as the Wilderness Society. Such groups deliberate throughout their processes and often hold deliberative programs to inform citizens of their issues as well as to urge citizen participation in effecting solutions to the common or complicated problems of life.

In short, deliberation, discussion, and debate are ubiquitous features of modern life. The public dimension of everyday life brings people into contact with others, communicating about mutual concerns with a wish to influence the course of their lives through the contact. This public dimension is enriched through participation in the opportunities for deliberation provided by the institutions of society.

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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND MEDIATION

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Conflict is clearly a part of our everyday lives. Whether at home, school, or the office, people often differ with one another about what actions to take, how to implement them, or how to lead their lives. Conflict arises at the interpersonal level when two people have perceived incompatible goals, misunderstanding about their relationship, or different ways of assessing and behaving in situations. These disagreements arise in family settings, friendship interactions, and organizations. School and work settings have developed peer conflict management programs and workplace dispute resolution systems, respectively, to handle the personal and financial costs of escalating conflicts. Differences among groups in community problem solving also lead to ongoing conflicts in discussions about protecting the environment, urban development, and moral dilemmas over abortion and gay rights. At the national and international levels, differences in culture, religion, and territorial rights become sites of conflict amid constantly changing social, economic, and political conditions.

In general, people have a negative view of conflict and treat it as disrupting social and personal relationships. When individuals depict conflicts, they use negative images such as war, explosion, storms brewing, and struggles, as evident in statements such as “He *attacked* my point of view,” “We met in a *battle* of the minds,” “She *blew up* at me,” and “Her anger was like a *cyclone*.” These images cast conflict as abnormal and harmony as normal (Wilmot & Hocker, 2001). In actuality, conflict is not only inevitable but also normal and natural.

Other views of conflict treat it as a game in which people “bat ideas around” or engage in a “give-and-take exchange”

to make a deal. Although the game image presumes that conflict is inevitable, it does not treat it as beneficial to society. Descriptors such as *helpful*, *enriching*, and *growth promoting* rarely appear in individuals’ descriptions of conflict.

Conflict is clearly a natural and important element in society because it forms the grounds for change and collaboration. Conflict aids in relieving tensions, generating creativity, correcting injustices, and balancing power. Treating a conflict as a *dance* that entails *learning the moves* or as a *dialogue* that involves *talking it over* and *understanding the other person* are ways to drop the negative images and promote positive attitudes toward conflict management. These positive orientations to conflict are vital for developing effective communicative practices in conflict management.

Definition and Characteristics of Conflict

Conflict is a particular type of social interaction, characterized by opposite goals, interests, or values. For a conflict to exist, only one party has to see the situation as incompatible, even if the parties’ goals are not truly in opposition. Moreover, the conflicting parties need each other to achieve their goals, or they would leave the situation and go elsewhere. Their need for each other means that either party could block the other one from achieving his or her desires. For example, John and Mary want to spend their vacation together, but they want to go to different places on their holiday. If John believes that they

should vacation in the mountains and Mary wants to go to the beach, the couple may argue and decide not to take a vacation at all or to take their holiday separately. Both choices are unsatisfactory outcomes and block the achievement of spending their holiday together.

Since the two parties need each other to achieve their goals, they enter a conflict situation with a simultaneous mix of both cooperation and competition. John and Mary cooperate because they want to spend their vacation together; yet they compete in holding different, and presumably opposite, individual goals. Hence, to work through their conflict, they must simultaneously compete while cooperating. This mix of opposite motives contributes to the tensions that push and pull on the parties during a conflict and lead them to find a balance between the opposing poles. Too much competition may lead to escalation of the conflict, while too much cooperation may lead to giving in and feeling exploited by the other person.

Engaging in conflict then is a balancing act. Like walking on a tightrope, the parties want to balance in the middle rather than swing too far to the left or to the right and eventually fall off the rope. Like tacking a sailboat, the parties need to capture the force and energy of the wind and steer the boat in the right direction in order to avoid being blown out to sea or losing control. So parties balance cooperation and competition to avoid escalating a dispute and feeling exploited.

Disrupting this balance also shows how a conflict becomes destructive over time. When this occurs, the conflict increases in the number of issues, the number of participants, and the costs that disputants are willing to bear (Deutsch, 1973). Issues begin to multiply and blur together, and disputants involve other resources to defend their positions. As the conflict escalates, the parties becoming willing to sacrifice more, take more risks, and hold fast to their original positions. As disputants lose sight of their original goals, they engage in conflict interactions to win or to hurt the other party rather than to work through a problem; hence, destructive conflicts typically end in win-lose or lose-lose situations. In contrast, productive conflicts move in a direction of added flexibility, broadening learning and insights about each other, and increasing trust and respect. Productive conflicts focus on learning, growing, and developing new insights about complex situations.

Communication and Conflict Interaction

Another source of constructive and destructive conflict is the pattern of social interaction that stems from each person's response to the other party's moves and counter-moves. Social interaction refers to what the parties say to each other, the information they exchange, their nonverbal behaviors, the meanings and interpretations of the situation, and the nature of their communication system. In one sense, communication constructs conflict through the ways the parties develop patterns of interaction over time. These patterns form a set of messages in which one person initiates a

concern and the other person responds to this message. This message-response pattern develops into habitual and repetitive ways of interacting that can become automatic or instinctive over time.

One pattern or sequence of messages that leads to a destructive cycle is a conflict spiral. For example, if one party threatens the other person and this individual follows with a counterthreat, the interaction develops into a competitive spiral that grows in intensity. Even an avoidance response, followed by continual withdrawal, can result in a conflict spiral, if the parties continue to ignore important issues and yet must act on them. Moreover, a destructive spiral acquires a momentum of its own. Each time the parties enter into a conflict, they draw from their past patterns to shape future actions. Once involved in a conflict spiral, parties struggle to break it and to avoid returning to it in future interactions (Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2005).

Just as social interaction shapes conflict, conflict patterns rooted in society influence communication. Since conflicts arise from our lived experiences, issues of race, class, gender, and culture shape the language that we use, the positions from which we talk, and the symbolic meanings of who we are and how we relate to others. Thus, societal conflicts impinge on communication and shape particular types of social interaction that can develop and perpetuate expressed struggles. Overall then, conflict and communication exist in a reciprocal relationship. Social interactions shape the nature of conflict, while conflict and tensions in social settings impinge on communication.

Goals of Conflict Management

Communication is also the foundation for managing conflict constructively and effectively. Thus, one goal of conflict management is to develop communication competence to engage in conflict situations in constructive ways. Specifically, being mindful of the process, knowing how to gain information from the situation, and making deliberate and conscious choices to avoid harming or exploiting others are important skills for managing conflict effectively. People who lack this competence to handle routine conflicts are more likely to rely on aggression than cooperation to attain their needs (Canary & Lakey, 2006). Individuals who are competent in addressing conflicts are flexible in their approaches, assess their situation accurately, and choose the behaviors that will help all parties in the situation. They follow appropriate rules and fulfill expectations, and they aim for win-win solutions or mutually acceptable settlements.

A win-win solution is one in which both parties get their needs met through the conflict management process. Each person sees the outcome as satisfactory and gets something out of the settlement; thus, the parties gain more from working together than if they resolve the problem individually. To apply this idea to the vacation example, John and Mary reach a win-win settlement if they decide to vacation at the beach this summer and go to the mountains for a vacation in the winter. This solution satisfies the needs of

both parties, and John and Mary get to spend their vacation together. This solution, however, is satisfactory but not optimal. To reach an optimal settlement, the parties would have their needs met at the same time rather than delayed. Optimal settlements typically result from learning that occurs through communicating effectively during the conflict. They probe to find out what they want from a vacation and why; they explore underlying needs that might not be evident on the surface of their requests. Trading off different seasons to go to the beach and the mountains asks one person to wait to meet his or her goal for relaxation or recreation. If the parties continued to talk, generate alternative solutions together, and think creatively about the problem, they might discover different options. An optimal solution in this case would be to find a vacation spot in which both the mountains and the beach are available to the couple. In this way, both parties could have their needs met simultaneously rather than in a delayed fashion.

Another goal for conflict management is helping parties transform or change their situations. Transformation refers to using conflict processes to change the ways parties see the conflict, how parties view their relationship, or how parties relate to each other. Transforming conflict differs from traditional goals in that it focuses on the underlying relational and identity concerns rather than on solving problems or reaching settlements. Transformation also makes use of different types of communication, those centered on dialogue, clarifying understandings, and reflecting on relationships. Dialogue aims at working through difficult issues, exposing and discussing deep-seated feelings, and developing new social realities and relationships. At the societal level of ethnic and social conflicts, transforming conflict entails recognizing the humanity of the other person or group, creating a new moral order between the parties, and basing relationships on mutually beneficial arrangements (Ellis, 2006).

Types of Conflict Management

The goals of developing competence, reaching satisfactory solutions, and transforming situations surface in three different types of conflict management: negotiation, mediation, and dialogue. The three types vary in definition, use, approaches for managing disputes, interaction patterns, and context issues pivotal to conflicts.

Negotiation and Communication

Negotiation refers to two or more people who work together to reach decisions, typically through exchanging proposals and counterproposals. A proposal refers to an offer that one party puts on the table as an option for reaching a settlement. The two parties exchange positions based on their estimates of the other party's behaviors and intentions; hence, negotiation is a strategic activity for making decisions about substantive issues in disagreements and disputes.

Negotiation Use

Initially commonplace in labor-management environments, negotiation was the primary way opposing parties settled issues such as wages, fringe benefits, and contractual relationships. It has been a widely used forum in international diplomacy and trade agreements. Efforts in the 1980s to reduce U.S. emphasis on litigation led to inclusion of negotiation training in the college curriculum in management schools, in public administration, and in law programs. With these changes, negotiation became an everyday organizational practice, one used in legal transactions, environmental and regulatory arrangements, buyer-seller activities, customer relations, and mergers and acquisitions.

Moreover, negotiation infuses everyday activities in the family, the workplace, and community life as individuals work out role assignments and routine endeavors. In environmental and governmental situations, it has become a way to develop general rules on proposed policies in advance of engaging in an actual conflict. Overall, negotiation is no longer limited to formal conflict management. Rather, it permeates everyday activities; hence, communication plays a vital role in shaping negotiation processes and outcomes.

Negotiation Approaches

Distributive and integrative bargaining are two approaches commonly used in negotiation. Derived from Walton and McKersie's (1965) classic research, distributive bargaining refers to the process of claiming value or dividing resources, particularly when the pool of resources is seen as fixed or limited to a specific amount. In distributive situations, parties try to maximize how much they will gain in a situation and minimize how much they will lose. Negotiators argue for the benefits of their positions, manage the other parties' impression of them, and avoid revealing any information that might make them look weak. Buying a used car provides an example of distributive bargaining. In this situation, both the buyer and the seller want to highlight their options, withhold their bottom line, and try to persuade the other side to give in. Some approaches to distributive negotiation, such as continuing to hold firm on a position, attacking the other party, and pushing too hard for concessions, result in unsatisfactory agreements or in no settlement.

Integrative negotiation, in contrast, focuses on creating value and expanding the resources available for a settlement. In integrative negotiation, parties strive for a mutually acceptable settlement that provides gain for both of them; hence, they focus on what they have in common and ways to meet each other's needs and interests. Engaging in problem solving, seeking information about priorities and needs, making concessions, and supporting the other party's ideas exemplify integrative processes. These processes are likely to yield benefits for both negotiators. For example, the management of a company that is losing money might propose to downsize a certain number of employees. The union, in

turn, might respond by recommending that the company reduce the salaries of upper-level managers. If the two sides engage in an integrative approach to negotiation, they might reach a mutually satisfactory solution through deciding to cut costs in production, proposing a program of early retirement, or requiring mandatory furloughs for everyone.

These integrative outcomes move away from both parties' original proposals. In the above situation, the parties share the common goal of company survival. As they discover this goal during the negotiation process, they realize that their original proposals would not be satisfactory to both sides, and they search for other options that would save money, help the company survive, and be mutually beneficial for both sides.

Interaction Patterns in Negotiation

Most negotiations are not purely distributive or completely integrative; rather, they entail a combination of both processes. Communication plays a vital role in defining how the two processes emerge and interrelate. Willingness to exchange information, especially about multiple issues and priorities of needs, is closely aligned with integrative processes, while arguing for one's position, asking for concessions, and debating the other side's options are typically aligned with distributive interactions. Both types of communication are necessary to attain individual needs and common goals and to avoid feeling exploited. Yet distributive tactics that turn into attacking the other side, locking firmly into position, or making excessive demands are likely to escalate the conflict and will result in no settlement.

Communication strategies, then, are also contingent on the ways negotiators respond to each other and on how their interactions develop over time. Specifically, in distributive processes, negotiators can avoid escalating a conflict by using strategies that complement rather than match the strategies of the other party. For example, if labor is arguing against management's position, then management might respond by defending their stance. This pattern of argument balances the communication and makes it easier to move to integrative negotiation. In marital conflicts, spouses who respond with submissiveness to their partner's dominant move or vice versa also balance each other.

In contrast, when negotiators match or reciprocate each other's aggressive or competitive tactics, they are more likely to escalate the conflict. Matching negative emotions such as anger or contempt, increases the likelihood of not reaching an agreement. When parties interrupt each other regularly or use deception, they strain their relationship and make it harder to negotiate an agreement. On the other hand, when both negotiators use first-person pronouns such as "I" and "You," give information about their priorities and needs, and talk in simple sentences, they signal a desire to move toward the other party and to work out their differences. Asking questions to make sure that parties understand each other is another way to break up a developing

conflict spiral and move the negotiation in a constructive direction. Hence, it is important for negotiators to know how to alter or shift unproductive interaction patterns into productive communication.

Context Issues and Negotiation

These observations about communication presume that the parties are from Western cultures. Negotiators from different countries often rely on and have different meanings for communication in conflict situations. Specifically, individuals from Asian countries rely on the context to interpret communication in conflict. They use facial expressions and body movements to convey messages about priorities, whereas negotiators from Western nations employ direct statements, reject offers overtly, and express their opinions openly. Thus, communication patterns in negotiation often differ across cultural contexts.

Another context feature that shapes communication in negotiation is the role of technology as a medium for negotiation. Advances in communication technology over the past 20 years have resulted in negotiation through e-mails, videoconferences, telephone conference calls, and other computer-mediated interactions. Comparisons among these different communication media reveal that face-to-face negotiators are more likely to cooperate than are individuals who use the computer or the telephone for their interactions. When parties rely on computers to engage in negotiations, they use fewer words, cluster too many arguments together in one message, and have trouble identifying when the other party is cooperating. So negotiating via computers is challenging and works best when supplemented with some face-to-face interaction.

To improve negotiations that rely on computer or telephone technology, parties should be very comfortable with the technology before they engage in conflict management. They should use multiple modes of communication to exchange information and to clarify issues. They should monitor the give-and-take process carefully and avoid using language that triggers negative emotions.

Mediation and Communication

When parties fail to manage conflict through their own negotiations, they often turn to another person for help. Unlike negotiation, mediation is a process in which a third party assists the disputants in working through a conflict. However, mediators do not make the decision for the parties; rather, they assist them with the process and help them move toward a settlement. In most situations, formal mediators are impartial and have no prior relationship with either of the disputants, but informal mediators might be friends, roommates, colleagues, or managers who embrace the best interests of both parties. Mediators typically ask questions, guide the interaction, paraphrase or summarize remarks, set the agenda, encourage parties to make concessions, and provide emotional support to both sides.

They differ in styles of interaction and the degree to which they exert control over the process.

Getting a third party to assist in managing conflict offers a number of benefits. Namely, it provides a cooling-off period for the disputants, helps them frame substantive issues, and redirects the interaction between them. Despite these benefits, though, overuse of mediation may encourage dependency on third parties instead of the disputing parties managing conflicts by themselves. For example, two coworkers who always go to their boss to manage conflicts between them may be less motivated to work out their problems on their own. Use of mediation, however, generally leads to high satisfaction with both the process and the outcomes of conflict (Donohue, 2006).

Mediation Use

Mediation programs have proliferated in the past two decades, especially in communities that have dispute resolution practices connected to the courts. Mediators help with divorce settlements, intervene in disputes between landlords and tenants, manage controversies among neighbors, and facilitate settlements of disagreements about zoning and community development. In addition to community conflict management centers, school systems have implemented programs in peer mediation to help students prevent violence and manage conflicts among classmates. Mediation is a common practice for dealing with labor disputes, but organizations have expanded the use of this approach to address salary grievances, personnel issues, and interdepartmental conflicts. Moreover, mediation continues to be a widely used approach in international diplomacy, peace-keeping, and brokering trade relationships. Overall, mediation has become a standard tool in a repertoire of conflict management approaches.

Mediation Approaches

Even though a wide array of approaches exists in mediation, they typically cluster into three types: (1) problem-solving models, (2) interaction management models, and (3) relational development approaches. The problem-solving approach, also known as assisted negotiation, focuses on addressing underlying interests and identifying common ground between the parties. In this approach, mediators often have a vision or a hypothesis for what would help the parties reach a settlement. They select their questions and strategies to search for common ground. For example, if a mediator thinks that poor communication underlies a problem, the third party directs questions to help the disputants diagnose their understandings. If the mediator uncovers common ground between the parties, the third party sometimes remains quiet and lets the disputants pursue their common interests. If the parties become contentious, however, the mediator may exert control through integrating the disputants' comments, charting an agenda, and making

requests for concessions. The overall goal in this approach is to reach a mutually satisfactory settlement.

Mediators who adopt the second approach, interaction management, aim to distinguish between productive and unproductive communication patterns and to intervene in a conflict to move parties in a productive direction. They focus on messages that signal trust and liking between the parties, unequal power relationships, and the priorities or importance of issues. Through the use of questions and summary statements, the mediator moves disputants away from competitive patterns. One particular destructive pattern that surfaces in close relationships is a competitive dilemma. In this dilemma, the parties signal closeness and dependence on each other while simultaneously conveying disapproval and negative emotions. This competitive dilemma is evident when a divorced husband and wife come close together to negotiate a child visitation issue while they simultaneously convey negative emotions and disapproval that signal rejection of each other. The mediator aims to break up this competitive pattern, help the parties redefine their interdependence, and help them work out a specific visitation program (Donohue, 2006). The interaction management approach focuses on unproductive communication and how to help parties change their patterns of talk to work out agreements.

The relational development approach differs from the other two models in treating a person's identity and relationship with the other party as the underlying concerns in the conflict. This approach aims to empower the parties to discover the key relational issues that underlie their problems and to transform how they see each other and their situation. Some mediators use stories that disputants tell to help them decipher the different views that each party holds about the conflict. Stories reveal the ways in which perceptions about the parties' roles as victims or offenders enter into narratives and how different plots and scenes play out over time. Mediators listen carefully to identify what is missing in the disputants' stories and to help parties use the missing elements to construct a new story, one that explores common issues and has the potential to bring the parties together.

Another option within the relational development approach is known as *transformative mediation*. In this approach, mediators help parties transform their relationships through improving their own empowerment and their recognition of the other party (Bush & Folger, 2005). Disputants typically enter into mediation with a focus on their own injuries or problems. They feel beaten down and victimized by the conflict and are often too paralyzed to act. Through granting them the capacity to take control and supporting them in this objective, mediators empower parties and help them develop the confidence needed to act on their own problems. Empowerment, then, opens the door to recognizing the other side's suffering. This mutual recognition builds compassion and empathy, which helps the parties listen and respond to each other. This approach purports that once parties address their

relational problems, they can discuss differences on substantive issues with renewed cooperation.

Interaction Patterns in Mediation

The three models of mediation differ in the ways in which communication helps parties reach agreements. In the problem-solving approach, mediators exert control over the process by setting rules for interaction, summarizing, redirecting comments, and calming the parties. They paraphrase comments to check for understanding, raise questions about options for settlements, and direct parties to evaluate the options that they have generated. Since the goal of the process is to uncover common-ground issues, they direct parties to their major concerns and urge them to set priorities for what is important.

In a similar way, the interaction management approach emphasizes mediator control of the interaction but focuses on redirecting parties away from unproductive communication. Mediators listen to topics, issues, and arguments to hear underlying messages about warmth, friendliness, and respect and about how each party is trying to control the other. They use questions, summaries, and comments to move parties away from competitive behaviors and to change their destructive communication patterns.

The relational development approach shifts to disputant control of the interaction. Mediators let disputants tell their own stories, use the stories as windows for uncovering the underlying concerns, and get parties to think about alternative narratives that might include elements that are missing in the original examples. In addition to seeking agreements, mediators strive to get the parties to own their conflict and to create a new story in which disputants can avoid blaming each other for their problems.

In the transformative mediation approach, mediators empower the disputants by letting them control the process, helping them achieve what they want from the interaction and recognize the suffering that both parties have experienced through the conflict. They follow the parties' lead and occasionally interject comments that reflect substantive and emotional concerns. Mediators might ask if each disputant wants to add something that might change each other's views. After the disputants begin to listen to each other and feel empowered to manage their own conflict, the mediator might offer a summary of what he or she thinks the parties are trying to get across. In the relational development approach, mediators see their role as helping the parties become equipped to manage disputes on their own, work through difficult issues, and recognize the suffering that each party has incurred.

Context Issues in Mediation

These three approaches to mediation are applied to a wide array of settings, including divorce mediation, labor-management conflicts, community and neighborhood disputes, and educational settings. Several contextual features,

however, influence the effectiveness of mediation. First, the nature of the conflict itself is critical to mediation success, especially in the problem-solving model. Conflicts that are highly intense or ones in which the parties are not motivated to find a settlement are hard to mediate and often lead to an impasse. The interaction management and relational development approaches are more effective in dealing with these intense conflicts.

A second contextual issue is the importance of mediator training. Training programs often emphasize one approach or a set of techniques and strategies. Mediators need to be trained regularly in the use of these approaches. They need to understand the principles and assumptions that underlie the different approaches to mediation and how to adapt the one they select to an array of conflict settings, including mediation with elders, workplace disputes, and court settings. Effective and continuous training aids in developing these skills. Finally, in some instances, mediation works most effectively when third parties are integrated into the community, exhibit the spiritual and moral values of the disputants' culture, and speak the native language of the disputants. Multiple mediators often work effectively in intercultural or gender-based conflicts in which diversity might be a central concern.

Dialogue and Communication

Although not as well-known as negotiation and mediation, dialogue typically involves third parties who act as facilitators in public conflicts. Dialogue emphasizes free and open expression of different points of view from multiple participants (Barge, 2006). It addresses conflict through creating new meanings for action that transform individuals and communities. By bringing oppositional groups together, facilitators help parties listen, begin to understand each other, and use critical thinking skills to develop courses of action.

Dialogue is particularly useful when parties hold fundamentally different values or moral positions (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). In most conflict situations, parties have difficulty addressing value disputes, and they rarely change their fundamental values; thus, dialogue provides a forum for engaging different value-based perspectives. The goal is to have parties move beyond polarizing other groups and to gain a richer understanding of complex issues and problems.

Uses of Dialogue

As a public process, dialogue resembles an old-fashioned town hall meeting in which parties voice their concerns about organizational, community, environmental, or international conflicts. Facilitators design a process that helps parties listen to multiple voices and creates opportunities to see their opponents in a new light. Then they generate new ideas, deliberate about the ones best for their collective needs, and strive to move forward in a common direction.

Problems that were initially treated as the domains of experts are now handled more effectively through dialogue and democratic participation. Specifically, land development concerns, planning and zoning controversies, community safety issues, and public school violence concerns are frequently addressed through participatory forums. In particular, dialogue provides prolife and prochoice advocates an opportunity to meet, develop common community concerns, work out options, and become engaged with policymakers (LeBaron & Carstarphen, 1997). Facilitators also employ dialogue to enable land developers, homeowners, regulators, environmentalists, and businesses reach a consensus in decisions about water and land use. Dialogue is also a type of conflict management employed in international circles, especially in problem-solving workshops that aim to foster mutual understanding in ethnic-political relations.

Dialogue Forums

A number of conflict management practices embrace dialogue as a forum. Two major approaches encompass an array of different dialogue practices. Public conversations entail programs such as the National Issues Forum, Study Circles Resource Center, Open Space, and the Public Conversations Project. These programs provide ways to structure dialogue, give participants timely and relevant information, enrich conversations, deliberate on the pros and cons of actions, and move toward solutions.

The National Issues Forum has citizens read booklets on the pros and cons of important social and community issues and then involves them in small-group dialogues to identify common-ground approaches to problems. Similarly, participants in the Study Circle Resource Center meet in small groups for several months and then in large community meetings to develop action items. In contrast, Open Space is a self-organizing, completely open process in which participants create their own agendas, work in breakout groups, come together in large groups, and then meet in different breakout groups. The Public Conversations Project is the most structured of the four programs in that it develops ground rules for conversation. Participants construct a contract, discuss their topics in small-group meetings, and enact follow-up reflections.

The second main approach to dialogue includes programs grounded in appreciative inquiry. Appreciative inquiry emphasizes the positive aspects of organizational and community life through focusing on assets and possibilities. It works from past and present strengths to identify moments of excellence. The belief that governs this approach is that positive interactions as opposed to negative deficiencies energize participants and offer them hope. Once parties have hope, it is easier to transform a conflict into opportunities for beneficial action.

Two examples of dialogue practices that highlight positive interactions are The Public Dialogue Consortium and the Appreciative Inquiry Summit. Grounded in deliberative democracy, the Public Dialogue Consortium focuses on

training participants to be facilitators, hearing voices from all stakeholders, framing issues in positive ways, and developing action steps. Facilitators report back to a large group, and then the process begins again with a new round of facilitators. Training participants to be facilitators instills an emphasis on strengths, positive outcomes, and possibilities for the future.

Interaction Patterns in Dialogue

These two approaches emphasize different interaction patterns for developing dialogue. In the public conversation programs, facilitators help participants listen actively, question each other, reflect on what was said, suspend judgment, and manage the tensions between advocacy and inquiry. To give everyone a voice, facilitators ask participants to share their stories and personal experiences before they deliberate about the pros and cons of alternatives. This approach also underscores the relational aspects of dialogue through urging participants to develop respect and to honor each other's comments.

The appreciative inquiry approach focuses on uncovering positive experiences and envisioning what might happen in the future. Facilitators typically conduct interviews with participants to discover the finest moments in the group's collective history and the core values of their community. Then, these positive moments are used to accent what is best and valued among community members. Next, participants address what should occur in light of the highly valued experiences gathered from the interviews. Communication consists of exchanging positive stories, reframing negative feelings into positive experiences, and drawing out visions of core values.

In both approaches, dialogue differs from the interaction patterns of persuasion, advocacy, and argument that characterize most conflicts. Dialogue privileges sharing and listening rather than arguing, admitting doubts and gray areas as opposed to setting forth airtight cases, asking questions out of genuine curiosity instead of trying to prove a point, and discovering deep-seated differences rather than presuming that parties understand each other. Dialogue is also fluid in that each comment simultaneously is a response to what happened previously and has potential to move the conversation in a different direction (Barge, 2006). Hence, dialogue is an emergent process, one that cannot be predicted from the participants' goals and intentions. It also builds collaboratively as parties respond to each other and create their situation together from what people say, how they say it, and how it develops over time.

Dialogue aims to transform individuals, relationships, and communities. Research on communication reveals three patterns that can lead to transforming of conflict situations: (1) labeling a problem differently, (2) using language that alters the levels of abstraction, and (3) developing new frames for understanding a situation. The ways in which parties label or name a problem relates to changing how they see a situation (Putnam, 2008). Each party typically enters a

conflict with different views of the situation and different labels for the problem. For example, public school teachers might name differential pay between men and women coaches as a problem of *discrimination*, but administrators might call it *paying for different job duties* or differences in the amount of time and work between male and female coaching jobs. If the two parties rename the problem as *deficiencies in women's sports*, they might change the number of games that women play or involve more women students in sporting activities. This renaming of the problem allows the parties to close the gaps between male and female salaries because the job duties have also changed.

A second interaction pattern that fosters transformation in dialogue is the use of language that shifts the levels of abstraction. Levels of abstraction refer to the way words function in categories. For example, two owners might talk about the health of a particular dog named Dusty. Other ways they could discuss this issue is to talk about diseases specific to a particular canine breed or to the problems that older dogs experience in general. Each time they shift from discussing the symptoms of a particular dog to talking about dogs in general, they move from specific to general issues at a more abstract level. This movement back and forth across levels of abstraction aids in redefining a conflict because the shift expands or narrows the boundaries and opens up new interpretations of the problem.

To illustrate, two people from different organizations engage in a conflict regarding who is taking advantage of whom and which company takes the most risk in their work relationship. If they move away from deliberating about particular revenue issues and begin talking more abstractly about what risk means for their respective businesses, they have the potential to transform the conflict by developing a new understanding of risk and seeing that they can take risk simultaneously rather than sequentially. This process leads to developing creative alternatives and producing a new form of collaboration.

A third way to transform a conflict through dialogue is to help the parties develop a new frame for making sense of the situation. In communication, a frame is like marking the boundaries or borders for a set of events. Similar to a picture frame, it is a way of marking ongoing streams of activity that cross time and space and bracketing specific interactions out for close examination. Parties usually come to the conflict with different ways of framing the ongoing events that produced their situation. Then, they try to develop a common frame to make sense of events by talking about what should be included or excluded in their frames, what should be in the figure as most important and what should be background, and how conflict elements should be moved to construct a shared picture of the events. To reframe the situation, the disputants might enlarge the meaning of an event, project actions into the future rather than in the past, or remove elements from consideration in analyzing the conflict. These changes shape the boundary and definition of a dispute and may lead to reframing and even transforming the conflict.

Context Issues in Dialogue

As a forum for managing conflict, dialogue depends on a number of contextual issues—namely, creating an atmosphere of safety, the inclusion of relevant parties, and the fairness and competence of the process. An atmosphere of safety results from communication that equalizes power differences among participants. Facilitators aim to build trust and empathy among parties through shaping understandings in small incremental steps. They treat parties equally regardless of status or position and emphasize participant involvement in all stages of the process.

Inclusiveness is critical to dialogue and deciding who should come to public meetings, which representatives are central to the problem, and what voices should be heard can make or break effective dialogue sessions. Finally, dialogue needs to be fair and competent. Fairness results from granting all parties a legitimate role in the decision-making processes, and competence depends on reaching the best alternative given the resources and opportunities to address the problem.

In summary, dialogue is a form of structured communication that emphasizes free and open expression of different points of view and using social interaction to transform conflicts. It is particularly effective for value-based, community conflicts in which parties hold stereotypic images of each other and feel alienated from decision makers. Two alternative approaches, public conversations and appreciative inquiry, focus on the communication skills of listening, questioning, reflecting, and deliberating. Public conversations also emphasize building common ground among participants, while appreciative inquiry works from positive achievements and strengths.

Both approaches draw on participants' stories and life experiences. Opportunities to transform conflict situations come from interactions that label or name problems differently and from those that discuss issues at both specific and general levels of abstraction. The factors that influence the effectiveness of dialogue include developing an atmosphere of safety, including all relevant groups and parties in the process, and attending to the fairness and competence of the process.

Changes and Future Directions in Conflict Management

The role of communication in conflict management has changed radically over the past three decades. Communication is not just a set of tactics that people use to address conflict, nor is it just a style or way of approaching conflict. Rather, communication is the way that parties construct and shape the very nature of conflict through forming productive interaction patterns, preventing conflict spirals, and transforming conflict situations. Hence, communication is not simply a tool to use in managing a conflict; it is a way of understanding how a conflict evolves.

The growth of mediation and public dialogue programs over the past several decades attests to the need to develop

procedures for managing conflicts outside the formal court system. Formal and informal mediation has grown in a wide array of arenas and is especially popular for managing custody and divorce settlements, neighborhood disputes, disagreements between landlords and tenants, and customer relations. Many corporations require human resource personnel to be trained in mediation or offer conflict management education for all employees. In a similar way, corporations have discovered that they can reduce lawsuits, eliminate workplace violence, and improve employee relationships by designing dispute systems. These systems have multiple points of entry to address problems, build in appeals for decisions, and emphasize open expression of concerns.

Managing conflict at the public level is beginning to shift from reliance on experts to employing a public participation process. Only recently have these processes turned to dialogue and facilitation as opposed to public hearings in which audience members make statements to decision makers. Public dialogue also struggles to involve all the relevant parties, work with large numbers of participants, and develop forums that both control interaction and allow for free and open expression. Forums that are too freewheeling or too constrained can reinforce stereotypes and prevent the development of trust and empathy.

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VISUAL RHETORIC

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Defining visual rhetoric can be a simple task, but its evolution as a research topic in the communication discipline is more complicated. At face value, the term *visual rhetoric* encompasses two meanings. First, visual rhetoric can be defined in artifactual terms, as rhetorical expression in visual form. To design an advertisement, create a protest sign, draw a political cartoon, practice photography as a commentary on social issues—all these examples of persuasive expression qualify as *visual rhetoric* in that they feature some visual image or form that functions to influence or convey meaning.

Some examples may include verbal elements, but in visual rhetoric the visual image is the central component of the message. A cartoon, for example, may include labels or dialogue, an advertisement is more likely than not to have some explanatory copy, and a photograph usually is accompanied by a caption or a story. But all these verbal elements are structured around a visual image, an image that conveys its own message and may prompt a response or reaction from the viewer. Sometimes the visual element stands alone. In these cases, the viewer may respond with an emotional reaction to the image, or the image may prompt specific associations. These examples of visually oriented messages fit the definition of rhetoric in that they are instrumental, public, intended for an audience, and situated; take symbolic form; and have potentially persuasive effects. Production courses in media or graphic design classes are concerned with the creation of visual rhetoric in much the same fashion as public-speaking courses teach students how to create effective verbal rhetoric.

But the communication discipline also treats rhetoric as a public message and process that constitutes meaning, meaning that may illuminate cultural and civic values as well as provide insight into historical and contemporary strategies of persuasion. In this framework, visual rhetoric incorporates an analytic pursuit rather than an applied, creative activity. The demands and functions of communication courses on rhetorical theory and criticism address this analytic perspective. Therefore, the term *visual rhetoric* also refers to the effort to understand and theorize rhetoric that occurs in visual form or involves the practice of visualization. In this sense, visual rhetoric has been said to operate as a mode of inquiry, a way of looking at images that is different from art history, aesthetics, or other ways of interpreting and assessing visual images and the processes of seeing. Visual rhetoric, as an analytic pursuit, guides us toward an understanding of the ways in which visual artifacts construct and create meaning. More recently, that pursuit also questions the effects of looking. In other words, rhetoricians are concerned with not only how images appear, or what implicit or explicit strategies of persuasion are invoked, but also how they are looked at.

To engage in the study of visual rhetoric is not only to exercise a particular mode of inquiry but also to implicitly argue for a definition of that mode—rhetoric—that goes beyond the traditional boundaries of *public address* and the spoken word and considers the force and potential generated by visual and material forms. Visual rhetoric broadens the definition of public discourse to include all variety of messages. Visual rhetoric invites us to consider not just the

speeches of presidents, for example, but also the social effects of their “photo opportunities.” Visual rhetoric invites us to think about the meanings generated by or reflected in political cartoons and photojournalism during a presidential campaign, not just the speeches and commentary by and about candidates on the campaign trail. Visual rhetoric invites us to consider how historical figures might be depicted in photographs—and how that might affect public memory of those figures—and not just analyze their appeals made in speeches. Visual rhetoric acknowledges that in a media-saturated age, our persuasive environment is as much about pictures as it is about words.

This duality between the practice of visual rhetoric and the analysis of visual rhetoric mirrors the history of the speech communication discipline, in which an initial concern with teaching the practice of public address as a development of skills was joined by a concern with the analysis of speeches. Today, although many courses in rhetorical theory and criticism taught within the communication discipline still focus on speeches, scholars are increasingly interested in the application of rhetorical principles to artifacts that have visual form or some sort of visual component or structure. The communication discipline is characterized by a wide range of pursuits that encompass both the development of practical skills and the liberal arts tradition of enhancing skills at critical thought.

In this essay, I provide a historical overview of the evolution of research in visual rhetoric that addresses and illuminates the second definition of visual rhetoric: the critical and theoretical examination of rhetoric that incorporates or exists as a visual form. The roots of visual rhetoric derive jointly from inquiries about the mass media and from a more general evolution of thought in the humanities. But both approaches had to overcome the long-standing bias toward language and against images in the communication discipline and in Western thought.

Theoretical Foundations in Visual Rhetoric

Speech Communication and Rhetoric

The analysis of visual rhetoric was initially explored as a subset of the larger arena of rhetorical studies. In their exploratory studies of visual images, scholars called on many of the theories and methodological tools we had developed for the study of language. To describe the study of visual rhetoric as an exact mirror of the traditional study of verbal oratory—as if images were “visual speeches”—has proved limiting, however, and does not entirely reflect the aims of current scholarship in the subject. The emergence of visual rhetoric as a scholarly concern has also occurred in a different academic context from the one that informed and developed the speech communication discipline early in the 20th century. The postmodern turn in more

recent rhetorical studies lends complexity and richness to the study of visual rhetoric. Since scholarly concern with visual rhetoric is relatively recent, current theory is positioned between applications of traditional rhetorical theories (which many scholars still find useful) and the development of emerging theories that attempt to address the particulars of visualizing practices.

While the study of speeches grew from a single critical perspective that had its roots in Aristotelian principles, and then generated additional theoretical and methodological perspectives that students learn today, the study of visual rhetoric has developed in the context of rhetoric’s rich theoretical developments of recent decades and at a time when academic thought reaches across, and is influenced by, other disciplines. Rhetorical study is also deeply influenced by the cross-disciplinary concerns of cultural studies. All these dynamics bring complexity to the study of visual rhetoric and also provide more workable tools than a traditional, Aristotelian approach might have provided.

Since serious and close analysis of the visual has a comparatively recent history within the communication discipline, compared with the study of oratory, relevant theory is still in a stage of development, and there are multiple views on how visual rhetoric should be studied or even defined. Although this situation can lead to controversy, it also creates exciting possibilities for study and learning. Students may consider themselves fortunate if they have teachers and classes that address this vital and contemporary subject in communication, and few areas of communication research offer as many connections to other disciplines as does the study of visual rhetoric and visual culture. In discussing visual rhetoric, we begin by charting the pioneering efforts at visual communication studies, the obstacles encountered by such studies, and how those studies have evolved in the short time we have benefited from rhetoric’s “visual turn.” In the next few sections, I will describe the development of visual rhetoric as overcoming obstacles in intellectual thought, its disciplinary roots in media studies that led to organized responses to visual communication, and the influence of the general humanities that has taken visual rhetoric beyond some of the constraints of using theories and methodologies adapted from the study of verbal rhetoric.

Antivisual Attitudes

That communication scholarship has only pursued the study of visual rhetoric in the past three decades is noteworthy, especially considering that visual images and visualization have been an important component of human activity for centuries. As David D. Perlmutter (1999), who has written extensively on news photography, observed, “We are *homo iconis* by our very nature, sight-driven animals that receive 90 percent of the data we collect and organize about the world through our eyes.” Humans are also the only animals who consciously and routinely create images to communicate with others.

When unknown Stone Age humans picked up pigments and tools to depict hunting and battle scenes on the walls of caves, they were engaging in the production of visual culture, which has increased with each new technological development that facilitates the circulation and reception of images. Paul Messaris, in his books on visual communication, describes how some aspects of our interpretation of images, especially the connections between camera angles and notions of power, stem from childhood experiences.

Postmodern thinkers also point to the importance of sight as a sense-making human activity, although some think of this phenomenon as more significant now than in the past. Martin Jay (1991) has used the term *ocularcentrism* to indicate the centrality of vision and visual images in contemporary society. In short, theorists have argued for the importance of images and imaging in human cognition and communication, and it remains fairly irrelevant whether ocularcentrism is limited to contemporary contexts or describes the historical human condition. Images are pervasive in our world as we live in it and as we have lived in it for some time. The invention of photography and the development of media technologies have only enhanced the appeal and power of images for us. But if images have always been with us, and their increase is tied to innovations in printing, film, television, and electronic communication, why has it taken so long for the communication discipline to embrace their study?

Part of the answer lies in long-standing cultural and historical attitudes that regard visual images with suspicion. Major religions warn against the dangers of idolatry or sacrilegious offense that attend the creation of images. As one example, violent protests ensued around the world when Muhammed, the spiritual leader of Muslims, was depicted in some provocative political cartoons published by a Danish newspaper in 2004. The issue continues to surface periodically in the tense political and cultural climate of our contemporary world. Although it didn't help matters that cartoon depictions are generally satiric and irreverent, any depiction of the holy figurehead of the Muslim religion is forbidden and considered offensive.

In ancient Greece, Plato cautioned about the divide between authentic experience and its visual simulation as shadowed images cast on a wall. During the 20th-century scholarship on visual images from thinkers as varied as Ernest Gombrich, Rudolph Arnheim, Walter Benjamin, and Roland Barthes began to influence and encourage work in the humanities on visual symbolism, semiotics, and iconology, as did the work of many critical writers on photography. Theoretical work in the larger field of the humanities would later shape contemporary studies in visual rhetoric. Within the communication field, the development of the study of visual rhetoric owes much to media scholars, who often voiced concern about the dominance of the visual in a public realm increasingly dominated by technological changes and a proliferation of mediated communication forms and channels.

Long after we accepted film and television images as major influences in the construction of social realities,

resistance to the place of the visual in this environment continued. The apparent dominance of the visual image as a tool of meaning making in society has continued to be met with skepticism about its adequacy and value in various social and cultural discourses.

This skeptical attitude is rooted in Aristotelian principles of rhetoric, which privilege logic and reasoning as the highest and best forms of public communication and persuasion. Logic and reasoning have been associated with the spoken word, while visual images are equated with emotional appeals. Emotional appeals are powerful rhetorical strategies that offer rhetors the ability to subvert the grounds of logic and rationality. In this manner of seeing images, they all too easily function as instruments of deception and propaganda, whether it's in the form of altered photographs circulated by totalitarian regimes or photo opportunities for U.S. presidents that seek to associate the politician with favorable images of masculine power to gain public acclaim. The pictorial images of public leaders projected by photography, films, and television are frequently interpreted as shallow, simplistic, and manipulative distractions from the complicated issues and policy questions of the political sphere, mere spectacles that entertain more than they inform. In this sense, appearance not only triumphs over reality, it becomes a new and false reality.

Because visual images are often seen as more manipulative than verbal speeches, many media and argumentation scholars initially regarded the visual realm with a negative view, claiming that the functions of visual images were limited and subordinate to the function of language. It is easy to dismiss images in politics and public discourse as mere spectacle, opportunities for entertainment rather than engagement, because visual images transfix us so readily. The question of whether a presidential candidate wears an American flag pin (sending a visual message of patriotic devotion) can triumph over real discussion of issues in today's public sphere. Similarly, politicians are at least as likely to employ managed photo opportunities to create an impression as they are to speak from the bully pulpit with facts, figures, and rational arguments. In heightening the value of the verbal over the visual, sometimes we forget that not all verbal messages are rational, as politicians and advocates also speak strategically with code terms, buzz words, and glittering generalities.

Besides treating the value of a visual message with skepticism, another common academic response to visual images was to regard them as merely ancillary to verbal texts or explanations. In other words, either visual messages were thought to overpower more rational thinking or they were considered to be inconsequential compared with written and spoken words. These responses may seem contradictory, but both are dismissive of the visual and have contributed to a historical lack of critical thought about visual images. At the same time, those who held concerns about the media's relationship with culture were motivated to call for instruction in "visual literacy" so that students would be better able to think critically about problematic

rhetorical artifacts. Thus, pedagogical tools such as *Killing Us Softly* (1979) and *Dreamworlds* (1990), two films that deconstruct the visual elements of advertising and music videos, respectively, responded to the concern over the assumed powers of visual persuasion. The relationship between visual images and formal argument was later explored in a special issue of the journal *Argumentation and Advocacy*, published in 1996.

The Prospect of Rhetoric Reconsidered

At its beginning, the study of visual rhetoric was initially rooted, in part, in the interests and concerns of media, advertising, and journalism scholars who were concerned about the social effects of visually oriented messages. Scholars of rhetoric shared some of these concerns about mediated visual messages but were also influenced by a shift in the 1960s over the appropriate practice of rhetorical scholarship from a task rooted in historical study to a task that should address and critique contemporary rhetorical discourse. The significant effects on society of social movements in the 1960s and 1970s lent a sense of urgency to expanding the scope of rhetorical studies beyond historical speeches to an embrace of more contemporary forms. Visual and mediated presentations were common elements of contemporary rhetoric, and television was making an enormous impact in the exchange of political messages. Rhetorical scholars realized that their analytic tools could aid in understanding many symbolic expressions besides speeches that were creating significant public meaning. The rhetorical actions spawned by social movements anchored the study of visual rhetoric to the visual or material artifact, both in form and in function.

One might argue that the visual has always potentially been an appropriate subject for rhetorical analysis, especially if we look to Aristotle's admonition to use the "available means of persuasion" in the inventional process. In the 20th century, Kenneth Burke's influential writings on rhetoric strongly suggested that visual forms qualified as symbolic action, a bedrock term that defined rhetorical expression in Burkean terms. But until a period of cultural unrest over the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Movement, the Vietnam War, and other social change movements drew attention to widening modes of discourse, attention to the visual by rhetoric scholars was not evident.

A key turning point in the direction of rhetorical studies came in 1971, with a position statement that was part of an endeavor by the Speech Communication Association to reassess the field of rhetoric. The report called for a broadening of the scope of rhetorical criticism to include the many types of expression that were becoming common in the public dialogues on social change. Although visual expression was not specifically listed, it was clearly consistent with the "institutional and cultural symbols" that were hailed by the report's authors as the appropriate province of rhetorical study. Not only did the Wingspread Conference, as it was known, prompt initial publication of

scholarship on visual rhetoric, but other scholars such as Kathleen J. Turner and Cara Finnegan have, in reflective essays, more recently continued to affirm the value of the "visual turn" in rhetoric and public address studies.

Methods and Applications

Research in the 1970s and 1980s

The Wingspread Conference call for attention to new forms of rhetorical expression was met in the 1970s and 1980s with new critical analysis of various forms of visual texts from media and popular culture sources. Kathleen J. Turner (in 1977) and Michael DeSousa and Martin J. Medhurst (in 1982) published essays on comic strips and editorial cartoons in which they applied familiar rhetorical perspectives to graphic forms that mixed visual imagery with verbal elements. Medhurst joined with Thomas Benson to edit the seminal volume *Rhetorical Dimensions in Media* (1984). Both Medhurst and Benson had applied rhetorical concepts to films, and *Rhetorical Dimensions in Media*, in its three editions, discussed a range of media artifacts, most of them in visual form, although the book was not specifically labeled as an exploration of visual rhetoric. Similarly, Bruce E. Gronbeck explored the rhetoric of political advertising and documentary films, again taking a perspective that merged the visual and verbal elements of certain political artifacts into a cohesive message. Although these early studies varied in their specific attention to visual elements, the focus on visualized texts was new and important.

Because of their context in political discourse, editorial cartoons provided a compelling site in which to examine visual rhetoric. In addition to Medhurst and DeSousa, and the articles on political cartoons published in *Rhetorical Dimensions in Media*, Denise Bostdorff applied Burkean critical methodology to cartoons about a controversial U.S. Secretary of the Interior in an essay published in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. Bostdorff's analysis demonstrated that cartoons, in their combined visual and verbal manifestations that turned on irony and satire, operated from Burke's idea on perspective by incongruity. Lester C. Olsen addressed the visual, specifically, in his studies of artifacts of the American colonial period and posters that illustrated FDR's "Four Freedoms," identifying iconology as a central motivator in visual rhetoric. Each of these scholars drew in some way from existing critical methodologies and aesthetic theory and applied them to visual subjects. Along the way, artifacts such as posters and editorial cartoons were positioned as rhetorical texts, broadening the definition of rhetoric, which had been grounded in platform speeches.

Another important scholar who championed visual rhetoric at this time was Sonja K. Foss, whose interest in visual rhetoric pedagogy and inventive and informed investigations of a range of visual artifacts inspired emerging scholars to take up the visual as a critical subject. Foss

examined visual and material artifacts as disparate as works of art, furniture, architecture, and memorials. But in the course of making applications of critical methodologies, she also began to investigate how visual artifacts suggested new approaches and methodologies beyond those that had been developed in response to the study of speeches. Foss's analysis of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1986), along with the writings of others on the subject in the 1980s, also guided the discipline's subsequent, significant attention to the rhetorical and symbolic aspects of memorials as visual and material artifacts.

Organizing the Conversation on Visual Rhetoric

In the late 1980s, Sonja K. Foss, Marla Kanengieter, Raymie McKerrow, and several others who were interested in the intersections and applications of rhetoric to visual images formed a new unit of the National Communication Association (NCA) devoted to visual communication. Although this NCA division represents the full range of perspectives on visual communication studies, including media and visual literacy, visual rhetoric has occupied an important area of research within the NCA's Visual Communication Division.

Similarly, an informal group of scholars who have convened for a summer conference on visual communication, known as VIZCOM, for the past 22 years has included visual rhetoric as a subject focus, in addition to other perspectives on the study of images. While individual scholarship has helped shape and define the area of visual rhetoric, collaboration and conversation among scholars at conferences and within organizations have advanced visual studies significantly. Although, in some respects, visual rhetoric is still informed by the larger sphere of visual communication and visual studies—particularly photojournalism and media studies, the development of visual rhetoric in the discipline also owes something to developing theory in the humanities.

The Pictorial Turn in the Humanities

W. J. T. Mitchell, a professor of English and art history at the University of Chicago and editor of the noted interdisciplinary journal *Critical Inquiry*, addressed the question of visual images in a number of publications, notably the book *Picture Theory: Essays in Verbal and Visual Representation* (1995). Noting the burgeoning work of theorists addressing images that represent varying perspectives including philosophy, art history, cultural studies, photography studies, and semiotics, Mitchell proposed that these studies signaled a transforming “pictorial turn” in the humanities, a turn away from preoccupation with language to development of a range of concepts related to images and visuality.

One important aspect of Mitchell's argument has been that visual meaning is not predicated on language. Although this view is somewhat controversial, it opened the door to

broader assessments of meaning connected to visual form, not just grounded in verbal language, although we often use “language” as a conceptual metaphor to describe visual meaning.

Another important aspect of Mitchell's argument is identification of the rhetorical nature of the visual. In this respect, images (and their received meanings)—as well as human patterns or habits of seeing—are not defined as natural and universal. Rather, they are situated in historical, social, and cultural contexts and are deeply influenced by those contexts in their construction, uses, and interpretations. They are rhetorical texts in that they express and constitute cultural norms. The effects of images are thus highlighted, along with the strategies of image making. As one writer puts it, visual rhetoric “is concerned not only with how images look, but how they are looked at.”

The idea that images affect a viewer's response within a prescribed cultural mode was also famously argued by John Berger in this classic book *Ways of Seeing* (1972). It is worth noting that images, even when we see them as discrete texts, are often looked at in conjunction with other texts, both visual and verbal, expanding the possibilities of meaning. And yet, as elements of culture may dominate the social order, so too may visual images provide a prevailing cultural construction. This construction is called a *scopic regime*, an ordering of experience influenced by a hegemony expressed through visuality and socially ratified images. For example, the preponderance of female nudes in Western art and the relative absence of male nudes is regarded as a scopic regime that expresses a male-dominated culture that objectifies women.

For Walter Benjamin and Jean Baudrillard, a concern with images is complicated by their resemblance to “reality” and their capacity for reproduction. Baudrillard (1988), in particular, argues that we possess an inability to distinguish between what is real and not real and that all experience is now simulated (or *simulacra*) because we live in a scopic regime that encourages seeing the world as reflected and contained in images. Cultural critics, postmodern theorists, and other thinkers who shaped Mitchell's idea of the “pictorial turn” in the humanities continue to influence scholars engaged in visual rhetoric.

Studying Visual Rhetoric as Rhetoric

Although advances in the humanities have informed the study of visual rhetoric, its development in the communication discipline was initially and necessarily situated in the broader concerns of established rhetorical theories within the communication discipline. Extrapolating from research published in the 1970s and 1980s, we could say that the study of visual rhetoric closely resembled the study of oratory and public address, as scholars largely employed existing tools and methodologies to visual artifacts in the same way they had been applied to speeches. This strategy was understandable given that it was grounded in the traditions of rhetorical theory and criticism

and illuminated the places where visual and verbal forms shared rhetorical features. Moreover, as previously noted, visual images are rarely entirely separated from a context that may include a verbal aspect.

The application of standard rhetorical methods to visual artifacts continued in the 1980s and into the 1990s with the publication of additional work on political cartoons, as one example. Edward H. Sewell (1986) and Janis L. Edwards (in 1997) both examined cartoons as narratives. Taking an approach more closely tied to the visual elements of cartoons, Edwards and Winkler (1997) argued for certain political cartoons as representative forms that functioned as ideographs, a theory that had been previously applied to verbal terms in discourse. Edwards (1997) and Kaplan (1990) discussed visual metaphor in the contexts of cartoons and advertising, respectively. In the emerging research, no one method of analysis proved to be dominant. Instead, visual images seemed organized around many of the features that constructed spoken rhetoric. Existing methods of analysis proved applicable to images in ways that suggested that rhetorical theory could encompass visual as well as verbal expressions. Other scholars published early work that examined political advertising (another confluence of verbal and visual elements) and films.

In 1996, *Argumentation and Advocacy's* special issue on visual argument (was such a thing possible?), which set forth some theoretical assumptions about rhetoric in visual form, helped bring visual rhetoric further into the mainstream of rhetorical study.

Expanding the Range of Artifacts

The adaptability of rhetorical studies to the visual was also demonstrated by a growing interest in memorial architecture and material culture, combined with a cross-disciplinary focus on memory studies. Investigations of symbolic architecture and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial by Foss and others in the 1980s and the work by Carole Blair and associates on memorials as embodied rhetoric have inspired visual rhetoric scholars to extend their ideas of “the visual” beyond the concept of the image and join visual studies to other interdisciplinary concerns.

The 1990s brought critical attention to visual texts such as civil rights memorials, Gilded Age homes, patriotic medals, archival photographs, and photojournalism, a continuation of subjects with strong visual aspects that were appropriately defined and studied as visual rhetoric. The publication of Barbie Zelizer’s critical examination of Holocaust photography, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera’s Eye*, in 1998 was a critical moment that validated and inspired visual studies in rhetoric, especially as related to photography. Like Paul Messaris’s 1996 book on visual literacy and advertising, *Visual Persuasion: The Role of Images in Advertising*, Zelizer’s book won the NCA’s Diamond Anniversary Award for the outstanding book in the discipline.

Expanding the Scope of Visual Analysis

After nearly two decades of scholarly exploration in visual rhetoric, new courses in visual communication have been developed at any number of communication programs. Although not all these courses specifically address the visual from a rhetorical perspective, and emerging textbooks have explored visual images from a range of media and cultural studies perspectives, the larger context of “visual communication” assisted in the development of visual rhetoric as both a research and a pedagogical area.

At the same time, scholars began to reinvent the study of visual rhetoric. Most scholarship on visual rhetoric had approached images and material artifacts by using established critical tools and concepts to examine the strategic rhetorical choices evidenced *within* the image or structure. Subsequent scholarship, influenced by broader debates in the humanities and cultural studies, began to look at visual rhetoric in terms of its broader dynamics of production, circulation, and reception, reaching beyond the standard methods of rhetorical criticism to generate a more inductive approach to the visual.

For example, Rose (2001) argues that a methodological framework for the critical interpretation of images can address three sites of meaning: the site of production of the image, the site of the image itself, and the site of reception by audiences. Each of these sites is also governed by three modalities: technological, compositional, and social. Rose’s framework points to an accepted expansion of the traditional focus of rhetorical criticism on strategies evident *within* a text, but it also acknowledges the rhetorical tradition’s interest in history. Again, the 1995 publication of W. J. T. Mitchell’s book *Picture Theory: Essays in Verbal and Visual Representation*, along with other philosophic investigations of visibility as a societal construct, seemed to have ignited the new perspective on engagement with visual rhetoric. Among the scholarly endeavors taking up more holistic perspectives was Kevin DeLuca’s 1999 examination of the rhetoric of environmental organizations, *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism*, which argued for engagement with the contemporary visual dominance of the public sphere. Cara Finnegan, in *Picturing Poverty: Print Culture and FSA Photographs* (2003, also an NCA Diamond Anniversary Award winner), has influenced scholarship in visual rhetoric by highlighting circulation as a key critical issue in visibility and visual studies.

More recent research has incorporated a broader sense of visual rhetoric than singular or generic images, tapping into postmodern theories to study the practices and inducements of visualization. Circulation, appropriation, and rhetorical function provided themes for a series of studies by Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites on iconic examples of photojournalism. Image appropriation—where rhetors visually reference or reproduce existing images in new contexts—was discussed by Hariman and Lucaites (2007) in the book-length version of their studies in iconic photographs, *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photography, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy*.

Edwards and Winkler (1997) earlier focused on image appropriation, examining how political cartoonists frequently employed Joe Rosenthal's iconic photograph of the flag-raising on Iwo Jima to comment on assorted military or political efforts. Lester Olson and James Kimble evaluated a familiar poster from World War II titled "We Can Do It!" which features a woman factory worker, her arm upraised and hand rolled into a fist. Not only has this image been appropriated in a wide range of artifacts that reference feminism, politics, and other topics, but Olson and Kimble note that viewers commonly incorrectly identify the image as an official illustration pertaining to "Rosie the Riveter," the popular designation for wartime female factory workers in that era. Familiar images thus become inventional resources that cartoonists, advertisers, and other media producers employ for rhetorical effect.

Hariman and Lucaites further located their discussions on the civic function served by familiar and frequently appropriated photographs that marked significant cultural moments. As of this writing, Hariman and Lucaites continue the conversation on the function of images within liberal democracy by maintaining a blog (with pictures) named after their book, *No Caption Needed*.

Much of the visual rhetoric research in the new millennium has followed a more integrated and holistic approach than the textual analysis that marked early efforts to analyze the visual. A number of scholars have, for instance, considered the iconology of visual aspects of commemorative works regarding World War II and other sites of national memory. Investigation of memorials as significant rhetorical artifacts of commemoration continues to engage communication scholars. Processes of production, circulation, and reception of images and artifacts have become part of the investigation of the visual, adding to the project of textual analysis.

Future Directions for Visual Rhetoric

Prospects

To speak of future directions for visual rhetoric is ironic because visual rhetoric has occupied the cutting edge of rhetorical studies in the three decades it has engaged scholars in communication research. Still, as we have seen, the path of studies in visual rhetoric has evolved as the defining characteristics of visual rhetoric have been redefined. Additionally, the evolution of thought on visual rhetoric mirrors the evolution of rhetorical studies into a cultural studies mode. The emphasis on memory studies and rhetoric is just the most evident feature of this stage of inquiry. Lawrence Prelli's important volume *The Rhetorics of Display* (2006) positioned both the visual and the verbal within the rhetorical notion of display.

Still, visual rhetoric looks ahead to new concerns. At the 2008 Kern Conference on Visual Rhetoric and Technology, each panelist who spoke on future directions

cited Internet imagery and its circulation as a growing area of visual rhetoric inquiry. Although attention to fixed images and more traditional technologies has not been exhausted, the imaging associated with new technologies is moving ahead as a scholarly concern.

This situation does not mean that textual analysis of images is passé. Application of existing rhetorical principles to images still potentially reveals much about the place of visual images in the context of rhetorical invention. The range of images in the public sphere presents many new avenues for study, and the developing ideas on cultural critical analysis offer the promise of additional insight into the visual, and the defining features of rhetoric. Some areas of communication research remain understudied in terms of images. For example, we consider images as a crucial component of political discourse today, yet studies of images in political contexts are few and are generally limited to televi-sual effects. While there has been some attention to political cartoons, political photography has been seriously neglected as an aspect of rhetorical investigation.

Visual rhetoric has proven to be a richly developing area of study within the communication discipline. Although the journals that deal specifically with the visual tend to fall outside the boundaries of rhetorical study, journals such as *Photographies*, *Visual Communication*, and *Visual Communication Quarterly* offer material on related research in media images, and rhetoric journals such as *Quarterly Journal of Speech* have demonstrated an openness to visual rhetoric. However, visual rhetoric still encounters obstacles to continued development in knowledge and understanding.

Problems

The rapid evolution of visual rhetoric scholarship is energizing, but also inhibiting, as theory and definition move forward rapidly, without adequate time to reflect on and refine research perspectives. Pedagogy also seems to lag behind research in this area, as spoken rhetoric dominates textbooks on public address and rhetorical theory and criticism. While many professors include discussions of the visual in their rhetoric courses, and relevant research is presented to students, this component of rhetoric is limited largely to faculty who have a special interest in the topic. As Olson (2007) noted, institutionalized concentrations on visual rhetoric are virtually absent, given the handful of interdisciplinary "visual culture" or "visual studies" institutional programs, discounting graduate and undergraduate study in the area and limiting collaboration.

Another factor that is both potentially enriching and inhibiting is the disjointed nature of visual studies within communication. Examination of the visual continues to be harbored in subareas of the discipline, such as rhetoric, media studies and production, and journalism. The multiple perspectives on visual communication bring diverse viewpoints and insights, but discussions of specific areas are not always seen as relevant to other areas. While visual rhetoric may borrow from or cross over to visual media

studies, the field of rhetoric still promotes concerns other than media, advertising, or visual intelligence studies, leading to “Balkanization” of visual studies within the communication discipline.

As Olson also noted, there is still resistance to rhetorical studies of the visual from traditionalists in the field. The focus on oratory as rhetorical study’s central concern is embedded in the discipline, particularly at specific institutions where, Olson maintains, such attitudes may influence future directions for rhetorical study by limiting attention to artifacts and dynamics other than historically significant speeches. While published research does not reflect this bias, it is evident in the pedagogical materials and structures of rhetorical study.

Visual rhetoric’s robust incursion into the communication discipline is demonstrated by the emerging collections of research, both original and republished, listed in the References and Further Readings section of this essay, as well as by scholarly interest in the topic. It is hoped that this interest will translate to greater pedagogical development as we move forward in a world where images dominate our public sphere and accompany much of our discourse. While some may still look with derision at the visual as an empty spectacle, it is important to understand how visual rhetoric acts on us and in our world to create, assist, and circulate meaning.

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MEMORIALS AND OTHER FORMS OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY

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The decision to include a chapter on memorials and collective memory¹ in this handbook is noteworthy in its own right. Had this volume been published 25 years ago, it is difficult to imagine that these topics would have been considered of sufficient importance to represent communication studies. Prior to the mid-1980s, published scholarship in communication and rhetorical studies was silent on the topics of “memorials,” “monuments,” and “collective memory.”² At that time, memorials were studied primarily by art critics and historians, as well as by military historians. Similarly, the related topic of collective memory, and its implications for communal, cultural, or national identity, did not receive much attention in the communication discipline. Since that time, however, interest in these matters has blossomed. The same pattern holds for other disciplines and interdisciplinary arenas of study as well. In fact, *critical memory studies* has emerged as an important organizing term for the interdisciplinary study of collective memory and, thus, for memorials as well (see Zelizer, 1995). How can we explain the recent and rapid development of academic interest in questions of memory?

In this chapter, I first want to explore factors that have led communication and rhetorical scholars to the systematic study of memorials as *memory projects*—that is, to particular cases of memorializing that ostensibly speak on behalf of the community and affirm how some person, event, or moment in the past should be remembered. I suggest that the emergence of scholarly interest in memory projects reflects and reveals a crisis in contemporary cultural and political life that bears directly on our identity as members of our

national collectivity. Second, since memorials designate some person(s), event, or activity as worthy of remembrance, I examine several views of “memory” as they pertain to the study of memorials and collective memory. Finally, I offer a sampling of different types of memorial projects—studies that engage a range of objects that operate as memorials—so that readers can investigate further about the growing importance of critical memory studies in the field of communication and develop a more expansive view of “memorials” and memorial practices to include a broad range of material, visual, and performative texts. Throughout this chapter, I ask you, the reader, to keep in mind the importance of historical and cultural context for studying memory projects. Rich and thoughtful contextual development enables us to appreciate how sites of memory serve as traces of a particular moment in a community’s life, traces that can reveal the tenor, tensions, hopes, and concerns of that moment. And since material sites of memory tend to endure through time and unfolding historical and cultural conditions, memory projects enable us to see how collective memory persists, transforms, and is open to disputation and appropriation.

Why Memorials? Why Only Recently?

We might first consider why memorials, as material sites of memory, have only in recent years attracted serious scholarly attention in communication studies. Three factors, minimally, contribute to the answer: (1) a cultural crisis of memory, (2) the historic centrality of speech in

the communication discipline, and (3) paradigm shifts within the discipline. Together they provide an understanding of the catalysts that brought about contemporary scholarly interest in memorials, collective memory, and identity, particularly within the discipline of communication.

A Crisis of Memory

In 1989, the French historian Pierre Nora made this observation about a transformation taking place in the texture of everyday life. He wrote,

An increasingly rapid slippage of the present into a historical past that is gone for good, a general perception that anything and everything may disappear—these indicate *a rupture of equilibrium* [italics added]. . . . We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left. (p. 7)

In this passage, Nora addresses what others have called the “fragmentation of contemporary culture” (see McGee, 1990), a general condition of life—called by some the postmodern condition—that is due to the advance of industrialization and modernization. Fragmentation is characterized by increasing compartmentalization of, and disconnection among, the “parts” of our lives; it reflects our loss of integration with the community itself, as we race about from work to school to family to other obligations, and our ever-increasing reliance on the mass and electronic media for connections to others. In the past, everyday life was characterized by the coherent integration of the entirety of our (ancestors’) lives within the rhythms of a community. And communities were “the real environments of memory” (Nora, 1989, p. 7), in which people shared stories and constructed the shared meanings of past events together.³ With the loss of these “real environments,” Nora argues, we hunger for “sites of memory.” In his view, community is local and situated in place rather than something more expansive. In fact, he distinguishes between history, as a narrative that belongs to no one in particular but to all of us in general, and memory, as communal narratives whose ownership is distinctly local and situated.

We can, however, take a broader view of this process of shared narrative construction and examine how we are constituted as members of a larger, imagined community based on the composite of stories that we inherit and retell about our past and that tell us who we are as a people. The unifying thread of these stories constitutes the “master narrative,” or the “grand metanarrative.” One frequent referent for this phrase is the entirety of Western thought and progress that gets labeled “modernity,” and it includes the centuries-long pursuit of human emancipation, the rise of individual liberties and self-governance, the advance of public education, the embrace of scientific knowledge and technology with its promise of security and plenty, and the belief in the preeminent human capacity for rational control of our individual and collective fates (see Harvey, 1989; Lyotard, 1984). Clearly, this is a hopeful and celebratory story, and equally

clearly, the dominant “story of America,” with its own master narrative, resonates comfortably with and within the grand narrative of modernity’s promise.

But what does this have to do with memorials? One important answer is this: When our sense of our collective identity becomes problematic, unstable, uncertain, and open to challenge, memorials—as sites of memory that claim to speak on behalf of the collectivity—become of crucial cultural importance. When our sense of who we are as members of a community is no longer clear or stable or certain, we engage the problem of collective memory itself.

The Vietnam era did much to destabilize and undermine Americans’ faith in their master narrative, from the discovery that their government had lied repeatedly to them as citizens, to the constitutional crisis precipitated by Watergate, to the massacre of Vietnamese at My Lai by American soldiers, to the racism that African American soldiers and those of other minority groups faced on return home (see Schudson, 1992; Turner, 1994). Moreover, the entirety of the Vietnam era was entangled with the challenges of the civil rights and women’s rights movements. In the wake of America’s Vietnam War and its destabilizing impact on the American ethos, it is no surprise that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, dedicated on Veterans Day in 1982, quickly became the focal point of considerable attention by communication scholars (Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci, 1991; Carlson & Hocking, 1988; Ehrenhaus, 1988a, 1988b, 1989; Foss, 1986; Haines, 1986). All these authors, in their own ways, engaged the problematic of what the war meant, of what (if anything) was served by the more than 58,000 American military deaths and the estimated 2.5 million Vietnamese dead, of what it meant to be an American.

America’s Vietnam experience was a significant catalyst for the emergence of memory studies and the examination of “public memory” and “the politics of the past,” as the historians John Bodnar (1992) and John Gillis (1994) remark in the introductions to their volumes. However, Vietnam is hardly the only experience or event to contribute to the rise of critical memory studies. There is much in our shared national story to call into question the meaning of national identity and the promise of the American master narrative. For example, against the claims of America as a beacon for decency and human rights stand the slaughter and subjugation of Native Americans and the torture and ritual humiliation of Iraqis in Abu Ghraib Prison. Against the promise of science and technology for human betterment stands the fact that only the United States has used nuclear weapons against human beings (see Linenthal, 1995; Linenthal & Englehardt, 1996; Prosis, 1998). Against the claims of human equality that are the foundation of Jeffersonian democracy stands the indisputable fact of American racial slavery and white supremacy, and the widespread resistance to seeing that as a part of the nation’s story rather than a violation of it (see Huggins, 1991).

In sum, when the texture of life is coherent and integrated and when the stories that bind us together as a

community “ring true” with narrative fidelity, then the pervasiveness of commemorative practices and sites assumes an unexceptional quality and blends into the texture of everyday life. However, in the face of cultural fragmentation and loss of faith in the narratives that ostensibly unify us, memorials become culturally significant sites to deliberate, argue, or affirm who we are as members of a community.

The Centrality of Speech in Communication Studies

A second explanation for the recent emergence of memorials as significant objects of study in the communication discipline is found in the discipline’s lineage and historic grounding in the study of speech—discursive rhetorical practice. This central focus on the spoken word, particularly in the context of public address, has long relegated nondiscursive symbolic practices to supporting roles at best. Consequently, memorials per se have been overlooked as important cultural and rhetorical artifacts, despite the fact that rhetorical scholars have a long history of valuing and studying significant commemorative discourse throughout Western history. The interest by communication scholars in commemorative discourse, as a form of ceremonial discourse more generally, can be traced to the discipline’s early reliance on a neo-Aristotelian model of criticism, with its organization of oratory into deliberative, forensic, and epideictic (see Wichelns, 1925)⁴ and, more recently, to the impact of genre criticism (see Campbell & Jamieson, 1978). Within the category of epideictic, the scope of critical interest in commemorative discourse spans the entire Western tradition, from Pericles’s Funeral Oration, delivered almost 2,500 years ago, to contemporary times. In the pantheon of American public address, Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address has long attracted scholarly analysis and adulation (see, e.g., Black, 1994). Interestingly, while the Gettysburg Address has received extensive scholarly attention, no investigation has been published in communication studies of how collective memory is constructed at the Gettysburg National Military Park through its museum, memorials, and monuments.⁵

Communication scholars who conduct close (verbal) textual analysis continue to make important intellectual contributions. The past quarter of a century clearly reveals that communication scholars are now far more open to investigating a wide variety of textual artifacts. In 1984, the study of memorials gained legitimacy when Hattenhauer argued, “Architecture not only communicates, but also communicates rhetorically” (p. 71) and then further suggested that perhaps “the clearest examples of what architectural signifiers connote is exemplified in ceremonial and monumental architecture” (p. 72). In 1994, Brummett offered a valuable distinction between “traditional” rhetorical texts as primarily verbal and expository and the texts of “popular culture” as primarily nonverbal and narrative or metonymic, noting the increasing importance of the latter category. A cursory examination of publications in recent issues of communication journals will bear out the fact that

traditional verbal texts now share scholars’ attention with texts such as architecture, films, photographs, and museums.

Paradigm Shifts

The third factor I wish to note concerns paradigm shifts in communication studies during the 1970s and 1980s. These shifts were influential for those who studied rhetorical texts as well as for those who studied communicative interaction practices and processes. It would be misleading to suggest that only rhetorical/communication critics can be interested in memorials as objects of study. The communication discipline comprises scholars drawn to various kinds of intellectual questions and objects of study and educated in a variety of modes of inquiry. As paradigms of inquiry shift, so too do the questions scholars ask and the phenomena that engage their attention.

One paradigm shift occurred with the “cultural” or “interpretive” turn in the study of human communicative interaction. Prominent in this alternative to traditional empirical social scientific inquiry was the “ethnography of communication,” an approach that theorized communication first and foremost as performed cultural practice (see Carbaugh, 1991; Philipsen, 1975, 1989). Ethnographic study seeks to describe how a culture’s communication practices enable people to construct shared meaning and conduct their lives meaningfully within a community with others. Certainly, memorials are amenable to ethnographic study, as they are both rhetorical products of the community and, frequently, sites of gathering for negotiating meanings of the community’s past. A noteworthy study of this negotiation process centered on a memorial site is Trujillo’s (1993) critical ethnography conducted on the 25th anniversary of the events at Dealey Plaza, the site of John F. Kennedy’s assassination. However, the primary focus in the “ethnography of communication” tends to center on the ritual quality of everyday communication practices rather than on more formalized public ritual practices (e.g., giving commemoration speeches) or public sites of commemoration (e.g., memorials). Consequently, memorials tend to take a supportive role in that particular ethnographic tradition.⁶ For example, in his study of the speech practices through which Vietnam veterans authenticated themselves to other veterans, Braithwaite (1997) examined how Vietnam veterans invoked the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a valued resource for claiming their own experiential legitimacy. The Memorial played a secondary role in this study, but this is not to suggest that interpretive communication research, more generally, cannot make the study of memorials its central focus. Operating from a critical-interpretive approach, Ehrenhaus (1988a, 1988b) has examined the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as both text and context, investigating the various ways in which people craft the meaning of that site as they interact with the Memorial, with the written and visual artifacts left for public consumption, and with the others present at those moments of encounter.

Another paradigm shift was the “ideological” turn in criticism (see McKerrow, 1989; Wander, 1983, 1984b). This turn arose in response to the technically oriented political disengagement of much communication criticism during the political and cultural foment of America in the 1960s and 1970s (which I have addressed earlier). Particularly in view of an American foreign policy that was increasingly viewed as morally suspect, the central questions posed by the ideological turn were these: What are the responsibilities of the critic? Is the critic’s primary task to understand and explain how a particular discourse is constructed to achieve its desired ends? Or is the critic’s primary task to render a judgment about the moral grounds on which a text advances its claims? Should the critic subject to critical scrutiny the worldview that supports the text’s arguments?⁷ The impetus for the ideological turn was based on three related positions: first, the recognition that power and privilege are always present in communication practices and texts and that power and privilege have material consequences in the world that affect real human beings; second, that communication scholars tend to study texts in ways that ignore issues of power and privilege—that is, how a text privileges a certain voice, or ideological position, and silences or distorts or undermines other voices or positions; and third, that criticism is a mode of public engagement through rhetoric and that scholars of communication have a moral obligation to be a part of the culture’s debates through their criticism instead of residing safely apart from those debates and studying rhetorical texts with sophisticated, technical dispassion.⁸

Meanings of “Memory”

Central to the decision to study a memorial or to ask questions about memorializing is one’s choice about how to think about “memory.” The concept of “memory” has a long tradition in communication studies, originating in classical rhetorical theory with the five Roman canons of rhetoric—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. In his *Sourcebook on Rhetoric*, James Jasinski (2001) notes Corbett’s (1971) observation that of all the classical canons, rhetorical scholars have paid the least attention to memory (p. 355). The reason is not difficult to discern. Since antiquity, memory has been associated with memorizing speeches, and this locates (and hides) memory within the individual, apart from the more accessible and—for communication scholars—more interesting substantive, stylistic, and performative aspects of public discourse. This general assumption about memory as internal, individual, and hidden continues to be prominent today and resonates with contemporary cognitive psychology’s view of the individual as an information processor, retrieving stored information from memory. In fact, Bartlett’s (1932) classic psychological work on individual memory is often cited as a starting point for theorizing

“collective” memory (see Middleton & Edwards, 1990; Wertsch, 2002, chap. 3). In this view, even if collective memory is constructed in interaction with others, the basic resources for that social product must come from the private memory of each individual; moreover, that interactively constructed memory then returns to, and helps shape, the individual’s memory. Jasinski (2001) further notes a renewed interest in memory through two trends in communication studies. Both require rethinking this classic view of memory as essentially individual. The first trend is grounded in the now widely held assumption that reality is socially constructed through communication (see Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Mead, 1934). Building on this assumption, memory is conceptualized as a publicly accessible and socially constructed phenomenon; individual memory ceases to be the focus. Here, we find the basis for examining the relationship between memory as communally shared and memory as practices of commemoration, including the creation and use of memorials. The work of the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1992) prior to and during World War II is foundational to theorizing memory as socially and rhetorically constructed. Halbwachs proposed that we think about memory as a collective resource and that remembrance can be evoked by material objects—such as memorials—as well as by narrative recounting of events within the group. Moreover, the substance of collective memory is always selective, tied to groups’ experiences and life worlds. As a result, there can be a diversity of “collective memories” about the “same” event or person. As groups’ collective memories differ, so too do the meanings and significance of what is remembered. Ultimately, the choices and courses of action that we perceive available to us, and the actions that we ultimately undertake, depend on how we remember what we remember.

From this perspective, and consistent with the “cultural turn” in communication studies, a memorial could be studied by the ways in which that material object provokes, and evokes, a particular range of memories that are shared and negotiated by members of a community and that construct a collective identity. Or, more resonant with the training of text-based critics, one could read the signifiers that constitute a memorial as a coherent text for the meanings that it invites and encourages us to find; certainly, the text-context relationship would be crucial to enrich the critic’s insights, since the memorial’s meanings are shaped, in part, by the historical and cultural context in which the critic engages it. For this reason, and consistent with Halbwachs’s belief that there can be multiple collective memories of the same memorial, critical analysis of a memorial might help us understand how meanings of the “same” past differ among groups or transform across a community’s life. Meanings of the past are always contingent on the needs of the present (see Schwartz, 1982).

To explain the second trend, Jasinski (2001) draws on Cox (1990), who characterizes memory as a resource for disrupting prevailing relations of power in a society by bringing to public awareness evidence and an understanding of the past that has been hidden, silenced, or suppressed. In this view of memory, we encounter the ideological turn. More than just a social construction, memory is conceived here as a resource of invention and social critique—that is, a resource for thinking about the world, for arguing, and for revealing how powerful interests benefit by the hegemonic dominance of privileged viewpoints. Here, we find the theoretical move that underlies critical memory studies—scholarship that analyzes and “unpacks” the manner in which memory is rhetorically constructed to advance particular ideologically grounded viewpoints and agendas at the expense of other viewpoints and groups; that reveals how dominant constructions of memory “naturalize” present conditions through the selective process of remembering and forgetting; and that demonstrates how “forgetting” has been managed through silencing, absence, and suppression. Here, memory pertains to a reclamation process of recovering what has been lost or suppressed, to challenge the comfortable and comforting (for some) prevailing notions of “history”—how the world “is” and how the world “must” operate. In the arena of Holocaust studies, Irwin-Zarecka (1994) refers to the *possibility* of memory, which results from this reclamation work. Only when memory is recovered and made possible can a society deliberate about its obligations and responsibilities to (and not for) that past; this is the *necessity* of memory.

Operating from the agenda of this second trend, the study of memorials is motivated by a series of related questions about the *politics of memory*. First, implied by the phrase is the notion that memory is not a repository in which objective, factual, and stable content is stored away and from which “truth” can be retrieved; nor is it a location in which stored memories can fade if they are not properly tended. Rather, the “politics of memory” assumes that memory is constituted through our use of symbols and is manifested in *this* moment as we rhetorically construct memory through our communication practices. This assumption in no way requires us to abandon belief in “the past” or in “material fact” (i.e., that “things happened” or that “people committed particular acts,” as Holocaust deniers have attempted to claim). Rather, the politics of memory leads us to appreciate the contingent and positional nature of making meaning—that the significance or consequentiality of particular material events as well as their impact on human beings depend on *how* we value those events and those people. And this leads us back to memorials.

Second, because memory (and the meanings of memorials) is constructed through our communication practices, it is open to disputation by others who seek to frame the past differently in order to draw different lessons or guidance

from it. Taken together, the phrase *the politics of memory* leads us to conceive of memory as a *fluid* discursive field (i.e., an arena of public discourse) of contested meanings, a site of struggle that reveals diverse and competing interests in society.⁹ Viewed in this manner, we can begin to understand how the politics of memory, and thus memorials as material manifestations of memory, bears directly on our collective identity—that is, how we think about who we are as a people. Marita Sturken (1997) writes about the connection between memory and identity in *Tangled Memories*,

Memory forms the fabric of human life . . . [it] establishes life’s continuity; it gives meaning to the present, as each moment is constituted by the past. As the means by which we remember who we are, memory provides the very core of identity. (p. 1)

A compelling example of Sturken’s observation is evidenced in Savage’s (1997) study of the extensive program of monument construction after the Civil War. One of the projects that he focuses on is the Freedmen’s Memorial—a memorial to Lincoln funded entirely by contributions from free African Americans and completed in 1876, a year that also marks the end of the Reconstruction. Consider the possibilities for the design of such a memorial at a moment when the possibilities for redefining race relations to create an interracial society were prominent in the national conversation. As Savage writes, the plan for this memorial “was in itself a test of emancipation’s strength” (p. 89), and the project was “an enactment of the cultural change that the nation had to bring about” (p. 90). It is noteworthy that the entire project was under the control of the Western Sanitary Commission, a white-run agency providing war relief. The final result of the project was a memorial in which a freed African American slave is kneeling in gratitude at the feet of a standing Lincoln, whose hand is outstretched over the head of the supplicant. In this representation, we find the unequal master-slave relationship reproduced in the liberation of the black slave from bondage by the noble white man. That unequal and inequitable relation of power would remain in place for nearly another 100 years.

The questions that many communication scholars pose about memorials and memory reflect the assumption that memory (and thus collective identity) is not so much a stable condition as it is a dynamic and unstable site (i.e., a fluid field of shifting meanings) where competing and contesting points of view vie to be heard and to prevail. Consider questions such as the following (perhaps as they might have focused Savage’s work on the Freedmen’s Memorial): What merits remembrance? How ought we to remember what merits remembrance? What voices or “positions” are (or should be) invited into these cultural conversations? Who is authorized to extend these invitations? How does this memorial advance a particular

viewpoint of how the past should be remembered? Whose interests are represented by this viewpoint? What are (or have been) the consequences of this privileged viewpoint? What voices are suppressed or denied full legitimacy? What points of view ultimately prevail? And what are the implications of certain voices prevailing?

Haines's (1986) essay about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is among the first studies of a memorial in the communication discipline and one centered expressly on the politics of memory. Haines draws on public addresses, news reports, and the poetry of Vietnam veterans to articulate the political struggle to control the Memorial's meanings, to examine "the mediated struggle now generating the meaning and memory of the Vietnam War" (p. 1). Like Foss (1986), who is drawn to the architectural "ambiguity" of the Memorial's physical design, Haines (1986) argues that this ambiguity permits administrative voices (of the Reagan administration) to appropriate the Memorial in their mediated, revisionist construction of the war's meaning and purpose. This appropriation, he argues, denies Vietnam veterans control over the Memorial's meanings as a place for therapeutic healing and creates for some a sense of personal despair so profound that some veterans see the Memorial as a potential site for suicide. His conclusion is particularly apt in view of contemporary American circumstances:

Maya Lin's Memorial design transforms Vietnam's grim statistics into an abstract image of sacrifice, generating rituals of remembrance and self-recognition within the context of Vietnam memory. . . . The administrative attempt at co-opting the Memorial for political purposes is clear, and is linked to the power strategies of future wars. . . . The Memorial's profound meaning is not so much in how the dead are remembered . . . but in how that remembrance is used by power to explain—to justify—future sacrifices in future Vietnams. (p. 17)

Memory Projects in Communication Studies

I end this chapter with a refrain of Nora's (1989) observation: "We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left" (p. 7). In one sense, this is an odd comment, immersed as we are by material signs of memory, reminders that remembering the past matters. In another sense, Nora's observation is poignantly apt. In many cases, the public dialogue, argument, and anticipation that precede a memorial site's dedication often exceed the actual importance that the memorial site comes to acquire for the community; once the project is completed, it fades away from the public eye and becomes a familiar part of the landscape.

Carole Blair and Neil Michel (2007) observe that we are immersed in a contemporary "culture of public commemoration that began with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial" (p. 596) and that persists to this day; this is the "crisis of memory" cited earlier as a reason for the rise of the study of memorials and memory. The study of this crisis, manifested as a cultural preoccupation with public remembrance, has

been the focus of Blair's work since her original project on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as postmodern architecture (see Blair et al., 1991). Sites of memory that Blair and Michel have studied include the Civil Rights Memorial (2000), the Astronauts Memorial (1998), and the AIDS Memorial Quilt (2007), as well as the Witches Trial Memorial in Massachusetts and commemorative efforts at Kent State University (Blair, 1999). Their essay on the AIDS Memorial Quilt is one of seven essays in a recent special issue of *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* (Winter, 2007) devoted to examining the rhetorical implications of the AIDS Memorial Quilt; among the questions raised and addressed are whether the Quilt should be viewed as a memorial or an archive (DeLuca, Harold, & Rufo, 2007) and its impact on negotiating the public's relationship with memory of the epidemic and homosexuality (Rand, 2007). And in his introductory essay in that collection, Morris (2007) notes the significance of Sturken's (1997) earlier cultural analysis of the entanglements of Vietnam memory with the AIDS crisis, in which she examined the Quilt as a site of cultural witnessing, of bearing witness to trauma.

Zelizer's (1998) *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye* is a significant volume that concerns the global circulation of Holocaust photographs and its implications for witnessing. For a site of memory anchored in place, arguably the most important national memorial site for witnessing is the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. In one study at that site, Crownshaw (2007) examines the capacity of photographic evidence to evoke a kind of trauma in contemporary audiences that bears upon the transmission of memory. In another, Hasian (2004) examines the museum's rhetorical dimensions and finds compelling evidence that the museum frames the Holocaust as an American affair. Using the film *Saving Private Ryan* as text, Ehrenhaus (2001) argues that Holocaust memory is embedded in the film's narrative as the underlying explanation for the American war effort. Biesecker (2002) draws on that film, as well as Brokaw's (1998) homage, *The Greatest Generation*, and analyses of the World War II Memorial and the Women in Military Service for America Memorial, to construct a text that together offers clear civic instruction to Americans on the celebration of their national identity. Implied in this civic lesson is the problematic that Owen (2002) identifies in her study of post-Vietnam films; the thematic development across these films articulates a falling away from the nation's foundational principles, issues a jeremiadic call back to those principles, and results in the reaffirmation of a unified national identity in (once again) *Saving Private Ryan*.

But the problematic of memory is not limited to bygone decades. Indeed, the challenges of collective memory are substantial in the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001, and in the wake of American

responses to those attacks. Fried (2006) has studied the Smithsonian Institution's "September 11" exhibit and finds that the exhibit positions visitors as witnesses to trauma and avoids the "larger geopolitical contexts" that would problematize the meaning of the day's events; she concludes that this curatorial choice "impoverishes public knowledge and collective memory" (p. 387). Cohen and Willis (2004) direct their attention to National Public Radio's "Sonic Memorial" project, which uses "digital multimedia convergence to create a national aural memorial" of the 9/11 attacks at the World Trade Center. Despite the fact that the Sonic Memorial "bridge[s] radio and new media environments through the creation of a lasting memorial website" (p. 591), the politics of memory is a prominent concern for these authors, who conclude with observations about the privileging and silence of various voices. And in a study of the commemoration of the American military dead in Iraq and Afghanistan, Grider (2007) examines how the "information architecture of the internet" has fostered the development of online memorial Web sites that decontextualize "human loss at the expense of a coherent representation of a military" (p. 265) or political rationale for these deaths.

In conclusion, once we move beyond the idea of a memorial as a stable physical structure located in time and space, we acquire a much more expansive notion of memorials as memorial projects—as organized rhetorical efforts to shape communal understanding of some aspect of our shared experience and past, to manage and struggle over its meanings, and to stake out a claim on how we should (or should not) stand in relationship to that past. Particularly in view of the continuing challenges to the American nation and the meaning of our collective identity, we have every reason to expect that memorials and memory studies will continue to be an important focus of attention in communication studies.

Notes

1. For purposes of this chapter, I will use the phrase *collective memory* to designate an understanding of the past that is rhetorically constituted by and within a community through its various discourse practices. *Collective memory* is by no means a universally accepted or understood term, nor is there universal agreement about its formation, dynamics, or character. For some, the term suggests a stable, consensual understanding about past events, their meanings, and their implications for action (e.g., see Halbwachs, 1992); for others, "collective" memory is defined as a contested zone, a fluid, shifting field of meanings and ideological struggle (see Sturken, 1997).

2. An EBSCOhost search of the Communication and Mass Media Complete database identifies Hattenhauer's (1984) essay "The Rhetoric of Architecture: A Semiotic Approach" as the first publication in the communication discipline expressly concerned with memorials as rhetorical texts.

3. As the culture analyst Edward T. Hall explains, the richness of "slow" verbal messages that are possible in stable, situated communities has been supplanted by the "fast" messages—and message fragments—of contemporary life, which are made possible through technological innovations for mass communication and for instantaneous personal communication. (See Hall's *The Dance of Life*, 1983.)

4. Despite the fact that the original essay is neither available through EBSCOhost or JSTOR, it has been reprinted in a number of collections. See Burghardt's (2005) or Drummond's (1962) collection of essays, for example.

5. This finding is based on a search of the Communication and Mass Media Complete database in EBSCOhost. Several dissertations have been written in the discipline of history about Gettysburg and popular memory. Also, see Weeks (1998).

6. The ethnography of communication approach is not "critical" in the sense that it avoids offering a political interpretation or critique of the power relations that are a part of social and communicative relationships. Critical ethnography, in contrast, pursues the study of the everyday informed by issues of power and privilege.

7. Readers may track one key debate on these questions in Karlyn Campbell's rebuttal of Forbes Hill's (1972) essay on Nixon's "Vietnamization" speech in her *Critiques of Contemporary Rhetoric* (1972). Also, see Wander (1983, 1984a, 1984b).

8. I do not wish to suggest that as citizens, communication scholars were unaffected by or disengaged from the politics of the time. Rather, political engagement was generally viewed as outside the appropriate domain of professional, academic scholarship.

9. This notion of disputation has led scholars to use various terminology beyond *collective memory*, which tends to suggest a stable set of meanings shared by a group. Bodnar (1992) uses the term *public memory*, which he characterizes as "the intersection of official and vernacular cultural expressions" (p. 13). "Public memory is a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future" (p. 15). Sturken (1997), in contrast, employs *cultural memory* as her central term "to define memory that is shared outside the avenues of formal historical discourse yet is entangled with cultural products and imbued with cultural meaning" (p. 3). This term has enabled her "to examine how . . . popular culture has produced memories of the Vietnam War and how these film and television images have moved between cultural memory and history" (p. 3).

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PART V

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF MESSAGES

THE INTERPLAY OF VERBAL AND NONVERBAL CODES

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Imagine listening to a computer-generated voice that pronounces each word perfectly but without any inflection or variety. Such a voice would be devoid of the rich sounds of nonverbal communication, which include pitch, volume, accent, and all the other qualities that characterize voices. Now, think about an e-mail exchange. Sometimes, the words people type are all that is needed. Other times, the words themselves are not enough, so people embellish them by adding bold typeface, italics, or extra punctuation marks such as ellipses or exclamation points. People also insert emoticons, which are symbols such as smiling or frowning faces, to add a nonverbal dimension to e-mail.

Conversely, it is difficult for humans to imagine a world that is completely nonverbal. When people visit foreign countries where they do not speak the language, they may try to use nonverbal communication such as pointing and facial expressions to get their message across, but without a common language to speak, interaction can be frustrating and counterproductive. As another example, think of the joy parents experience when their baby first starts to speak. Although children could previously communicate with their parents nonverbally, language opens up a whole new avenue of communication, allowing for more precise and intricate exchanges of information.

As these examples illustrate, verbal and nonverbal forms of communication are both essential parts of human interaction.

Although both forms of communication can be used alone, they are more frequently used together. In this chapter, the interplay between nonverbal and verbal communication is explored. First, a brief history of the emergence of nonverbal communication as an area of research is reviewed. Next, nonverbal and verbal forms of communication are conceptualized and distinguished from one another, followed by a discussion of what constitutes verbal and nonverbal codes. This chapter ends with a brief section on future directions for research.

History and Foundations

Various forms of nonverbal communication have been studied throughout the ages. The ancient Greeks and Romans studied how to use nonverbal behaviors to be more persuasive. During the 18th century, many Europeans were educated in the art of elocution—how to use gestures, posture, dress, and proper diction to make speeches more dramatic and emotional. The first social scientific perspectives on nonverbal communication emerged in the 19th century. Most notably, in his book *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals*, Charles Darwin (1872/1904) examined how nonverbal behaviors communicate emotion in socially adaptive ways. In the

latter half of the 20th century, psychologists and communication researchers began focusing more attention on nonverbal aspects of the communication process.

Ekman and Friesen's Early Contributions

Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen were among the first to examine how nonverbal and verbal codes work together. They described five relationships between nonverbal and verbal communication: repetition, substitution, complementation, contradiction, and emphasis (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). Repetition occurs when the verbal and nonverbal message communicates the same thing. Saying "No" while shaking one's head or "Stop!" while putting one's hand out are examples of this. Substitution occurs when nonverbal behavior takes the place of a word or words. A nod may be used rather than the word "Yes," or a high-five may say "Congratulations!"

Complementation takes place when the nonverbal and verbal messages add to one another, sometimes to create a clearer meaning. For example, smiling while looking into a spouse's eyes and saying "I love you" communicates an especially high level of warmth and affection. Contradiction is at work when the verbal and nonverbal messages are at odds with one another, such as saying "I'm not mad" while looking away and making a surly face or being sarcastic, which occurs when speakers use vocal tone to indicate that they mean the opposite of what they are saying. Finally, emphasis involves using nonverbal communication to underscore what is being said. Yelling while saying "Watch out!" emphasizes the urgency of a dangerous situation, just as a hand gesture might indicate that a point someone is making is especially important.

Ekman and Friesen's (1969) early work also examined the following five types of kinesic behavior that help describe how body movement functions within the total communication process: emblems, illustrators, affect displays, adaptors, and regulators. Emblems refer to a set of body movements that "have a direct verbal translation" (Ekman & Friesen, 1969, p. 63). They can stand in for words entirely and often do so when verbal communication is difficult or inappropriate (Ekman & Friesen, 1969; see also Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1996; Streek & Knapp, 1992). Therefore, they are often used strategically. Emblems have a common verbal meaning within a given culture or social group. For instance, in U.S. culture, there are emblems that mean "Good luck!" (crossing one's fingers), "Way to go!" (giving a thumbs up), and "Stop!" (putting one hand up with the palm facing away from the face). Emblems are typically so well understood within cultural or social groups that they "are virtually independent of linguistic context" (Bavelas & Chovil, 2006, p. 100). However, when used outside one's own cultural or social group, emblems are frequently misunderstood. Giving a thumbs up is translated as "Way to go!" or "Congratulations!" in the United States, but in many places around the world, including Iran, the thumbs up is a rude, offensive gesture.

Affect displays are body movements that transmit internal emotional states (Ekman & Friesen, 1969), such as clenching one's fists to display anger or smiling to exhibit happiness (see Andersen & Guerrero, 1998, for a review).

These body movements sometimes accompany speech and have the ability to replicate, say the opposite of, or qualify verbal communication (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). For example, a person might say, "I'm so angry with you," while displaying a furrowed eyebrow and showing his or her teeth (Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Connor, 1987), whereas another person might say, "I'm not jealous," while displaying a cold look. Some facial expressions of emotion need to be interpreted within the context of accompanying speech (Mead, as cited in Jones & LeBaron, 2002). Speech, however, is not a necessary component for the communication of affect (Bavelas & Chovil, 2006; Burgoon et al., 1996). People recognize stereotypic, universal facial displays of sadness, such as frowning and downcast eyes, in the absence of verbal communication (Bavelas & Chovil, 2006). When affect displays become easily recognized without speech, they may be classified as emblems because they are so easily interpretable (Ekman & Friesen, 1969).

Illustrators help describe, clarify, or emphasize something. Examples include drawing a declining line in the air when talking about a dropping number of car sales, pretending to kick a ball, drawing the shape of an A-line skirt in the air when describing it, pointing to a star in the sky while saying "That star," and using hand gestures to indicate the speed of a song when conducting a symphony (Andersen, 2008). Sometimes emblematic behaviors function as illustrators. For instance, a person might make a circle around her or his ear to indicate that someone is crazy while saying "psycho" (Ekman & Friesen, 1969, 1972). In this case, the emblematic behavior emphasizes and clarifies the meaning of the term *psycho*.

As the above examples suggest, illustrators are "movements which are directly tied to speech" (Ekman & Friesen, 1969, p. 68). Although illustrators sometimes repeat verbal communication (Burgoon et al., 1996; Ekman & Friesen, 1969), as much as 80% of gestures in some research on face-to-face interaction involve "nonredundant information" (see Bavelas & Chovil, 2006, for a review). In fact, gestures that fall under the illustrator category may complement, emphasize, and sometimes even disagree with the spoken word (Burgoon et al., 1996; Ekman & Friesen, 1969). Some illustrators, such as batons and ideographs (Ekman & Friesen, 1969), are highly related to linguistic context, as "their meanings depend on the 'talk thus-far' and are worked out in the talk that succeeds them" (Streek & Knapp, 1992, p. 13; see also Bavelas & Chovil, 2006). For example, a person must rely on linguistic cues to determine the meaning of a raised eyebrow, which could be used to emphasize a word, show one's surprise or confusion, or flirt with someone, among other possibilities (Bavelas & Chovil, 2006).

Adaptors, or actions of the body used to "satisfy self or bodily needs," have no special connection to speech (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). Most adaptors are directed toward the self, such as moistening one's dry lips with a tongue, scratching one's arm, biting one's nails, twisting the ring on one's finger, or chewing on a pen. Some adaptors are directed at other people, such as tucking a strand of hair behind a friend's ear or wiping the dirt off a child's face. Adaptors are often enacted without intention or conscious

awareness, although object adaptors may be used to intentionally communicate. Self-directed adaptors are used most frequently when people are alone or do not think that others are watching them (Ekman & Friesen, 1972).

The last set of kinesic behaviors, regulators, are body movements that are connected to verbal communication in a distinct way. Although they “carry no message content in themselves,” they “convey information necessary to the pacing of the conversation” (Ekman & Friesen, 1969, p. 82). For example, a person may nod his or her head to encourage another person to continue speaking. Other regulators, such as eye contact or lack thereof, raising of an eyebrow, and shifts in posture, may indicate to a speaker to stop talking altogether, to repeat a message, and/or to let another person speak. Ekman and Friesen (1969) note that adaptors and affect displays can perform regulative functions in a conversation.

Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson’s Early Contributions

At around the same time that Ekman and Friesen’s classic work was published, Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson’s (1967) groundbreaking book, *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, brought nonverbal messages to the forefront of the communication field. Prior to the 1960s, communication scholars tended to examine verbal messages related to persuasion, self-disclosure, and power without considering nonverbal messages. Two propositions from Watzlawick and colleagues’ (1997) book changed this. Specifically, the authors advanced the famous propositions that one cannot not communicate and that every message has a content and relational level. According to the “one cannot not communicate” proposition, it is impossible for people to avoid communicating with others. Even when people do not speak, nonverbal behaviors such as posture, gestures, physical appearance, and facial expressions communicate messages.

In terms of the distinction between the content and relational level of messages, the content level refers to literal meaning, whereas the relational level refers to how a message is interpreted within a given context. On a relational level, a message is interpreted on the basis of the situation, the relationship people share, and the nonverbal behaviors people display. For example, imagine that Maria and Jake are sitting on opposite ends of a couch watching a movie. Maria says, “I’m cold.” Her statement has a literal meaning, but it also has several potential relational meanings. If Jake interprets Maria to mean “Do something so I’m not so cold,” he might rearrange the blanket on his lap so that it covers both of them or he might get up and switch the heat on. Perhaps Maria and Jake have been arguing and Maria’s comment means that she is feeling cold toward him. Or perhaps saying “I’m cold” is a signal that she wants Jake to put his arm around her so that they can make up. The way Jake determines the relational meaning behind Maria’s words would partially depend on her nonverbal communication. Did she smile

and sound wistful when she said “I’m cold,” or did she look away from Jake and sound tense? Understanding that every message has a content and relational level helps highlight how verbal and nonverbal communication work in concert to create meaning.

Distinguishing Nonverbal and Verbal Communication

To fully understand the interplay of nonverbal and verbal communication, it is essential to conceptualize these terms and distinguish them from one another, especially since there is controversy in the scholarly community regarding where the line between verbal and nonverbal falls. For early nonverbal scholars, the issue was fairly simple: Words constituted verbal communication, and everything other than words constituted nonverbal communication (Burgoon & Saine, 1978; Eisenberg & Smith, 1971; Knapp, 1978; Mehrabian, 1972). Since then, however, researchers have argued that this definition is too broad and that it does not help people understand the qualities that distinguish verbal and nonverbal communication. For instance, if nonverbal communication is everything but words, does it include body movements such as involuntary blinking, which no one pays attention to? Most contemporary researchers would say “No” and argue that involuntary displays of behavior should not be studied as communication (e.g., Bavelas, 1990; Burgoon et al., 1996; Guerrero, Hecht, & DeVito, 2008). What about sign language or Braille? In these cases, the channel is nonverbal (gestures or touch), but the message is made up of words.

Analogic Versus Digital Processing

A more contemporary conceptualization of the distinction between nonverbal and verbal communication rests on whether the message is processed digitally or analogically (Andersen, 2008; Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Chua, 1988). When a message is processed analogically, people consider the whole message rather than dissecting it into smaller parts. In contrast, when a message is processed digitally, people make sense of it by looking at all the parts that make up the whole. Think about how children learn the alphabet. Often, they learn to sing their ABCs before they learn to say them. To a 3-year-old, “LMNOP” is usually a sound, not five distinct letters. This is because they have learned the ABCs by singing, which is an analogic activity. When they learn to say (and later write) each letter of the alphabet, they will be processing the information digitally. Analogic information, such as songs, artwork, facial expressions, and body movement, is processed primarily in the right side of the brain. Digital information, such as numbers, letters, and distinct words, is processed primarily in the left side of the brain (Andersen, 2008).

Some scholars have argued that communication is only nonverbal if it is processed analogically (Andersen, 2008). According to this view, nonverbal communication is continuous and holistic and as such is processed as a gestalt. This means that people see the “big picture” when processing

nonverbal communication, just as young children see “LMNOP” as something bigger than each individual letter. Verbal communication, on the other hand, involves linguistic information that is processed digitally (Andersen, 2008). Verbal information consists of discrete units that are highly notational and logical, such as the individual letters of the alphabet or individual words in a sentence. (See Table 27.1 for the key characteristics distinguishing verbal and nonverbal communication.)

Iconic Versus Symbolic Communication

Most verbal communication is symbolic and culturally specific. When communication is symbolic, there is an arbitrary relationship between the word (or behavior) and what it means. For example, in English, the word *tree* came to refer to something that grows up from the ground and has a trunk and (usually) branches. However, people could have easily chosen another word to represent tree (e.g., maybe “huckily”). Indeed, in other cultures, there are many different words for “tree.” These words do not resemble or relate to the trunk with the branches growing out of it in any real way; the association is arbitrary. People who do not know English would not connect the word *tree* to the image of the trunk with branches.

In contrast, many forms of nonverbal communication are iconic or intrinsic. Iconic messages resemble what they stand for. Examples of iconic messages include using one’s hands to show how big, tall, thin, or short someone is; pretending to kick a ball or swing a bat; or pointing to show direction. Intrinsic behaviors are actions that show a person’s internal state or constitute behavior in and of themselves. Examples include smiling, crying, hitting, and kissing. These types of behaviors tend to be understood across cultures, although there may be differences in the cultural rules that govern them. As a case in point, kissing is universally understood as an affectionate action, but the rules for kissing vary by culture (e.g., kissing both sides of the face to greet someone is more appropriate in some parts of the world than others).

<i>Nonverbal Communication</i>	<i>Verbal Communication</i>
Analogic	Digital
Usually iconic or intrinsic	Usually symbolic
Multimodal and variable	Unimodal and constant
More spontaneous	More strategic
Occurs in the here and now	Can refer to things removed in time and space (displacement)
Nonreflexive	Reflexive

Table 27.1 Key Distinguishing Features of Nonverbal and Verbal Communication

Although it is tempting to classify words as symbolic and behaviors other than words as iconic or intrinsic, the distinction is not quite so simple. Onomatopoeia words, such as “buzz,” “flush,” and “tap,” are iconic and may be understood across cultures. Similarly, although many body movements and vocalizations are iconic or intrinsic, others are symbolic. For instance, emblems can be translated into words and have various symbolic meanings in different cultures. Crossing one’s middle finger and forefinger have different referents depending on one’s culture. In the United States, this gesture commonly means “good luck” if held up in front of one’s face and “I’m lying” if held behind one’s back. In other cultures, this gesture is a sexual symbol, a symbol of friendship, or an obscene gesture. Although gestures such as the U.S. “good luck” gesture often have iconic roots (“I’m with you” in the case of the good luck meaning; “We’re close” in the case of the friendship gesture; one person on top of another in the case of the sexual symbol), they evolve so that they become synonymous with a particular meaning, thus functioning as a symbol.

Overall then, the relationships between most verbal communication and their referents are arbitrary and culturally specific. In contrast, a considerable portion of nonverbal communication is iconic or intrinsic and therefore understood (at least sometimes) across cultures. There is a gray area between these two positions. This gray area is occupied by onomatopoeia words and emblems. Some scholars consider emblems to be a form of nonverbal communication, and other scholars consider them to be a form of verbal communication. Those endorsing emblems as nonverbal communication cite their iconic roots (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006), whereas those endorsing emblems as verbal communication cite their verbal translation and constancy (Andersen, 2008).

Multimodal Versus Unimodal

In face-to-face contexts, one key distinction between nonverbal and verbal communication is that the former is multimodal or multichanneled whereas the latter is unimodal or unichanneled (Andersen, 2008; Burgoon, Guerrero, & Floyd, in press). This means that people can send various nonverbal messages at the same time. A person can simultaneously smile while leaning forward and gesturing, but a person can only say one word at a time.

The multimodal nature of nonverbal communication separates it from verbal communication while also making it an especially complex and sometimes ambiguous form of communication. If a person engages in multiple nonverbal cues at the same time, which behavior should a receiver focus on most? A receiver may not even pick up on all the different nonverbal cues that are occurring. This is why people often process nonverbal communication as a gestalt—in other words, they create a global image of the person’s behavior in their mind rather than trying to interpret each behavior separately (Andersen, 2008). Obviously, however, there is considerable room for misinterpretation,

especially if the receiver ignores or downplays some potentially meaningful behaviors. Although verbal communication can also be misinterpreted (and often is), the unimodal nature of verbal messages leaves less room for ambiguity.

Spontaneity Versus Intentionality

The term *communication* itself is defined differently by various scholars. Some scholars believe that for communication—either verbal or nonverbal—to occur, a sender must direct a message to another person or persons (Motley, 1990, 1991). Other scholars believe that communication occurs whenever a receiver attaches meaning to another person’s words or behavior (Andersen, 1991). Still others contend that communication occurs under either of these conditions (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006). The most common conceptualization of nonverbal communication is in line with the latter perspective, with nonverbal communication defined as nonlinguistic behaviors (body movement, vocal tone, facial expressions, etc.) that are either sent with intent or interpreted as meaningful by a receiver. This definition is appropriate for nonverbal communication because many forms of nonverbal communication occur spontaneously (Andersen, 1991). This is especially true of intrinsic nonverbal behaviors, such as crying, smiling, sighing, or speaking in a nervous voice. Such behaviors are often spontaneous expressions of a person’s internal feelings. People tend to trust spontaneous nonverbal cues more than they trust words (Burgoon et al., 1996).

Verbal communication, in contrast, tends to be sent with intent. Sometimes, verbal communication is highly strategic; people purposely say things a certain way to try to reach a particular goal. Other times, verbal communication is intentional insofar as it is directed toward another person (Motley, 1990). Although people can botch up what they mean to say, they still have a choice as to whether to utter the words or not. Some nonverbal behaviors are harder to control. People have difficulty controlling tears in their eyes, fleeting facial expressions of emotion, and vocal anxiety because such behaviors are highly spontaneous.

Of course, some nonverbal communication is strategic. A person might fake a yawn as an excuse to leave a social gathering early or smile as a means of trying to manipulate someone or create a good impression. To further complicate matters, the line between spontaneity and strategy can be blurry. Take the case of emblems. Emblems such as the hitchhiker’s thumb or the “OK” gesture are used like words and are therefore strategic. But many facial emblems (see Ekman & Friesen, 1969), such as a sad or a happy face, can be spontaneous or strategic, depending on the situation. In general, however, verbal communication tends to be more strategic, whereas nonverbal communication tends to be more spontaneous.

Displacement and Reflexivity

While nonverbal communication is unique in terms of its iconicity, multimodal nature, and spontaneity, verbal

communication has the unique qualities of displacement and reflexivity (Burgoon et al., 1996). Displacement refers to the ability to refer to things that are removed in time and space. For example, people can talk about how they felt last week compared with this week or how they would like things to change in the future. Nonverbal communication, in contrast, occurs in the here and now. Displacement is also related to being able to talk about things that are absent or nonexistent through the use of the negative. A daughter can tell her mother how she does not feel (“My throat doesn’t hurt”) as well as how she feels (“but my nose is really stuffed up”). It is more difficult to indicate negative states with nonverbal communication. The daughter could point to her throat and shake her head, but this could be interpreted in multiple ways (i.e., as indicating that her throat feels bad rather than that it does not hurt). Thus, verbal communication has a much greater ability for displacement than nonverbal communication.

Similarly, verbal communication has the special quality of reflexivity (Burgoon et al., 1996), which means that language can reflect on itself. A son might tell his father, “I didn’t mean to sound so sassy,” and his dad might reply, “I didn’t mean to sound so harsh.” People also make statements such as “I wish I hadn’t said that,” “I’m not doing a good job telling you how I feel,” “I think you misunderstood what I was trying to say,” and so forth. Words allow people to refine and reconstruct the meanings of other words that were previously uttered in a way that nonverbal communication cannot.

Nonverbal and Verbal Codes

Thus far, nonverbal communication has been conceptualized as analogic behavior that is multimodal, is usually iconic or intrinsic, and tends to be more universal and spontaneous than verbal communication. Verbal communication, in contrast, has been conceptualized as digital, symbolic, unimodal, and culturally specific. Displacement and reflexivity are two unique characteristics of verbal communication. Next, this chapter examines the various codes that constitute both nonverbal and verbal communication (see Table 27.2). A “code is a set of signals” that is associated with a unique message channel (Burgoon et al., 1996, p. 18). A channel is the mode of transmission, such as the voice, the body, or the environment. Within most channels, some messages are communicated nonverbally, whereas others are communicated verbally.

Contact Codes

Within the area of nonverbal communication, proxemics and haptics are both contact-related codes. Proxemics refers to messages communicated through the channel of space (Smeltzer, Waltman, & Leonard, 2008). For example, a nonverbal scholar studying proxemics might be interested in the fact that romantic partners

	<i>Nonverbal Communication</i>	<i>Verbal Communication</i>
Contact codes	Personal space	“Keep out” signs
	Conversational distance	“Welcome” signs
	Territory	Signs posting rules regarding territory usage
	Hugs, pats, slaps	
Kinesic codes	Posture	American Sign Language
	Facial expressions	Lipreading
	Expressive gestures	
	Eye contact, gaze aversion	
Appearance codes	Hair, eye, and skin color	T-shirts with slogans
	Height and body shape	Writing on team jackets or uniforms
	Facial features (e.g., nose shape)	Name labels
	Makeup	
	Clothing and accessories	
Voice codes	Vocal qualities (pitch, volume, warmth, animation, etc.)	Spoken words
	Singing, shouting, whispering	
	Pauses and silence	
Environmental and artificial codes	Architectural features	Signs identifying rooms, buildings, or streets
	Furniture arrangement	Room or house numbers
	Pictures, flowers	Plaques or diplomas containing information
	Temperature, noise, lighting	
Time codes	Pacing, wait time, punctuality	Clocks, calendars
	Perceptions of time as loose or exact	Verbal phrases related to time
Olfactory codes	Perfume, deodorant	
	Natural body odor	

Table 27.2 Nonverbal and Verbal Codes

NOTE: The types of communication listed here are meant to provide examples of verbal and nonverbal communication rather than a comprehensive list of codes.

generally sit closer to one another than friends (Guerrero, 1997) or that employees sometimes position their belongings in a particular way to show their cubicle space or their “territory” on the lunchroom table (Smeltzer et al., 2008). Haptics, or tactile communication, refers to messages communicated through human touch, which may span from intimate touch, such as hugging and holding hands, to nonintimate and even

aggressive touch, such as punching and kicking (Guerrero et al., 2008).

There are also verbal cues related to space and touch. For example, people regulate space using devices such as welcome signs, keep-out signs, and bumper stickers with sayings such as “If you can read this you’re too close” (Andersen, 2008). Public territory and traffic are also

governed by signs that tell people when and for how long they can park, when they can turn left or right, and whether a beach or park is public or private. At the haptic level, Braille is an excellent example of a tactile language that is processed digitally rather than analogically (Andersen, 2008). Braille is a language system complete with all the letters of the alphabet and punctuation necessary to string letters together to make words and to string words together to make sentences.

Kinesic Codes

When most people think about nonverbal communication, they think about body language. The formal name for body language is kinesics. Nonverbally, kinesic codes involve actions of the body that communicate signals without using touch or physical contact with another person (Burgoon et al., 1996). For example, posture, eye behavior, facial expressions, body movements (such as pointing or scratching one's arm), and most gestures fall under the nonverbal code of kinesics (Burgoon et al., in press; Guerrero et al., 2008). These types of kinesic cues can vary in terms of degree and intensity. A person can use demure eye contact to flirt or steady eye contact to intimidate. Similarly, a person's posture can vary from extremely relaxed to extremely tense.

Verbal kinesic cues, in contrast, tend to be more constant. In other words, there is much less variability in how people express verbal cues communicated through the kinesic channel. American Sign Language is a good example of a system of verbal communication that involves body movement. Like Braille, sign language includes behaviors that stand for words as well as letters that are strung together in logical ways that allow people to make sense of them. Similarly, lip reading is a form of verbal communication that involves being able to decode kinesic behaviors into words (Andersen, 2008).

While certain gestures, such as using one's hands to show how tall or short someone is, fall neatly into the category of nonverbal communication, others do not. Andersen (2008) argued that emblems such as the "good luck" gesture and "the finger" are actually forms of verbal communication because they are processed digitally like language and tend to be constant rather than variable. However, other scholars include emblems as a form of nonverbal communication (e.g., Burgoon et al., 1996; Knapp & Hall, 2006). Guerrero and Floyd (2006) considered emblems to be a form of nonverbal communication because such gestures nearly always share a resemblance to the words or ideas they communicate. Thus, their origins are iconic even though they become symbolic once they are universally understood within a given culture or social group. Moreover, gestural and vocal emblems (e.g., putting one's index finger over one's mouth and saying "shhh" to signal that someone should be quiet) tend to be used strategically, whereas facial emblems (e.g., smiling or rolling one's eyes) tend to be much more spontaneous.

Physical Appearance Codes

Fair or not, the way people look creates impressions. For instance, considerable research has demonstrated that there is often a halo effect for good-looking people. People assume that a person who is beautiful on the outside also has positive internal traits, such as being more sociable, honest, and socially skilled (Dion, 1986). There are numerous nonverbal cues related to physical appearance. Some of these cues involve signals sent from the way a person's body looks, such as hair color, skin color, size of body, and facial features. Other cues involve what a person wears, including clothing and accessories such as jewelry, ties, and scarves.

Although most physical appearances are nonverbal, some are verbal. People often wear T-shirts or jackets with slogans on them. In fact, some schools even have rules about what can and cannot be verbally represented on student clothing. Verbal cues on clothing can also show group membership. A baseball or dance team jacket, for example, might be emblazoned with both the individual's and the group's name.

Voice Codes

Many people think of the voice as part of the verbal code rather than the nonverbal code. Yet the way people say words communicates important messages. Within the area of nonverbal communication, the terms *vocalics* and *paralanguage* are used to describe the part of spoken language that is nonverbal. Vocalics includes all the signals other than the words themselves that are sent through a person's voice. These include voice qualities such as pitch, accent, speaking rate (i.e., how fast or slow someone speaks), volume, and level of expressiveness, among numerous qualities of the voice (Burgoon et al., in press). Vocalics also includes how people say words—are they singing, shouting, or whispering? Pauses and silence are also part of the vocalic code. For example, the amount of time it takes for someone to respond to another person's question is a silence that can send a message, as are the silences that convey a cozy level of comfort between two people or an angry grudge.

Verbally, spoken words are part of the voice code. The ability to speak and to construct sentences in ways that make sense to others who speak the same language are essential skills for being able to communicate verbally. Thus, the ability to speak is not enough, nor is the ability to say words. Famous case studies of children who were raised in isolation or with animals have shown that there is a developmental window for learning how to encode language (e.g., Rymer, 1994). Specifically, children need to be exposed to language before puberty if they hope to be able to acquire the language skills necessary to communicate. Although children who were isolated during their childhood often learn hundreds or thousands of words, they do not understand grammar or syntax, and they, therefore, cannot put discrete words together in ways that communicate broader messages.

Environmental and Artifactual Codes

Messages are also communicated via the environment and the objects within that environment. On the nonverbal side, there are myriad environmental cues, such as building design, color, furniture arrangement, noise, temperature, and artifacts (e.g., paintings, flowers). These types of environmental cues often frame communication by encouraging or discouraging social interaction (Guerrero et al., 2008). The objects people carry with them, such as purses, backpacks, briefcases, and cell phones, can also influence communication.

On the verbal side, signs that identify the names of buildings on college campuses, the office of the CEO, or the name of a street are all examples of verbal environmental cues. Room and house numbers can also be considered a form of verbal communication because numbers are processed digitally, as are letters and words. Some artifacts within environments also contain verbal communication. For example, some schools have a copy of the constitution posted on the wall. In museums and zoos, there are often placards that explain an exhibit or give facts about an animal. Personal artifacts, such as diplomas or awards hanging in one's office, contain verbal information that can enhance a person's credibility and status.

Time Codes

Researchers studying nonverbal communication use the term *chronemics* to refer to the ways people “use and perceive time” (Guerrero et al., 2008, p. 10). The way people use time is most closely related to communication. For example, being early or late communicates messages to others, as does the amount of time people are willing to wait for someone and the extent to which a person focuses on one versus multiple tasks at a time. Some people are oriented more toward the present, whereas others are focused on the future (Gonzales & Zimbardo, 2008). In the workplace, people are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs when they have a future time focus and less likely to be satisfied with their jobs when they feel pressured to work at a fast pace (Ballard, 2008). Nonverbal cues related to a fast-paced environment can contribute to feelings of pressure at work.

Time is also communicated through digital, verbal channels. The clock itself constitutes a highly digital mode of communication. In the United States, people frequently wear watches. Clocks are often on walls, computers, cell phones, and palm pilots. Verbally, people talk about “not having enough time to chat” or “having to go so I won't be late.” Thus, talk about time often serves to help people regulate their communication with others. As mentioned earlier, verbal communication is also unique in that people can refer to things in the present, past, and future by using language. Nonverbal communication only occurs in the present.

Interestingly, people from different cultures may vary in the extent to which they communicate about time using analogic versus digital cues. In some cultures, people view time precisely; in other cultures, people view time as loose and approximate (Hall, 1984). In the United States, people see time as fixed. When asked what time it is, people give the exact (or close to the exact) time. They also keep tight schedules and closely follow rules that regulate time. For individuals in this type of culture, digital forms of chronemic communication, such as watches and calendars, are especially important. In other cultures, such as Brazil and Southern Italy, time is treated more loosely; people are freer to be late or early for meetings; and analogic cues, such as how high the sun is in the sky and how dark it's getting, carry more meaning.

The Olfactive Code

In contrast to the other codes discussed so far, olfactics is a code that is almost exclusively nonverbal. Nonverbal researchers use the term *olfactics* to refer to the use and perception of smell as related to communication (Burgoon et al., in press). Although people can talk about something smelling good or bad (just as we can talk about the time), smells are almost always processed in a holistic fashion. The study of olfactics includes research on how people adorn themselves with smells such as perfume (Aune & Aune, 2008). In many places around the world, and particularly in the United States, people use perfume, soap, and body deodorant to convey a particular image to others or to cover up odor. Natural odors related to hormones and DNA structures are also part of the olfactive code (Furlow, 1996), as are smells within the environment.

Future Directions

Although scholars have made much progress in understanding the interplay between verbal and nonverbal codes of communication, much work remains to be done. One of the key issues relates to how much of the meaning associated with an interaction is derived from verbal versus nonverbal cues. Early estimates put the influence of nonverbal communication as high as 93%, but more recent studies suggest that nonverbal cues generally contribute about 65% of meaning, whereas verbal cues contribute about 35% (Burgoon et al., 1996). These percentages change depending on the task. When people are interpreting emotional cues, nonverbal communication is even more important. However, when people are trying to digest information, verbal communication is particularly critical. Future research should continue to explore how verbal and nonverbal cues contribute separately and in concert to create meaning.

Another important issue for future research is cultural differences. As discussed earlier in this chapter, some

codes of communication are more easily understood across cultures than others. Researchers have also uncovered a number of cultural differences in the way people communicate nonverbally (for reviews, see Andersen, 2008; Burgoon et al., in press). Yet little is known about the interplay of verbal and nonverbal cues across cultures. Scholars have determined that some countries, such as the United States and Germany, are characterized as low context, which means that people rely more on precise information from verbal communication (Hall, 1984). Other cultures, such as those in Asia, are characterized as high context, which means that people rely more on subtle information from contextual and nonverbal cues. For instance, the Chinese system of writing is filled with intricacies that are rich in meaning. Similarly, the meaning of some Vietnamese words change based on how they are said. In high-context cultures, analogic codes reflected in writing and speaking style appear to fuse with digital codes related to written and spoken words in ways that people in low-context cultures may not understand. There may well be other differences in how verbal and nonverbal codes relate to each other across various cultures, so this is an important area of future research.

Another recommendation for future research is to examine how verbal and nonverbal communication work together to create patterns of reciprocity and compensation. Reciprocity occurs when people display behaviors that have similar meanings (Burgoon et al., 1996). So one person might smile, and the other person might say “I love you.” Compensation occurs when people display behaviors that have opposite or very different meanings, such as one person looking away when another person stands too close to her or him. Thus far, most of the work on reciprocity and compensation has focused almost exclusively on nonverbal communication. Yet these codes could play off each other. For example, people might avert eye contact when conversation gets highly intimate or hug someone after receiving a compliment. Guerrero, Jones, and Burgoon (2000) demonstrated that people sometimes compensate verbally when their romantic partner acts avoidant (by saying things like “What’s wrong?”), even though they reciprocate nonverbally by showing more negative affect. A better understanding of these types of patterns will bring scholars one step closer to understanding the intricacies of the interplay between verbal and nonverbal codes.

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RHETORICAL STYLE

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Style is one of the most ancient concepts in communication and has long been regarded as a key component of messages. Its meaning and importance have not remained entirely consistent throughout history, however. This variability is a sign that it is an index of how communication works in cultures, for it changes as the role and nature of communication in society itself changes. Style has especially been associated with rhetoric, or the study, practice, and critique of persuasion. In important ways, what we think of style—whether we love it or hate it, think it is trivial or important—is what we think of rhetoric in general.

In this chapter, I argue that style has been understood within two main traditions: linguistic and performative. Both traditions have ancient roots, and both are alive and well today, but the linguistic understanding of style was relatively stronger in the past, whereas the performative understanding of style is gaining ground today. This shift of weight in the two traditions reflects a centuries-long cultural shift in the West from a concern with verbal ability to a concern with personal presentation in everyday life. Both traditions have generated a great deal of significant research, some of which I will review here. Although within and between the two traditions, the concept of style has varied greatly, I believe that a more or less consistent theme across all its manifestations has been aesthetics. By aesthetics I mean the sensory or artistic appreciation of objects and experiences (Brummett, 1999, 2004). Style may be understood as a kind of umbrella term for the aesthetic dimension of communication. I will proceed by explaining how style has been understood linguistically and then performatively. Finally, I will conclude by discussing the future of style

in the study of communication and why style in both traditions is key to effective rhetoric.

Linguistic Rhetorical Style

One understanding of style sees it as primarily or entirely the creative use of language in rhetorical appeals. The rhetorical theorist Roderick P. Hart (1990) explains this sense of style as “the sum total of language habits distinguishing one message from another” (p. 197). Whether attention to language is of central importance to persuasion or is mere decoration varies widely from one theorist and practitioner to another.

The understanding of style as linguistic, as the manipulation of language, is ancient. A number of theorists and teachers such as Isocrates, Plato, and Quintilian wrote on the subject. Here let us review a few of the ideas of just three of these ancient authorities: Aristotle, Marcus Tullius Cicero, and St. Augustine.

In his landmark, seminal work, *Rhetoric* (trans. 1954), Aristotle begins Book III with a discussion of style. Earlier in this work, he discussed how to come up with the substance of a speech, understood as arguments and emotional and personal appeals. Clearly, he intends a linguistic understanding of the concept of style: “For it is not enough to know what we ought to say; we must also say it as we ought; much help is thus afforded towards producing the right impression of a speech” (sec. 1403b). His work contains much practical good advice for the manipulation of language to create effective style—for instance, “Style to be good must be clear, as is proved by the fact that speech which fails to convey a plain meaning will fail to do just

what speech has to do” (1404b). He urges the reader to master figures of speech and turns of phrase so as to achieve clarity and to move an audience.

Classical rhetorical theory developed, over the course of centuries, what has come to be called “the canon” of rhetoric, which refers to the major parts of the preparation and presentation of a speech. These are the elements of effective public speaking to which the orator must pay attention. The great Roman theorist and orator Marcus Tullius Cicero (1977) offered a clear formulation of the canon:

And, since all the activity and ability of an orator falls into five divisions, I learned that he must first hit upon what to say; then manage and marshal his discoveries, not merely in orderly fashion, but with a discriminating eye for the exact weight as it were of each argument; next go on to array them in the adornments of style; after that keep them guarded in his memory; and in the end deliver them with effect and charm. (Book I, chap. xxxi, p. 142)

These “five divisions” have historically been summarized as invention (discovering what to say), organization, style, memory, and delivery. The historical tradition of rhetorical studies has focused more on style in the sense expressed by Cicero here, as linguistic manipulation, decoration, and adornment—as something added on to the substance of argument. But we will see below that ancient antecedents for the second, performative tradition of rhetorical style may be found in that canon of delivery as part of style as well. Let us just note in passing that this more “recent” performative dimension of style has ancient roots, even if it was not called style from the start.

In his great treatise *De Oratore*, Cicero discusses the linguistic dimension of style at length. “Every speech consists of matter and words,” he claims, “and the words cannot fall into place if you remove the matter, nor can the matter have clarity if you withdraw the words” (Book III, chap. v, p. 19). Different purposes in oratory are served by variations in linguistic style, he argues, for speakers “deserving of praise nevertheless achieve it in a variety of styles” (Book III, chap. vii, p. 26). As he explains later, “Important criminal cases need one style of language and civil actions and unimportant cases another; and different styles are required by deliberative speeches, panegyrics, lawsuits and lectures” (Book III, chap. liv, p. 211).

St. Augustine, writing in the 4th century CE, devotes Book IV of his work *On Christian Doctrine* (trans. 1978) to a discussion of how to preach to popular audiences. Following the concepts developed by Cicero, Augustine places great emphasis on linguistic style as adapted to the preacher’s purpose. He claims, “He who is eloquent should speak in such a way that he teaches, delights, and moves” (Book IV, chap. xii, p. 27). These three purposes of teaching, delighting, and moving (or persuading) are to be matched by subdued, moderate, and grand styles of

language, respectively (Book IV, chap. xix, p. 38). Augustine offers many examples of linguistic style from the Bible to illustrate these preferred dimensions of style as adapted to purpose.

Over the next centuries, theorists, teachers, and persuaders would continue to develop an understanding of style as linguistic manipulation. The study of figures of speech such as metaphor and irony developed tremendously, with works being written describing hundreds of such devices (see surveys by Corbett, 1998; Quinn & Quinn, 1995). People of the upper classes delighted in learning and using rhetorical style for entertainment and to impress others, especially as the Renaissance unfolded (Jeanneret, Whitely, & Hughes, 1991). From that, we are reminded that an important rhetorical function of style throughout the ages has been to define and separate different groups of people. It matters whether one has a “refined” or an “uncouth” style; one’s style bespeaks one’s class, geographic origin, and so forth.

During the late Renaissance, the French scholar Pierre de la Ramee, or Peter Ramus in Latin, wrote a work titled *Arguments in Rhetoric Against Quintilian* (trans. 1986) in the 16th century. Ramus is famous for equating rhetoric almost entirely with language style. He claimed that substantive argument was the property of logic, dialectic, or philosophy and that what we do when we argue is to demonstrate rational truths. All other influence is based on illogical—one might even say aesthetic—reactions to linguistic style, which Ramus equated with rhetoric. Since Ramus did not think highly of rhetoric as compared with logic, his equation of it with the mere decoration that is style shows us how the ways we think about style are often how we think about rhetoric as well. The Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus, also writing in the 16th century, based his educational system on rhetoric. A heavy emphasis of his method was extensive training in the manipulation of linguistic style. In his work *On Copia* (1963), he describes how students would be trained to reduce a sentence to its briefest possible expression as well as to expand a sentence fruitfully. The Englishman Hugh Blair, writing during the 18th century in what would be called the *Belles Lettres* or belletristic school of thought, emphasized the importance of refined, tasteful verbal style in both public and private speech and writing, in his book *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1860). A central theme throughout the early and middle history of the linguistic tradition of style has been to understand it aesthetically, to see it as a way to manipulate how we use, critique, and theorize the use of rhetorical language for artistic purposes.

In the 20th and 21st centuries, the linguistic study of style has continued vigorously. An aesthetic focus has remained, but with it has come increasing understanding that the aesthetic also has social and political consequences in that it can ground motivations. The ability of linguistic style to move audiences, whether the immediate audience of the public

speaker or the vast, mediated audiences of today's political struggles, has been explored in many scholarly studies.

An interest in studying language from many perspectives may be taken as a hallmark of the 19th and 20th centuries. Here, I want to call our attention only to a few scholars whose work in language focused significantly on style, on the aesthetic manipulation of language for effect. This scholarship is marked by concerns for aesthetic stylistic devices, principally metaphor; for the effects of word choices; and for the social effects of word choice in societies at large.

The English philosopher I. A. Richards (1936) had a largely stylistic understanding of rhetoric. Writing in the first half of the 20th century, he argued that metaphor was the underlying principle of all language and that therefore we cannot speak plainly and with total accuracy about the world and our experiences. Our language must always be expressed in one style or another, and it always occurs at some level of abstraction, Richards argued.

Writing throughout the 20th century, the eclectic and prolific theorist and critic Kenneth Burke advanced research into style more than anyone else. Burke believed that motives are shaped by the language that we use and that the way we stylize our language is vital in affecting how people think and act. In hundreds of critical essays, short and long, collected within his books, Burke showed the motivations created by expressing language in one style or another. In his book *Permanence and Change* (1965), for instance, written during the Great Depression, he argued that the way people chose to talk about the economy in the first quarter of the 20th century employed a style that actually led, through creating undesirable motivations, to the economic collapse. In his essay "The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle" (1939), he showed that Hitler's motivations for war and genocide were perfectly apparent in his use of style in *Mein Kampf*.

Scholars in communication have pursued the study of linguistic style throughout the 20th century and into the 21st. "Don't Leave Your Language Alone," admonished Ernest Pulgram in 1952 to prospective orators and writers. Scholars such as Henry Ewbank developed schemes for studying the subject, as in his 1931 essay, "Four Approaches to the Study of Speech Style." Joseph DeVito also attempted to schematize "Style and Stylistics," in an essay published in 1967.

The aesthetic dimension of this focus on word choice is clear in an early essay by Horace Grant McKean (1916), "The Public Speaker as a Word-Artist," and again in Donald C. Bryant's 1950 work, "Aspects of the Rhetorical Tradition: Emotion, Style, and Literary Association," in which he explores links between oratorical and literary styles. Likewise, Carl E. Burklund (1955) focused on the aesthetic language of figures of speech and stylistic devices in his article "The Presentation of Figurative Language." The aesthetic dimension of imagination was linked to style in Donald Salper's "The Imaginative Component of Rhetoric,"

published in 1965, in which he largely refers to linguistic expression.

Jane Blankenship (1962) studied "oral and written style" to show the rhetorical effects of phrasing. Paul Newell Campbell (1973) used a well-known scheme of linguistic acts to develop a theory of how style has rhetorical and practical effects in usage. Usage or usefulness also informed an article from 1940 by Henry Alonzo Myers, "The Usefulness of Figurative Language," in which style was studied not merely as decorative but as having impact in the world.

Assessing such impact is often difficult. Linguistic style itself may be used to trace the wider effects of any rhetorical act, according to Richard A. Cherwitz. Cherwitz's (1980) study "The Contributory Effects of Rhetorical Discourse: A Study of Language-in-Use" argued that style is a tool for gauging the effectiveness of a writer or speaker. The critic may see whether a speaker's language choice is taken up by others and by public usage—Cherwitz argues that the chaining out of such usage is a sign of rhetorical success. In that vein of examining rhetorical word choices and their effects, a number of studies have examined the styles of specific great orators or types of speakers, as in J. H. Doyle's (1916) early-20th-century essay "The Style of Wendell Phillips." Thomas Lessl (1989) examined "The Priestly Voice" to identify common stylistic components of a particular linguistic stance that people, whether actual priests or other public leaders, take in public communication. Another study that casts its net broadly is Michael Osborn's (1967) "Archetypal Metaphor in Rhetoric: The Light-Dark Family," which looked at our culturewide use of metaphors based on light and dark to assess their rhetorical implications. Osborn identified consistent patterns in which metaphors based on light carry positive motivations, while metaphors based on dark urge audiences to oppose the object or concept to which the metaphor is applied.

More recent essays in communication continue this important tradition of the study of style as linguistic manipulation. Although not always identified as an issue of linguistic style, a recurring theme in research has been to study dominant metaphors in public use in order to explain the rhetorical implications of those stylistic choices. Jennifer R. Mercieca and James Arnt Aune (2005) study the style of an 18th-century text to distinguish between elite and vernacular language use, which of course is linguistic style. Robert L. Ivie (1980) has explored the effectiveness of metaphors for rallying public support for war. In a number of important essays, Ivie has identified key stylistic components of public foreign policy rhetoric, and he has shown ways in which language choices have furthered ideological choices. On a similar theme, Steven C. Combs (2000) argues that war itself is an effective metaphor for rhetoric, and he studies the style of some ancient texts to draw parallels between fighting and persuasion.

Another recent line of research into linguistic style has followed Michael Calvin McGee's (1980) concept of the "ideograph," which is a widely used term or phrase with important ideological, rhetorical consequences—such as "the people" or "equality." Dana L. Cloud's (2004) essay on U.S. press coverage of Afghan women is an example of a recent study using this theory; in her essay, she explores the implications of the phrase *clash of cultures* for how the United States understands other cultures through word choice in its war on terror.

Performative Rhetorical Style

My review of the linguistic tradition of style proceeded chronologically, from ancient times to the present. I will mix that order up a bit in presenting the performative tradition of style. I do so because scholars have more recently come to think of style as something not only linguistic but as also embodied in movement, gesture, facial expression—even in the clothes one wears, the cars one drives, the way we decorate our homes and choose our entertainment. This is style in the sense that we might say, "Oh, she has great style" or "He has no sense of style at all." It is a highly aesthetic way to think of style, based on the presentation of self in public. I will begin with some contemporary scholarship on the subject and then go back to ancient theorists. I will do this because scholars throughout history have studied style in this sense but have only recently begun to call it by that name. Yet I want to show that a concern for style as performative, as going beyond just linguistic aesthetics, has been part of the rhetorical tradition all along.

In *A Rhetoric of Style* (2008), I offer this definition of the performative sense of style:

Style is a complex system of actions, objects, and behaviors that is used to form messages that announce who we are, who we want to be, and who we want to be considered akin to. It is therefore also a system of communication with rhetorical influence on others. And as such, style is a means by which power and advantage is negotiated, distributed, and struggled over in society.

Style is certainly implicated not only in how we speak but also in how we present our whole beings in public, how we judge and construct relationships with both private friends and public figures.

Bradford Vivian (2002) complains that "for better or worse, then, modern rhetorical theory lacks a contemporary rationale and methodology for the study of style" (p. 223). Of course, he means style in the performative sense, and although this understanding of the concept is not as well developed as is the linguistic one, his own work has gone far toward developing such a rationale. The media scholar Stuart Ewen (1988) defines style as "a way that the human values, structures, and assumptions in a given society are aesthetically expressed and received" (p. 3).

His book traces the history of style in structuring society and politics since at least the start of the 25th century. The rhetorical theorist Robert Hariman's (1995) fine study of political style explores four commonly found kinds of style in political circumstances, and his work is highly performative in that it looks at the ways in which emperors and bureaucrats alike manage their images by the styles through which they present themselves in public.

The cultural critic Virginia Postrel (2003) argues that performative style has taken center stage as we have become a more "commodified" culture, obsessed with the aesthetic goods we use to construct our personal styles, and that style in this sense is coming to restructure consciousness around the world. Likewise, Michel Maffesoli (1996) argues, "In the strict meaning of the term, [style] becomes an all-encompassing form, a 'forming form' that gives birth to whole manners of being, to customs, representations, and the various fashions by which life in society is expressed" (p. 5). As we become preoccupied with self-presentation in everyday life, we come to think of rhetoric as a way to manage impressions beyond limited, particular occasions of speeches and essays (see also work on self-presentation by Erving Goffman, 1959).

A small but growing body of work has begun to study the styles of particular people or groups in order to identify the rhetorical impact of stylistic performances. This work may be found throughout the journal *Text and Performance Quarterly*. In my forthcoming book, I study the style of the "gun culture," and I argue that contradictions inherent in the essentially working-class style of that culture are key to understanding its social and political effects. Hariman's work, mentioned above, has been widely influential in helping us understand the rhetorical impact of four political styles in a wide range of applications: government, the corporate world, and international relationships, to name a few. Richard Majors and Janet Mancini Billson (1992) describe a particular style from the African American community, "cool pose," as performative and life structuring in this way, incorporating "unique patterns of speech, walk, and demeanor" (p. 2).

This exciting sense of style as performative will join linguistic style as the source of new and provocative research in the future. But as a concept, the idea of style as performative predates by centuries the application of the word *style* to these communication patterns. People have been studying performative style even when they did not call it *style*.

I noted earlier that the Greek rhetorical theorist and teacher Aristotle understood style as linguistic. However, he also discusses "delivery," which anticipates later, performative understandings of style. Aristotle sounds quite modern in saying, "The whole business of rhetoric being concerned with appearances, we must pay attention to the subject of delivery." We should note that Aristotle also calls the need to manipulate delivery as "unworthy" (sec. 1404a). Aristotle views delivery as unworthy because, like style, it is mere decoration added on to substantive appeals.

Nevertheless, being a pragmatist and acknowledging that people do respond to how a message is presented, he argues,

It is plain that delivery has just as much to do with oratory as with poetry. . . . It is, essentially, a matter of the right management of the voice to express the various emotions—of speaking loudly, softly, or between the two; of high, low, or intermediate pitch; of the various rhythms that suit various subjects. (sec. 1403b)

Although he does not call these considerations by the term *style*, he is clearly introducing ideas that today we might think of in terms of “a speaker’s style.” Aristotle restricts his understanding of such performance to the giving of speeches, however, rather than expanding it to style in everyday practices.

The Roman rhetorician and orator Cicero had a concept of style that went beyond just language to include performative dimensions. Cicero’s discussion of style is limited to public oratorical presentations and does not include the rhetorical effects of style in everyday life, but it is nevertheless perfectly consistent with today’s increasingly performative understanding of style. In his treatise *De Oratore* (1977), Cicero discussed the style of two orators whom he admires and noted the extent to which both language and physical performance are intertwined:

In present company, consider Sulpicius and Cotta, who stand almost on a level: what greater difference could there be between two orators, and yet what greater eminence in their respective styles? The one accurate and precise, unfolding the matter in language appropriate and suitable to it—he always sticks to his brief, and having discerned with supreme acumen the point that has to be proved to the court, he lays all other matters on one side and rivets his thoughts and utterances to this; Sulpicius on the other hand combines extreme boldness and energy, a very loud and resonant voice, and unrivalled vigor of bearing and dignity of gesture, with a weight and flow of language that make us think him Nature’s nonpareil of orators! (Book III, chap. viii, p. 31)

Later in that treatise, Cicero develops some principles of “delivery” that he does not call style per se but that clearly fall into the performative tradition of understanding style. By delivery, he means the physical, nonverbal means of public speaking, including gesture, clothing, expression, and so forth. He claims, “Delivery, I assert, is the dominant factor in oratory; without delivery the best speaker cannot be of any account at all, and a moderate speaker with a trained delivery can often outdo the best of them” (Book III, chap. iv, p. 213). Delivery is crucial for conveying emotion and tone,

for nature has assigned to every emotion a particular look and tone of voice and bearing of its own; and the whole of a person’s frame and every look on his face and utterance of his voice are like the strings of a harp, and sound according as they are struck by each successive emotion. (Book III, chap. lvii, p. 216)

We noted earlier St. Augustine’s assignment of three styles of language to three rhetorical purposes that a preacher might pursue. We also find a performative theme in Augustine’s rhetoric, even if he does not call it style. Writing for clergy at a time when many clergy were not as well educated or formally trained as might be desirable, Augustine stresses the importance of a performative style in conveying religious truths to audiences. The preacher should try to speak eloquently and wisely, he argues:

However, if he cannot do this, let him so order his life that he not only prepares a reward for himself, but also so that he offers an example to others, and his way of living may be, as it were, an eloquent speech. (Book IV, chap. xxix, p. 61)

This sense of a life lived in public with rhetorical effect that is not tied to language is quite consistent with later performative understandings of style. Augustine also notes the political and social consequences of style when it functions divisively in anchoring the judgments we make about other people’s worth and class.

As with the linguistic tradition of style, the performative tradition was developed over the centuries following the classical era, although not as strongly as the linguistic and not as clearly identified as style. In 16th-century Florence, the statesman and courtier Nicolo Machiavelli published his classic *The Prince* (1984), much of which is a study of the performative style necessary to gain and keep power. In the 18th century, the English man of letters Thomas Sheridan (father of the better-known playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan) published his influential *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (1968), a precursor of what would come to be known as the elocutionary movement. Sheridan echoed Cicero as he argued that nonverbal communication was at least as important as verbal communication, and in fact, he argued that it is a universal language since animals of all species including people may understand one another through gesture, vocal inflection, facial expression, and so forth. Sheridan therefore advocated paying attention in communication to one’s whole body, clearly a performative understanding of persuasion, although he did not specifically call it style. His countryman in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Gilbert Austin, published *Chironomia* (1966), a remarkable work that organizes the space around the speaking body, assigning different areas to different emotions and emphases. Thus, there was a place to gesture for praise, a place to gesture if you wanted to place blame, a place to gesture to incite love, and so forth. Influential at the time, Austin’s work was of course too mechanical and simplistic to find much use in later centuries. But while it, too, does not use the word style, it belongs to a tradition that sees stance and movement as important elements of communication. We might also consider the 19th-century French teacher of dance and elocution, François Delsarte. Although not known for

prolific or influential publications, his theories and courses of instruction were widely important in the growing elocutionary movement presaged by Sheridan. Like both Sheridan and Austin, Delsarte taught that specific movements and vocal inflections were linked to the creation of predictable emotional reactions in the audience. The ideas of Sheridan, Austin, and Delsarte influenced not only public speaking but also how people carried themselves and spoke in all kinds of public appearances, even during everyday life, which is of course a performative way of thinking about style.

Modern scholars of communication from the start of the 20th century have studied the performative dimensions of style. A willingness to call this dimension by the term *style* has, as we saw at the start of this section, recently entered into this scholarly tradition. An early essay from 1915 by Gladys Borchers develops “An Approach to the Problem of Oral Style,” in which Borchers discusses the special dimensions of style that come from the person presenting herself in public before others—in other words, from performance. The importance of orality or the use of the spoken word is a dimension of style that moves toward the performative, since it goes beyond the purely linguistic. This is the theme of Robert T. Oliver’s 1943 article “Living Words.” A living word, as opposed to one on a page, is inherently performative. In performance, style tells us about the individual speaking, an idea developed early in the century by C. K. Rogers (1916) in “The Voice as a Revelation of the Individual.” That which is experienced orally is experienced in particular ways. An essay by Lionel Crocker (1928), “The Refrain in Oratorical Prose,” is an example of early 20th-century studies of such orality. An even earlier essay is F. H. Lane’s 1916 “Action and Emotion in Speaking,” which clearly addresses the performative dimension of delivery in public presentations: what one does, how one gestures, and so forth. A similar study from 1927 was Gaston Louis Malecot’s “A Note on Gesture and Language,” continuing Austin’s tradition of studying the ways in which gesture in performance conveys meaning. Likewise, T. Earle Pardoe explores “Language of the Body” in a 1923 essay. By 1970, W. Ross Winterrowd was referring to the nonverbal, performative dimensions of communication *as style* in his “Style: A Matter of Manner.”

Sheridan’s idea that a living voice may convey emotions nonverbally finds a more recent echo in Smiley Blanton’s 1989 study of “The Voice and the Emotions,” with its focus on the delivery and performance of public discourse. Wayland M. Parrish explored the kind of performed styles best suited to extemporaneous speaking in his 1923 essay “The Style of Extemporaneous Speech.” Floyd K. Riley studied parallels between conversation and certain styles of public address in 1928, in “The Conversational Basis of Public Address.” Marouf Hasian Jr. (2000) continues the performative tradition of style without explicitly calling it style in his study of

John Brown’s demeanor and self-presentation during his 19th-century trial.

Conclusion

The common thread linking the linguistic and performative traditions is aesthetics. However it is viewed, style has always been understood as an aesthetic dimension of communication. When a theorist has not thought aesthetics to be important, style has not been felt to be important. It is then regarded as mere decoration, as something extra to be added to a message or presentation after the main substance of argument and exposition has been developed. We saw above that linguistic style has sometimes been referred to as mere ornament or decoration. Performative style is often denigrated as mere “skin” or “surface,” a mask that one puts on just for today and that does not reflect one’s reality. Ewen (1988) describes that opinion as the feeling that “the ability to stylize anything . . . encourages a comprehension of the world that focuses on its easily manipulated surfaces, while other meanings vanish to all but the critical eyes” (p. 262). Those “other meanings” are often seen as the more important substance or inner core of who a person, speaker, or group really is. These doubts that are raised about both linguistic and performative style raise the question of whether style in either sense is important in effective communication. That is also to raise the question of whether attention to the aesthetic dimension of communication is necessary for rhetorical, communicative effectiveness.

It will not do to sneer at either sense of style in the 21st century or to believe that aesthetics are unimportant for effective communication. We are living in an age of aesthetics today. You can certainly find at least one show on television any time of the day or night that features aesthetics: how to cook, how to decorate, how to dress, how to be made over, how to overhaul your car, and so forth. Magazine racks in stores groan under the weight of slick glossies offering to show you how to make your self or your home more aesthetically appealing. If there are cultural reasons (e.g., the aesthetic is a more important value for us than it may have been for other eras) for this phenomenon, there are surely also commercial reasons: The world’s huge industrial overcapacity must be kept going by constant hyperconsumption on the part of the public, globally. We have to be induced to buy far more than we need, or the economy would come crashing down. One can never be persuaded to buy 20 pairs of jeans and 30 pairs of shoes for practical reasons alone. But if we can be persuaded that we have to have another pair of jeans in just that shade of indigo, if we can be taught that last season’s jacket is no longer socially acceptable, if we are led to believe that only this pair of shoes is appropriate for that big night out—in other words, if we can be taught to think in terms of style, then there is hardly any limit to what we may be persuaded to

buy. An aesthetic preoccupation is key to global capitalism, and if it is also central to today's popular culture, the link should not be surprising. Ewen (1988), argues that today's economy especially depends on style, since in the market "all manners of human expression and creativity are mined for their surfaces: their *look*, their *touch*, their *sound*, their *scent* [italics added]. This booty is then attached to the logic of the marketplace: mass produced and merchandised" (p. 52).

For both cultural and economic reasons, style and aesthetics are key to effective communication because they are key to how people live and think today. The political candidate with all kinds of good policy ideas who cannot express himself or herself in an exciting verbal style or cannot perform a likable personal style is simply not going to be elected. The business presentation couched in heavy jargon by someone in a rumpled suit and a slouching stance is not going to land the contract. And wouldn't that be unfortunate if the candidate were really the best person for the position and if the contract should by economic common sense go to that inept persuader? Style, linguistic and performative, is no longer decoration and adornment—it is increasingly the most important element of effective communication.

I think that given the power of the capitalist system and the market today, it is entirely understandable that style should increasingly take on a performative aspect. While the linguistic tradition is still with us, you can't sell the stuff for making good metaphors as easily as you can sell the stuff for making a good impression at the club tonight or at the job interview tomorrow. The linguistic tradition is a little disconnected from commodification, but commodification was made for the performative understanding of style and vice versa. For these reasons, the performative understanding of style will continue to gain strength as a major cultural preoccupation and dimension of communication.

A theme sounded throughout classical rhetoric is that one should study persuasion because it would be too bad to leave goodness and truth undefended while evil and falsehood win over audiences. Today, we may say that about the study of style. If it was important to know how to argue before audiences of the past, how to present facts and figures in the most logical fashion, today it is important to know how to reach audiences through style. Rather than regard style as inconsequential, communicators should accept its cultural and economic dominance and incorporate it into their rhetorical efforts in everyday life, in public presentations, and in mass communication.

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29

GENRE

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Genre is an alien term, hard to pronounce and difficult to define. Etymologically, *genre* comes from French, meaning “kind,” “category,” “sort,” or “gender,” and from the Latin *genus*, meaning “descent, family, type, or gender.” Genre and its close relative *form* are challenging terms because they are abstractions. No one has ever seen form or genre, only exemplars that we perceive as a particular form or genre. Accordingly, these concepts are malleable and are understood differently by literary and rhetorical critics, those who study communication through language, and those who study discourse communities and their regulation and constitution by rules and conventions.

The notion of categorizing works of literature and rhetoric by type has its roots in the thinking of Aristotle, the great categorizer, whose *Poetics* described the three broad literary genres of prose narrative, poetry, and drama (Connors, 1986) and whose *Art of Rhetoric* described three types of public discourse, the deliberative to enact expedient policies, the forensic as a means to do justice, and the ceremonial or epideictic to celebrate the values of the community and unify its members. Initially, such distinctions were descriptive, identifying basic symbolic processes. That is, to live peacefully in any community, there must be rules; hence, there must be deliberative discourse. If rules exist, some will break them, hence the need for forensic discourse. Because deliberative and forensic speeches involve disagreements, ceremonial discourse is needed to remind the community of its unifying values. Moreover, Aristotle did not treat these as mutually exclusive genres but noted points at which their elements merge or overlap, as in the deliberative implications of ceremonial discourse, illustrated by

the eulogies of Pericles for the Athenian dead and Lincoln’s address at Gettysburg.

What began as descriptions of public discourse soon migrated into pedagogy for fledgling orators. Training was based on imitation, which required students to analyze form (style, manner, arrangement) and content (themes or lines of argument). Students were expected to analyze a model, then imitate the form but supply new content or imitate the theme but present it in a new form. Exercises in imitation occurred on every level, beginning with exercises in vocabulary and grammar, and taught students to assess what precisely a given form did to create a given meaning or effect (Clark, 1959). Because the models used were outstanding examples from the rhetorical literature, the exercises were also training in invention. “In classical rhetoric, the doctrine of *imitatio* provided the most obvious intersection between the reading of texts and the production of persuasive arguments,” Michael Leff (1977) notes, and he emphasizes its central role in rhetorical invention: “*Imitatio* is not the mere repetition or mechanistic reproduction of something found in an existing text. It is a complex process that allows historical texts to serve as equipment for future rhetorical production” (p. 201). In the introduction to *Exemplum*, John Lyons (1989) links this pedagogy to the example:

Example is therefore based on the view that the apparently infinite number of possible events can be contained within a limited structure or repertory of rules. The occurrences or manifestations of a general rule will therefore be limitless, but the underlying rules will be finite,

an assumption underlying the practice of rhetoric, as described by Antonius in Cicero’s *De oratore*, that

all the possible subjects of debate are not founded on a countless host of human beings or an endless diversity of occasions, but on typical cases or character, and that the types are not merely limited in number but positively few. (Loeb Classical Library 34, in Lyons, 1989, p. 28)

Pedagogical exercises taught rhetorical theory by example:

Given the limitations of theoretical instruction, imitation played a vital role in rhetorical education, for it could show what the rules could not tell. In the first phase of this process, the reader would learn to identify strategies and forms as actually embodied in a historical text and to judge their significance relative to the construction of the text as a whole and its situated rhetorical purposes. (Leff, 1997, p. 202)

Subsequently, the strategies and forms identified would be incorporated into a new discourse addressing a different set of circumstances. As summarized by Rita Copeland,

the relationship between model and copy, like that of lineage, is predicated on the act of invention; the model or ancestor, discovers and posits the ground for future invention. Such an evolutionary pattern is enabled or sustained by the very interpretative continuity which it creates. Hence, to justify the imitative enterprise, the copy produces, not conspicuous likeness of the original, but rather what is understood and revalued in the original. (Copeland, 1991, p. 27, cited in Leff, 1997, p. 202)

Leff notes that this kind of imitation is a vehicle for what J. Robert Cox (1987) calls “the invention of usable traditions” (cited in Leff, 1997, p. 203) and constitutes what Leff defines as hermeneutical rhetoric.

As the field of speech emerged out of English departments at the beginning of the 20th century, genre played an important role in differentiating studies of rhetoric from studies of literature. In 1925, Herbert Wichelns responded to the need to define a distinctive mission for rhetorical scholarship. Like the founders of the new discipline, he defended the importance “of the study of the [oratorical] art” (p. 4). Literary analysis was unsuitable for such study because it presupposed “the absolute standard of a timeless world,” whereas oratory is “the art of influencing men in some concrete situation” (pp. 21–22). Rhetoric was not timeless literature; rhetorical acts were responses to particular situations, and orators were to be judged by their ability to adapt to and influence the immediate audience. Accordingly, rhetorical criticism “is not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect” (p. 22). He wrote, however, that public discourse lies “at the boundary of politics (in the broadest sense) and literature; its atmosphere is that of the public life, its tools are those of literature, its concern is with the ideas of the people as influenced by their leaders” (p. 26). In other words, oratory was a kind of discourse importantly different from literature, although some of its tools were those of literature.

Early efforts in rhetorical criticism were collected in *History and Criticism of American Public Address* (Brigance,

1943, 2 vols.; Hochmuth, 1955, 1 vol.). Reflecting the distinction between literary and rhetorical scholarship, Brigance (1943) insisted that personal influence and social status, *not artistry*, guided his selection of speakers (Book I, chap. vii). The critical method outlined by Wichelns was systematized and detailed by Thonssen and Baird (1948).¹ Studies following these methods consisted primarily of historical-biographical studies of the situation in which a speech was given and of the man who delivered it. Based on analysis of the essays in the three volumes of *History and Criticism of American Public Address*, Edwin Black (1965) concluded that the standard methods of critical analysis consisted primarily of classifying speeches generically as deliberative/policy related, forensic/legal, or epideictic/ceremonial and analyzing them in terms of the modes of proof to identify argument, appeals, and credibility and the classical canons or arts in order to assess originality, structure, style, and delivery.

The urge to classify discourses, to order them by groups, has been a strong impulse in rhetorical criticism primarily because criticism rests on comparison and contrast, the processes by which we are able to perceive similarities and differences and to identify forms, strategies, and arguments. Comparison and contrast are not, however, of equal importance, primarily because differences are inevitable and endless. Every person, event, object, or situation differs in myriad ways. We cope with “blooming, buzzing confusion” by ignoring some differences to attend to and recognize recurring elements or patterns, which exist at many levels of abstraction and direct and frame the ways in which symbolic acts are to be interpreted. Attempting to understand phenomena by comparing them with other phenomena, similar and dissimilar, is a basic human conceptual activity.

Our ability to recognize any element of discursive practice relies on prior familiarity with other instances—of types of argument (e.g., a fortiori), kinds of structure (e.g., method of residues), issues (stasis), strategies (e.g., refutation, enactment), types of evidence (authority, testimony), tropes (metaphor, metonymy), and so on. Accordingly, all criticism is based on analogy, of perceived similarities among speeches, such as the eulogies for warriors by Pericles and Abraham Lincoln (Wills, 1992, pp. 41–62), Reagan’s ceremonial speeches at Bitburg and Bergen-Belsen compared with those at Omaha Beach and on D-Day (Jensen, 2007), or a comparison of Lincoln’s Cooper Union address with Barack Obama’s speech on race at Philadelphia (Wills, 2008), likenings that are the natural outcome of the comparative foundations of criticism. Evaluation is, likewise, based on comparison. We derive norms for judging immediate and long-term effects from familiarity with past successes and failures. We evaluate the artistry of rhetorical works by comparing them with those we consider models of excellence, of the ethical principles espoused in different works as options from which we might choose, and of the bases for judging truth and propriety through comparison with

outstanding exemplars. The challenge has been to avoid the pitfalls that genre invites—the sense that classifying speeches into types is all that is required of the critic, pitfalls of imposed regularity explored in the collection edited by Aram A. Aghazarian and Herbert W. Simons (Conley, 1986). As the editors note, any example of public discourse can be approached through many different frames so that a given work, such as Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter From Birmingham Jail," can be treated as protest rhetoric, an apostolic epistle, an apologia, Southern rhetoric, religious rhetoric, and so on (p. 11). Each frame is as apt as the extent to which it helps us understand the power of King's letter and the sources of its invention; criticism is not a contest to discover the best niche. Classification, however, courts the dangers of oversimplification and prescription. As critics quickly noted, generic analysis was as vulnerable to cookie-cutter applications as were the neo-Aristotelian methods it was designed to replace, and they argued forcefully that generic analysis was reductive and formulary (Conley, 1986; Patton, 1976). They were right; any critical procedure applied rigidly becomes just that.

As Aghazarian and Simons (1986) point out, "The amorphous nature of discourse continues to be a problem in genre studies," calling attention to the problems of interpretation. What, for instance, counts as "an invitation to contemplation, a call to action, a restatement of political principle, an appeal to unity" (p. 199) in an inaugural address? The essays on presidential inaugurals generally and on Reagan's 1981 inaugural in particular in that volume illustrate the insights of differing frames as well as the problems of interpretation (Joslyn, 1986).

There is no particular virtue to categorizing as such or to organizing discourses according to some principle, group of strategies, or motives (Benoit, 2000; Harrell & Linkugel, 1978; Ware & Linkugel, 1973). Identifying a form or a genre is useful only if that identification helps us understand how a particular discourse unfolds and appeals, how it functions. Comparison can be revealing. Looking at the apparently pointless discourse of the Yuppies of the 1960s through the lens of the diatribes of the ancient Cynics makes what is apparently nonsense intelligible (Windt, 1972). Through comparison, we can explore the role of enactment in the Democratic convention keynote addresses of Barbara Jordan (1976) and Barack Obama (2004). We can enlarge our understanding of enactment through analyzing Angelina Grimké's use of the mob's protests as proof in her 1838 speech in Pennsylvania hall, and we can discover another dimension of enactment by treating President Kennedy's repeated phrase, "Let them come to Berlin," in "Ich bin ein Berliner," as a call to enactment, asking us to do as he has done, to use Berlin as a test of the claims of the Communists (Campbell & Jamieson, 1978, pp. 18–19).

The possibilities for human symbolic action are infinite, yet our capacity to recognize and perceive such strategic

moves depends on frames of reference that enable us to discern a kind of argument, a strategy, a metaphor, or a genre. At this level, criticism is descriptive analysis, decoding and identifying the forms embedded in a complex message encrypted in a speech, a photograph, or a memorial. Equally, however, as Adena Rosmarin (1985) suggests, skillful critics create symbolic castles out of textual clues, drawing attention to Lincoln's control of time in the Cooper Union address (Leff, 1997), pointing to iconicity, the similarity between the form of a sign and its meaning (Leff & Sachs, 1990), such as the assonance in Kennedy's inaugural reference to "the steady spread of the deadly atom," noting Angelina Grimké's use of a prophetic persona and that of the biblical Esther (Japp, 1985), and tokens of ideology in political discourse (Black, 1970). As humans who communicate, we are all practicing critics whose interpretations are tested daily in conversation with our peers. Academic critics draw on their knowledge of rhetorical theory and literature to discern strategies at work that are likely to go unnoticed by most audiences. A disciplinary community of peers tests those claims to judge whether the claim is a mirage or the astute perception/recognition of an example of unusual symbolic architecture. In addition to Black's treatment of Chapman's speech as a morality play, other examples include the aforementioned comparison of the diatribe of the ancient Greek cynics with the rhetoric of the Yuppies (Windt, 1972), the post-9/11 rhetoric of George W. Bush as analogous to Puritan covenant renewal (Bostdorff, 2003), the rituals and performance of petitioning (Zaeske, 2003) and voting (Ray, 2007) as rhetorical action, treating Nixon's resignation speech as a farewell address in which he attempts to define his presidential legacy (Campbell & Jamieson, 1990, pp. 207–211), the explanatory power of a dramatic analysis of the processes by which a shooting in Maine was transformed to shift blame from the hunter to the victim (Tonn, Endress, & Diamond, 1993).

In 1965, Edwin Black offered an alternative to the traditional methods of rhetorical criticism based on language. Fundamental to his alternative were assumptions about linguistic practices. He wrote,

There will be a correspondence among the intentions of a communicator, the characteristics of his [*sic*] discourse, and the reactions of his auditors to that discourse. . . . to deny that is to deny the possibility of language as we ordinarily understand that term. (p. 16)

Thus, he concluded,

When we find three factors—strategies, situations, and effects—coinciding, this is a tolerably good reason for suspecting that the three factors . . . are really just three aspects of the same thing. Rhetorical strategies refer to characteristics of the discourse; rhetorical situations refer to extralinguistic influences on the audience; audience effects refer to responses to the strategies in the situations. (p. 134)

What he called the rhetorical transaction combined these three constituents (p. 135).

Two concepts underlying Black's approach to criticism are problematic. One is situation, a concept often reduced to a material reality (Bitzer, 1968). Situations, of course, are real, but only as the shared perceptions of a group. In some cases, these are widely shared perceptions and interpretations, but they are never uniform, illustrated dramatically by differing views among Americans of how to interpret the events of 9/11. They also are unreal, conceptual products of symbolic systems created by communities. Raymie McKerrow's (1989) call was for a critical rhetoric to attack the unreal but hegemonic rhetorical constructs that pervade our lives. Situation needs to be understood as a symbolic context grounded in community, a construct whose limits we recognize when our cultural knowledge is inadequate, as when Gerry Philipsen (1986) provides the background that enables us to understand Mayor Daley's council speech or when Lin-Lee Lee (1997) enables us to comprehend why Zhao Ziyang's speech to the students in Tiananmen Square persuaded them to end their hunger strike.

The other term is *genre*, the subject of this essay. Black (1965) defended his language-based approach to criticism and the importance of the intertextual connections that it emphasized this way: "The neo-Aristotelians ignore the impact of the discourse on rhetorical conventions, its capacity for disposing an audience to expect certain kinds of justifications in later discourses that they encounter, even on different subjects" (p. 35). In other words, discourses alter and shape community norms; their effects extend beyond responses in a given historical moment. Discursive practices are models. Genres emerge and evolve.

In the introduction to *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action*, Campbell and Jamieson (1978) traced the history of generic approaches to rhetorical criticism. Subsequently, Campbell and Jamieson generically analyzed the rhetoric of the U.S. presidency. Their initial efforts focused on inaugural addresses (1986) and the speeches of ascendant vice presidents to identify the functions that these speeches performed (Jamieson & Campbell, 1982). As the analysis expanded to more kinds of presidential speeches, such as state of the union addresses, veto messages, war rhetoric, and farewells, this work became a study of the interaction between an institution and its rhetoric (Campbell & Jamieson, 1990, 2008). Jamieson's early work on the rhetoric of the papacy was especially helpful in moving us in this direction (1974, 1975). The approach taken was pragmatic: what are the ends of these discourses and what means are used to achieve them—that is, the relationship between form and function as a way to discover the knowledge created by the presidential practice of rhetoric.

In contrast to a conception of criticism as grounded in social practice, the literary critic Adena Rosmarin (1985) emphasizes the creative role of critics, whose *métier* is

claiming and expanding our rich symbolic inheritance. In *The Power of Genre*, she explores the key questions that face critics, who, she argues, "strive both to unfold the unique and unmediated particularity of a text or reading experience and to generalize this particularity, phrasing its explanation in terms not its own" (p. 6). She raises some of the most troubling questions:

Does genre constitute the particular or do the particulars constitute the genre? Are genres found in texts, in the reader's mind, in the author's, or in some combination thereof? Or are they not "found" at all but rather devised and used? . . . Can we "see" them or do they hover on the hermeneutic "horizon," always potentially but never actually in view? (p. 7)

She aligns herself with E. H. Gombrich's studies of the rhetoric of visual representation, who claims that every symbolic act is "intertextual—that each visual text, like each verbal text, is a rewriting of previous texts" (p. 19). Obviously, this claim echoes assumptions underlying Greco-Roman concepts of rhetorical invention. Rosmarin defines genre as "a kind of schema, a way of discussing a literary text in terms that link it with other texts and, finally, phrase it in terms of those texts" (p. 21). In other words, genre is

the critic's heuristic tool, his [*sic*] chosen or defined way of persuading his audience to see the literary text in all its . . . fullness and then to relate this text to those that are similar or, more precisely, to those that may be similarly explained,

and she adds that "explanatory power, like affective power, tends to be greatest when the affinities are surprising" (p. 25).

There are some similarities between Rosmarin's approach to genre in literature and Black's approach to rhetorical criticism based on linguistic practices. Generic analysis is not precisely a method but an interpretative frame based on the ways in which language works in human interaction. What might eventuate in a generic comparison begins with close readings of texts. Such works can be widely understood to be somehow importantly similar, such as eulogies, with the critic in a search of what key symbolic moves they share. On the other hand, a close textual analysis can lead to an unusual generic claim, as occurs in Black's analysis of Chapman's Coatesville Address. That speech has no surface similarities to classic morality plays such as *Everyman* or *Abraham and Isaac*, but Black works to persuade us to see what it does as symbolically similar to the transformations effected in and through morality plays. Once "seen" or interpreted in those terms, we can understand why and how that address is able to speak to subsequent audiences.

An alternative, social scientific approach to genre has grown out of psychological studies of cognition in everyday life (Nelson, 1969). What is sometimes referred to as activity theory, based on its Russian roots, looks at speaking and

writing as tools that mediate social practices by means of genres. Such genres are functional types, typified semiotic responses to recurring conditions that a group of people involved in some activity network share, and such genres mediate varied social practices in multilayered, multifaceted ways. Every modern profession carries out its activities through written genres, which evolve as conditions change, illustrated by changes produced by developments in law, medicine, and academic disciplines. This approach to genres is called sociohistorical because it traces the history of various genres within and among networks of social practice.

Whereas historically form and genre were preeminently pedagogical tools for honing the skills of fledgling orators, and then became part of the array of methods used by modern rhetorical critics, these concepts have become tools in efforts to understand discourse in postmodern culture. Genre has become less the study of affinities between speeches or symbolic acts and more the study of linguistic conventions and usages that constitute and regulate the practices of academic disciplines, professions, organizations, and institutions. The research studies of Carol Berkenkotter and Thomas N. Huckin (1995), Michael Bernard-Donals (1998), Cheryl Geisler (1994), and Charles Bazerman (1994), among others, illustrate this shift in focus. Its historical roots lie in the work of Lev S. Vygotsky in the late 1920s and 1930s, and it continued in the 1960s in the work of developmental psychologists. In the 1980s, that tradition was related to lines of research into cognition in everyday life (Nelson, 1969; Russell, 1996). Michael J. Shapiro (1986) traces the philosophical support for this shift, noting that

[Martin] Heidegger displaces the ego-subject, the subject of consciousness, from the center of knowledge and puts in its place a historical, changing subject constituted as a set of skills and/or practices, including (and especially) linguistic practices, which “house” human existence. (p. 160)

The shift is also related to Michel Foucault’s notion of

“discursive practice”—the combination of discursively engendered objects, concepts, enunciative modes, and themes—which creates privileged places for some subjects who are constituted as agents of knowledge while others are relegated to silence. (Shapiro, p. 162)

In other words, Foucault not only studies them but also seeks to undermine the power bequeathed by prevailing discursive practices (Shapiro, 1986, p. 165; see also McKerrow, 1989).

As an illustration of these dynamics of genres in a community, Charles Bazerman (1994) outlines the development of journalistic practices, including the interaction between discursive forms and technology:

The history of literate forms is a history of inventions, not just of literate forms themselves, but of their use in social circumstances and of the development of social circumstances through the incorporation of literate forms. The history of journalism

and the public taste for news includes material inventions, such as printing presses, steam presses, Linotype machines, radio, television, and satellites. But it also obviously includes the invention of kinds of periodicals. . . . Further, within these periodical types are embedded the inventions of thousands of changing genres, such as the sports story, the front-page analysis, the op-ed article, the advice to the lovelorn, and the gossip column. These literate forms appear within changing social structures created around the texts, such as changing distribution networks for the periodicals; the emergence of the profession of journalism; . . . the creation of a consumer advertising culture, and the idea of public opinion. (pp. 38–39)

Here, genres reflect the conditions of a field or profession, and as these change, so do the practices of those engaged in it.

As concepts, form and genre are rooted in the communicative functions of language. Humans are able to communicate as members of linguistic communities that share vocabulary, syntax, and established patterns of usage. It is impossible to communicate one’s distinctive personal experiences; vocabulary identifies only classes of objects (desks) or emotions (anger) that include widely varying instances or gradations of feeling. Northrop Frye (1957) links genres to “typical recurring images,” “associative clusters,” and “complex variables.” He compares them with the *topoi* of rhetorical commonplaces and calls them “communicable units” through which our experiences and feelings can be made intelligible to others (p. 99; see also pp. 95–115, 245). Forms and genres are conventions of usage that make it possible to interact with others and to articulate and express values, attitudes, and beliefs.

These concepts, which operate at different levels of abstraction, are discussed by Mikhail Bakhtin (1986) in his essay “The Problem of Speech Genres.” Bakhtin differentiates between primary and secondary speech genres. Primary genres are found in the local communicative activities of everyday life, such as greetings or asking a friend for a favor. Secondary genres, such as scholarly and scientific articles, written forms of organizational communication (Sharer, 2001; Yates & Orlikowski, 1992), legal summons, subpoenas, and patents, codify activity in situations occurring over time and in distant locales; accordingly, secondary speech genres are “complex” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, pp. 7–8). Bakhtin (1986) describes speech genres as boundless in their diversity because each sphere contains a whole repertoire of them. Secondary genres emerge “in more complex and highly developed and organized cultural communication” (p. 62), such as the artistic, scientific, or sociopolitical spheres that absorb and digest various primary or simple genres. According to Bakhtin,

Language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. . . . [T]hematic content, style, and compositional structure—are inseparably linked to the *whole* of the utterance and are equally determined by the specific nature of

the particular sphere of communication. Each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own *relatively stable types* of these utterances. These we may call *speech genres*. (p. 60)

Primary genres are embedded in the local, intimate milieu in which they occur; in contrast, secondary genres are more removed, distant. Bakhtin (1986) wrote,

Secondary (complex) speech genres—novels, dramas, all kinds of scientific research, major genres of commentary and so forth—arise in more complex and comparatively highly developed and organized cultural communication (primarily written) that is artistic, scientific, sociopolitical, and so on. (p. 62)

This approach is developed at length by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), who focus on the genres that develop and evolve in academic cultures. Their central claim is

that genres are inherently dynamic rhetorical structures that can be manipulated according to the conditions of use, and that genre knowledge is therefore best conceptualized as a form of situated cognition embedded in disciplinary activities. (p. 3)

Five principles constitute the theoretical framework for their work: first, that genres are dynamic rhetorical forms developed from responses to recurrent situations that stabilize experience and give it coherence and meaning; second, that knowledge of genres is derived from participation in the communicative activities of daily and professional life; third, that genre knowledge embraces both form and content, including a sense of what content is appropriate to a particular purpose in a particular situation at a particular moment; fourth, that in using genre rules we constitute social structures and, simultaneously, reproduce these structures; and, finally, that genre conventions signal a discourse community's norms, epistemology, ideology, and social ontology. They apply these principles to the scientific journal article; to scientific peer review correspondence; to the evolution of a scholarly forum; and to curricular, pedagogical, and classroom genres.

Carolyn R. Miller's groundbreaking 1984 essay "Genre as Social Action" responded to competing views of genre in rhetorical studies, and her analysis links the work of rhetorical critics and students of practices in discursive communities, such as academic fields. Her approach to genre is pragmatic, claiming that "a classification of discourse will be rhetorically sound if it contributes to an understanding of how discourse works—that is, if it reflects the rhetorical experience of the people who create and interpret the discourse" (p. 152). She proposes that "in rhetoric the term 'genre' be limited to . . . a classification based in rhetorical practice and consequently open rather than closed and organized around situated actions (that is, pragmatic, rather than syntactic or semantic)" (p. 155). She calls this approach ethnomethodological because "it seeks

to explicate the knowledge that practice creates" (p. 155).² Bazerman (1994) also links ethnomethodology to the study of genres:

It has been the project of ethnomethodology to uncover the everyday understanding of the world that is revealed in our everyday action; equally it has been the project of cognitive psychology to find how we code that everyday understanding of the world into structures of thought that then guide our continuing daily actions. Both . . . analyze how we bring to bear our sense of the world in our momentary actions. (pp. 175–176)

Consistent with her pragmatic approach, Miller (1984) argues that "a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish" (p. 151). Accordingly, genre "must involve situation and motive" (p. 152), "a point of connection between intention and effect, an aspect of social action" (p. 153). Because genres rely on the social practices of a community that grow and fade through time, they are "an open class, with new members evolving, old ones decaying" (p. 153). Although genres are responses to them, "situations" cannot be material or subjective. They cannot be material because, as objective phenomena, they are unique and cannot recur (Stebbins, 1967, p. 154, in Miller, 1984, p. 156); similarly, situations cannot be a subjective configuration or "perception" because these, too, are unique. Put differently, "Recurrence is an intersubjective phenomenon, a social occurrence"; thus, genres "are social constructs" (p. 156). Here, Miller turns to the work of Alfred Schutz, who argues that our "stock of knowledge" is based on types through which we interpret new situations, "types that are created and shared and evolve through communication and, hence, reside in language," and adds that "language can be construed as the sedimentation of typical experiential schemata which are typically relevant in a society" (Schutz, 1971, p. 234, in Miller, 1984, p. 157). In other words, "it is through the process of typification that we create recurrence, analogies, similarities" (p. 157). Here, Miller cites the work of M. A. K. Halliday, who comments that

the apparently infinite number of different possible situations represents in reality a very much smaller number of general *types* of situations, which we can describe in such terms as "players instructing novice in a game," "mother reading bedtime story to child," "customer ordering goods over the telephone," "teacher guiding pupils," "discussion of a poem," and the like. (Halliday, 1978, p. 29, in Miller, p. 157)

Although situations are infinite, their typifications are limited.

At issue, however, is how substantive, stylistic, and situational elements fuse in a genre. Kenneth Burke (1968) describes form as "an arousing and fulfillment of desire. A work has form in so far as one part of it leads a

reader to anticipate another part, to be gratified by the sequence” (p. 124). In other words, form shapes response to content by giving instruction about how to perceive and interpret, which disposes the audience to respond in a certain way. “Seen, thus, form becomes a kind of meta-information, with both semantic value (as information) and syntactic (or formal) value. Form and substance thus bear a hierarchical relationship to each other” (Miller, 1984, p. 159); thus, “we can think of form, substance and context as relative, not absolute; they occur at many levels on a hierarchy of meaning.” In other words, “form at one level becomes an aspect of substance at a higher level” (Miller, 1984, p. 160). As an illustration, she points to a hierarchic model developed by Thomas S. Frenz and Thomas B. Farrell (1976), which is composed of context, episodes, and symbolic acts. Context “specifies the criteria for interpreting both the meaningfulness and propriety of any communicative event.” Context has two hierarchic levels—form of life and encounters. “Form of life” refers to “cultural patterns, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, that give significance to actions, both linguistic and nonlinguistic.” Encounters “particularize form of life through rules of propriety” (Frenz & Farrell, 1976, p. 335). The second level of the hierarchy is the episode, a “rule-conforming sequence of symbolic acts generated by two or more actors who are collectively oriented toward emergent goals” (p. 336). The third and lowest level is the symbolic act, which comprises “verbal and/or non-verbal utterances which express intentionality” (p. 340) and is the “component” of the episode. Thus, what is form at one level becomes content at another, and at each level, form is a frame that instructs us about how to interpret content.

The complex relationships between form and content at different levels of abstraction are part of the ways in which we make meaning, ways in which we expand our rhetorical repertoire. Our ability to understand the form-content relationships created in communal practice are aspects of our social competence, but they also represent communicative potentials. Miller (1984) writes,

What we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms. . . . We learn, more importantly, what ends we may have: that we may eulogize, apologize, recommend one person to another, instruct customers on behalf of a manufacturer, take on an official role, account for progress in achieving goals. We learn to understand better the situations in which we find ourselves and the potentials for failure and success in acting together. As a recurrent, significant action, a genre embodies an aspect of cultural rationality. (p. 165)

Miller’s conclusion emphasizes the ways in which social knowledge and language competence teach us how to adopt personae and perform appropriate symbolic acts and to recognize such action in others, which are essential elements in creating and interpreting the discourse that is a part of our daily life as communicators.

Genres are forms that exist in and are understood by members of communities. As such, they are affected by context, analogous to what Ludwig Wittgenstein referred to as language games, meanings that arise out of rule-governed usage, like the rules that create games such as bridge and soccer. Contexts, too, are hierarchical. What was form at one level becomes an aspect of substance at another level, echoing Bakhtin’s view of primary and secondary genres. In other words, “Conventions of form and substance combine according to constitutive rules to create the typified rhetorical action of the eulogy; in addition, the action is interpretable under regulative rules provided by larger contexts, like religion or public affairs” (Miller, 1984, p. 161). In other words, genres “exist” at different levels of abstraction.

Bakhtin (1986), too, emphasizes the fusion of form and content and the merging of generic elements, or what he refers to as *heteroglossia*, modes of speaking or writing that people learn to mimic, weave together, and manipulate, such as “formal letter” and “grocery list,” or “university lecture” and “personal anecdote” (see also Geertz, 1980). Samuel McCormick (2003) illustrates this process at work in a vernacular speech that reorganizes features of integrationist and nationalist ways of speaking drawn from two key strands in African American public discourse. This analysis is consistent with Bakhtin’s (2004) view that any language stratifies itself into many voices: “social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions” (p. 674). This diversity of voice, Bakhtin asserts, is the defining characteristic of the novel as a genre, but McCormick’s analysis illustrates similar processes at work in public address.

Although form and genre once were pedagogical tools for honing the skills of fledgling orators and then became methods used by modern rhetorical critics, at present these concepts have become tools in efforts to understand discourse in postmodern culture. Genre studies are now less concerned with identifying similarities among speeches or symbolic acts and more concerned with the linguistic conventions and usages that constitute and regulate the practices of academic disciplines, professions, organizations, and institutions.

Notes

1. In 1950, Harold Zyskind innovatively combined close textual analysis with generic criticism, using the Aristotelian genres as a basis for determining whether the Gettysburg Address was best understood as epideictic or deliberative rhetoric. He asserted an important principle, that the value of a generic approach could be tested by asking, “Are the meaning and purpose of the Address—in its uniqueness—in any way illuminated by an analysis of it as belonging to that genre?”

2. In *A Pragmatic Theory of Rhetoric*, Walter H. Beale (1987) writes that pragmatic theory “is concerned primarily with *what human beings do with discourse . . . with the act of discourse as a human action, in its typicality and in its uniqueness*” (p. 1).

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DRAMATIC ELEMENTS IN MESSAGES

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Picture this. Maybe, remember this! You're a child. You're playing in your backyard sandbox with your sibling. He or she throws sand in your face. You run to Mother to tattle. "Freddie threw sand at me again," you exclaim. "Yes, but you hit me first" is his reply. "But you called me a bad name, that's why," you retort. (You each "punctuate" your squabble differently, begin your narration of the event at some self-serving turn of events.)

Mom's had it with this scenario. She's heard it before. "You know the rules," she says for the fifth time: "No throwing sand, period! You don't go near the sandbox, the jungle gym, or the swings, neither of you, for a week! Now go do your homework." In a day or two, there're hugs and kisses and a milder tone of voice. You've learned your lesson—maybe.

That's drama.

Here's another, on a no-doubt-incomparable plane of importance. It's December 8, 1941. The day before, Japanese planes destroyed America's Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, except for aircraft carriers then at sea. President Franklin D. Roosevelt addresses a joint session of Congress to ask for a declaration of war. He details in general fashion the extent of the aggression on this U.S. territory, including heavy loss of military personnel. He lists Japanese attacks on Malaya, Hong Kong, Guam, the Philippines, and Wake and Midway islands as well, extending the scope of Japan's violation of the rules of international relationship. Using words such as "infamy," "dastardly," "sought to deceive," and "grave danger," Roosevelt identifies the bad guys against whom the "American people" will rise up "in their righteous might."

"The very life and safety of our nation" is at stake, Roosevelt says. "All measures [will] be taken for our

defense . . . no matter how long it may take us." "Unbounded determination" will energize this effort. In the end, "we . . . will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again." "Absolute victory" is the goal. "We will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us God."

That's drama.

The Japanese would have "punctuated" this narrative differently, to be sure. References to an oil embargo, for example, might have preceded accounts of Nippon warships setting sail for Oahu.

Anyway, America did win that war. America sacrificed greatly at the front and at home to make it all happen. Contra the propaganda of the Japanese warlords, U.S. soldiers did not commit atrocities, postwar, on Japanese civilians. The United States made Japan's formerly dictatorial polity a model democracy, quite an improvement. It earned the privilege of buying Japanese cars, radios, TV sets, and cameras in exchange for dollars and raw materials. Or something like that!

Not to make light too offensively of that memorable era in American history, its moment of drama parallels, in rhetorical form and in the abstract, the messages exchanged between Mom and the kids perhaps in your kitchen several years ago. Both narratives fall under the heading of a most rudimentary definition of drama: moral conflict to set right a situation gone wrong or to keep right a situation that could go wrong.

To tease out the implications of that simple construction, if it's moral conflict, at least one human being has to be involved: if not woman against woman, Mom against the kids, or nation against nation, then man against nature. Or, alternatively, a morally sensitive being, namely a person,

has to be involved in the telling of the tale, at any rate. Only creatures with language possess morality.

If it's conflict, then there'll be finger pointing, blame laying, or guilt tripping, followed by punishment of some kind. Something's gone wrong. "You did it" and "Here's how you're going to have to pay" nicely serve as generic indictment and disciplinary announcement. There can't be conflict without talk like that, talk of crime or mistakenness. And the offended can't appropriately follow up on such an accusatory message by saying, "Fine, it's OK with us, go ahead, keep doing it, for all we care." A response won't be fully "dramatic" unless a person or persons intervene in some way, even if only to scold and suggest improvement. A verbal "slap on the wrist" fits with a charge of mistakenness. A long stint in prison or even a sentence of death, sad to say, still serves as penalty for crimes and evils in many parts of the world.

What about the "unbounded determination" and effort it's going to take to win through to "absolute victory," or whatever? There's a sense in which dramatic actors must punish themselves to bring it all to pass. Self-discipline, self-denial, "mortification," it's often called: In dramatic conflict, persons usually have to direct their acts of sacrifice inward as well as outward. Even Mom had to stop what she wanted to be doing, raise her voice, gin up her emotions, and role-play the scold to get you back on the straight and narrow. It wasn't fun for her, either.

How does one know that something has gone wrong in the first place? There must be "rules" of some kind, specific to a given culture, subculture, polity, or context, that the "bad guys or gals" have broken. Such rules of behavior and relationship might be written down, as in the legal codes of conduct the state imposes on its citizens through the actions of legislatures, the police, and courts of law. Or the rules of behavior and relationship might be unwritten, such as the ones that a culture or society imposes on its members in stealth fashion. Dress codes, dating practices, the forms that structure mannered conversations, the dramas enacted at ceremonies, parties, and other social gatherings—the "rules" that circumscribe the social butterflies active therein are not found in statute books, though they will often surface in the advice columns found in newspapers. Want to discover whether an unwritten "rule" is really a rule? Break it and see! The reaction to your social "crime" will be instructive, for sure.

What's still missing from this brief anatomy of drama? It's "moral conflict to set right a situation gone wrong." "No pain, no gain," the saying goes. After the pain, the punishment, the penalty, the suffering, what do you have, what's the gain? It's moral order restored, at least temporarily. That's usually the stated hope. You might have learned something in the "college of hard knocks." That, too, is a potential gain after the pain. Human relationships may feel right again, if the penalty fits the "crime." Isn't rehabilitation the ideal goal of a stint in prison, movement maybe to a halfway house or probation, and then restoration to complete citizenship? To borrow language from the highest orders of morality, dramas aim toward messages and

resolutions of "redemption": The United States atop the free world after 1945; Japan and Germany, now America's friends and allies, model democracies and powerhouse economies within two decades; Mom's embrace and, one would hope, reconciliation between sister and brother.

- A moral order of some kind, held together by rules of relationship applied by the "Moms" of the world, the "big shots" in authority
- Disorder by violation, through weakness, indifference, perversity, or commitment to a different social or political "order"
- Depending on who's telling the story, guilty bad guys who did the awful deed, opposed by the righteous good guys who act to set things aright
- Maybe a constructive or rebellious, charitable or hostile preparatory attitude that will energize or moderate the intended, corrective action, determine its degree or extent
- A sacrificial act or series of such actions, other directed in the form of punishment of one kind or another and/or self-directed in the form of mortifying, self-interfering efforts, all the way from the mild, muscular exertion of a gesticulating Mom to the martyrdom of an M. L. King, Jr.
- Morally corrective purposes and the means, steps, or stages by which to achieve them, a vision of redemption of some sort, restoration of order, things put back together again where they belong or, preferably, better conditions still!
- Risk, chance, maybe danger in the choice and pursuit of their purpose, as dramatic actors, by definition finite and uncertain human beings, reconnoiter resistances and calculate the odds of success in their quest to set right the moral wrong, improve their problematic situation, the stakes being enormous in declarations of war, high in marriage proposals, middling in negotiations at a car dealership, and likely minimal in the humane reproach of a sand thrower: Neither Moms nor presidents know for sure their selection of strategy will deliver, their gamble pay off

That's drama. Messages that contain these elements are dramatic indeed. Where do these features of discourse originate in talk on whatever level of social interaction—for example, the family/child level; the school/student level; the church, synagogue, mosque, temple/parishioner level; the society/member level; the company/employee level; the state/citizen level; the UN, international agreement/nation-state level; you name it? (Each level or dramatic arena will, of course, have its own particular rules and procedures for enforcement, and its own names for these generalized moments or stages of development.) Where, at bottom, do these elements of drama come from, and why is it important to know?

Drama as Rooted in the Content Parts of Speech

This chapter is titled "Dramatic Elements in Messages." Here's where the focus gets down to the atomic layer of

drama. Language users can't escape drama in their talk and thought. It is implicit—moral conflict and human struggles to overcome it or avoid it are implicit—in the words that make up the subjects and predicates of speech. What follows will seem ho-hum familiar to you. Its implications may not be.

A subject, the thing or idea a sentence makes a statement about, and a predicate, the sentence part that tells what the subject is, does, or has done to it, are put together in English with four building blocks. These four building blocks can be called the “content parts of speech,” since they make up the content, the “meat and potatoes” so to speak, of the spoken or written sentence. You know what they are. They are nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Dictionaries, grammars, and books written by linguists give us the following meanings for these four building blocks of the subjects and predicates that make up sentences:

- Noun: a word, or group of words, that names a person, place, thing, or idea.
- Verb: a word, or group of words, that states an action that is taken or states what type of being a subject has, what it is.
- Adjective: a word, or group of words, that describes a noun, that is, describes a person, place, thing, or idea, offers a sharper picture of what it is, tells “what kind.”
- Adverb: a word, or group of words, that describes a verb, adjective, or other adverb, a word that indicates, for instance, why an action took place, how it was accomplished, when and where it happened, and the *manner* in which it was carried out.

Armed with these definitions of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs—the building blocks of the subjects and predicates that go together to make up sentences—the basic forms of thought the English language puts in the mind can now be stated. In terms of traditional grammar—the subject being the main idea and the predicate being what is said about that main idea—the following is clear:

In English discourse,

- A noun subject actor or receiver of action (the “agent” or the “patient,” to use the words linguists call them) performs or receives a verbal action (the who and the what)

or

- A noun subject is identified, classified, or given an attribute or sensation, if the verb is a linking verb, such as “is” or “feels” (the who and the what)
- For some usually adverbial purpose, end, or goal (the why)
- By way of some usually adverbial means or cause (the how)
- To some usually adverbial extent or degree or with some usually adverbial quality or attitude (the manner in which the action is prepared for and/or carried out)

- Within, in terms of, and in response to a usually adverbial, time-and-place scene, situation, or context (the when and the where of the action)
- The thought of the verb is often completed with what is called a “predicate complement” noun or adjective of some kind
- Noun subjects and objects are often modified by adjectives

These, then, in abbreviated summary, are the basic forms of thought expressed in statements about anything—humans, nonverbal animals, vegetables, inanimate materials, and ideas: noun subject actor or receiver of action (or noun subject identified, etc.), verbal act, typically adverbial purpose, means, manner, and scene.

The Implicitly Moral Nature of This General Pattern of Verbal Action

This anatomy of the most basic forms of thought expressed in English discourse may not seem very “dramatic” on its face. Nobody necessarily gets yelled at, verbally knocked around, when subjects and predicates are put together, especially when describing flowers growing in a garden, or planets circling the sun. If, however, one looks closely at the word *purpose* and follows through on its implications, one may think differently. An actor or “agent” performing an action for a purpose is at the center of language as drama. If not up to its ears, the word *purpose* is up to its knees in potential moral conflict. Consider the following.

The word *purpose*, first of all, names a “negative.” It names something that does not yet exist or something that does not yet exist in sufficient quantity, quality, or duration. If your purpose is to win a ballgame, you get in shape, practice hard, and cooperate with your teammates in drills that perfect the plays the coach has designed. The victory on the field or court though—the purpose or aim of your efforts—has not yet come to pass at the time you formulate or speak of your purpose. The victory, your purpose, is still in the future. And the future is a “negative” for the present. It has not happened yet.

The same holds true even for politicians whose purpose is merely to maintain things the way they are. They don't want anything new or different from the status quo, as it is labeled. All the laws and economic arrangements presently in place are just fine, they feel. These conservative statesmen and women or “reactionary” social-movement leaders oppose innovators and revolutionaries. Problem: The future isn't here yet. It is still a negative. What will it be filled with? The conservative status quo? Or revolutionary change and innovation? The purpose these resistance politicians or reactionary social-movement leaders will serve is one of lengthening the duration, enhancing the quantity and perhaps the quality, of the kind of

government and social system the nation currently has. Their purpose, like that of the ballplayers, points ahead in time to a set of conditions that do not yet exist, because the future does not yet exist.

Naming as it does a “not yet” or an “is not the case,” the notion of a “purpose” epitomizes language as verbal action, in contrast to language as a passive “mirror on nature.” “Purpose” points up how language can superimpose on the concrete natural conditions around us something that is “not there.” Just as your sought-after college diploma is “not yet” in your pocket, there’s probably “no” elephant stampeding through the room you’re in at this moment. “No elephant” is a concept you can bring to your present observations as you look to your left and your right. A chair might be materially there, along with a desk or table and a computer. But “no” playful pachyderm. “Purpose” and the negative destabilize a scientific or positivist view of language. They undermine an “objective” and therefore value-free notion of verbal description. Something is happening in language you can’t see, hear, feel, taste, or smell. Could it be—drama?

The social psychologist Abraham Maslow (1970) drew a famous diagram in the shape of a pyramid. He called it the hierarchy of human needs and motivations. He could have called the common human needs he lists in ascending order, lower to higher, a hierarchy of human purposes. Certainly, all persons pursue in their daily activities the ends and goals Maslow deems generally important for human life and success.

On the bottom tier of the pyramid, Maslow lists those physical needs humans directly share with nonverbal animals. They are those of food, drink, cover, shelter, reproduction, and elimination. Higher motivations include safety, belongingness, and esteem. At the pinnacle of the pyramid is the motive of self-actualization, self-fulfillment.

The moral drama that the word *purpose* conjures in the mind by way of hints and suggestions can be seen in a comparison and contrast between humans and other animals on Maslow’s lowest level of needs and motivations. The physical needs of humans Maslow cites are exactly the same, on some level of abstraction anyway, as those of insects and birds, squirrels, and chimpanzees. All animals, human and nonhuman, need and seek after, food, drink, shelter or habitat of some kind, reproduction, and so on. The difference is when nonhuman animals do not meet these needs, they get hungry, thirsty, vulnerable to danger and the elements, and deprived of offspring. When humans do not meet these needs, they get hungry, thirsty, vulnerable to danger and the elements, and deprived of offspring—and they get shamed! The poor themselves are deemed guilty for not properly providing for themselves and their dependents, a typical 19th-century approach to the problems of hunger and homelessness in a society. Or the social order that allows such deprivations to exist within it is blamed, a typical 20th- and 21st-century approach to the

problems of hunger and want. Somebody or some condition is blamed. Moral conflict transpires. Dramas of correction and redemption ensue.

The “higher” human needs and motives with a place in Maslow’s pyramid—safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-fulfillment—are no less burdened by moral judgment. Persons who neglect their safety needs and suffer for that neglect didn’t take proper “care,” their neighbors might say. A recluse who doesn’t “belong” anywhere or has no friends, is often stigmatized as a “loner” or social outcast. To a great extent, “esteem” is meted out according to our location on the “social ladder,” within our community of associates. One is deemed “estimable” or “not estimable” by way of that social standing. Men and women with talent who never use it to good advantage are sometimes labeled “failures” in life. In the pursuit of safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization, persons are no less open to ethical criticism and immersed in drama than in their search for food, clothing, and shelter.

That’s why Erving Goffman (1959, 1967), a sociologist, said that human beings in society are ritually vulnerable. By that he meant that humans are susceptible to moral judgment by those around them. Whether they fulfill their needs and purposes, lower or higher, is tinged with moral danger. “Face” is at stake. Men and women can hardly help thinking of “good” and “bad,” “valuable” and “worthless,” when they confront, contemplate, and employ the word *purpose*.

Not Only Whether but Also How

The word *purpose* connotes a rule-governed process of goal seeking, as well as a morally tenuous burden to meet one’s needs, to some extent at least, in the end. Potential moral censure goes not only with *whether* those fundamental human aims and resolves are fulfilled but also *how* they are fulfilled. All scenes, contexts, and hierarchies within which symbol users operate are circumscribed by rules (Cushman, 1977). Even behind closed doors, the “moral law” inside the human mind that inspired the philosopher Immanuel Kant with such “wonder” works its censorious will. The ultimate scene of human action, the literary scholar Tim Crusius (1990) says, is “language” and the intuition of the negative that suffuses it. And the negative, author of the *thou-shalt-nots*, judges persons omnipresently (Appel, 1993a, 1993b).

To wit: Unlike crows and coyotes, human beings do not descend on a farmer’s field to sate their hunger and take what vegetables or livestock they want, without fear of legal action. At the supermarket, they don’t stuff their shopping cart with goodies and wheel them out to the car, without stopping first at the checkout counter to pay. They hardly walk down a tree-lined suburban street, notice a beautiful home across a well-manicured lawn, and say to their spouse next to them, “That would be a great place to live! Let’s move in and make it our own

tonight.” They don’t pass a strange and gorgeous woman, or handsome man, on the street, and go up and say, “I’ve decided you and I are going to make a baby right now.” Symbolizing animals can’t “strike it rich” at banks and convenience stores with a pistol or an Uzi, without a likely and long vacation behind bars. How they strategize the pursuit of their purposes is even more fraught with potential moral conflict than whether they bring them to pass. Food, safety, friends, status—whatever it is they want, human animals have to conform to the *thou-shalt-nots* of society, or else!

Moral Women and Men, OK, but “Moral” Animals in Nature, Vegetables, and Minerals? Get Real!

An obvious issue is this one: If the notion of a morally tinged “purpose” is inherent and inescapable in messages about distinctively human actions, what about descriptions of the nonhuman world? Obviously, symbol users have to access these same parts of speech and forms of thought in their representations of anything and everything. Language offers no other content terms and meanings to work with. How does a claim of ubiquitous drama dovetail with talk about creatures and beings that have nothing to do with morality or ethics?

Consider these common turns of phrase and modes of thought that employ exactly the same terms for moral activity used to describe people:

- The stalking *action* of the lions went unnoticed by the wildebeests.
- The hydraulic *action* of the running water smoothed the edges of the rocks.
- Our car’s engine *acted up* on the trip last week.
- A chemical *agent* in the dish soap cut the grease on the silverware.
- The mother bird gathered twigs for the *purpose* of building a nest.

Lions, water, automobiles, detergents, and birds are not dramatic beings. None of them has anything at all to do with *moral* conflict. They are innocent of laws and rules. Not one experiences guilt or shame. Yet the same basic terms that express what they do also describe the legal *action* Sam took against George, the insurance *agent* who sells medical policies, and the spiritual *purposes* of the youth group on a religious retreat. Speakers and writers use these same basic descriptive concepts with respect to nonhuman beings without a sense of metaphor, without a sense of comparing two things that are essentially dissimilar. What gives?

What gives is that the subtleties of the drama inherent in language escape the modern “scientific” mind. Contemporary men and women aren’t quite as aware that they are investing rocks, plants, and nonhuman animals

with something akin to moral agency in such declarations as follows:

- The earth revolves around the sun once a year at a 23½-degree slant, generating the four seasons.
- The sun shone down on us, warming our bodies.
- Trees grow their branches toward the sunlight to facilitate photosynthesis and stay alive and healthy.
- A pack of African wild dogs ripped the baby zebra to shreds to satisfy their hunger.

Moral agent: a being that has a capacity for self-initiated action that can effect changes in its environment or in itself for good or ill, for benefit or harm. Each of the noun subject “actors” or “agents” in the sentences above are declared to be doing something to bring about changes in their environment for good or ill. The earth “revolves” on a slant to generate the four picturesque and productive seasons of the year. That’s the implication. The sun “shines” so as to bring warmth and life to the denizens of Planet Earth. That’s the implication. Trees “grow” their branches in a certain direction to make it possible for them to bear fruit to eat, provide shade and beauty for body and eyes, and furnish birds and other animals with a safe habitat. That’s the implication. African wild dogs “rip” a poor little baby zebra apart, live, to preserve themselves and their pups, yes, but they do so in such a vicious, cruel, and disgusting way, no one would want them around as house pets or team mascots. That’s the implication. These four “agents”—and that’s what the linguists call *any* subject in an active voice, action verb sentence, human or nonhuman—are represented as performing four “actions,” three of which do “good” and one does something “bad,” or at least morally ambiguous. True, African wild dogs have to live, but can’t they display better table manners?

Persons in primitive or archaic cultures would not have required such subtle analysis to understand that they were investing the nonhuman world of animals, plants, and inanimate objects with moral potencies via their speech. They did so openly, naturally, consciously. Following the cues intrinsic to language more naively than modern women and men, they revered, dreaded, even worshipped rocks and trees, rivers and storms as magical, living beings. Primitive peoples saw them as gods who could bring blessings or curses on themselves and their tribe. Their religion was “animism,” the anthropologists and theologians say. In animism, individual animals and plants, nonliving things and natural processes are seen to possess “souls” and supernatural powers by which to bring benefit or harm to the human realm. Nonhuman beings are conceived to be free moral agents, only more majestic than humans in their might and efficacy. The philosopher Ernst Cassirer (1946/1953) theorized that language began in this very way, via the projection of “momentary deities,” “momentary gods,” as he labeled humanity’s first words, on the sheer brute materials of the world as it is (pp. 17–18, 71).

The inherent thrust in language toward higher orders of abstraction led eventually to polytheism, where the

god of *this* river metamorphosed into the god of all rivers, and thence to monotheism, in which “acts” of nature have become the “acts” of one God. Read your insurance policies on hurricanes and floods, tornadoes and earthquakes, for particulars.

The philosopher of language most directly behind what’s been said to this point is Kenneth Burke. He’s certainly the most influential American rhetorician of the past 100 years. His name is the one, in the United States, most commonly associated with drama in discourse and life. Burke (1954) says, “Spontaneous speech is not a naming at all, but [rather] a system of attitudes, of implicit exhortations” (p. 177). Language “exhorts” to moral action, he asserts, or prompts an interpretation of phenomena, *all* phenomena, as in some way inscribed with moral action.

Burke (1954) adds, with respect to the parts of speech and their latent meanings,

[Jeremy] Bentham [a 19th-century British philosopher] detected a kind of organic flaw in the nature of speech, at least as regards the linguistic ideals which we now ask our vocabularies to embody [that is, the ideal of detached, “scientific,” value free reportage and description]. Speech takes its shape from the fact that it is used by people acting together. It is an adjunct of action. It thus tends naturally toward the use of implicit moral weightings, as the names for things and operations smuggle in connotations of *good* and *bad* [italics in original], a noun tending to carry with it a kind of invisible adjective, and a verb an invisible adverb. Our attempts at impersonality [read “objectivity”], as Bentham noted, are generally made by the use of question-begging words, which are impersonal only insofar as speaker and auditor share the same interests. (pp. 191–192)

Burke (1966) lays great stress on the ways the symbolizing animal, *Homo sapiens*, sees the “positives” of nature through the eyes of “moral negativity,” on the way “man [and woman] must perceive nature through the fog of symbol-ridden social structures that he [also she] has erected atop nature. Material things,” Burke says, “would thus be like outward manifestations of the forms which are imposed upon the intuiting of nature by language [necessarily infused and replete with moral action] and by the sociopolitical orders [i.e., rule-based moral hierarchies] that are interwoven with language.” Thus, “Nature, as perceived by the word-using animal, would be not just the less-than-verbal thing that we usually take it to be. Rather, as so conceived and perceived, it would be infused with the spirit of words, . . . full of gods, . . . a fantastic pageantry, a parade of masques and costumes and guild-like mysteries” (pp. 378–379; Burke, 1961/1970, pp. 17–23, 172–241).

The Dramatic Elements in Language and Life: A Reprise and Elaboration

What should be clear by now is this: The ultimate form or pattern of linguistic utterance that results from the trajectory

of implications begun by the general pattern of verbal action found in the definitions of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs (the content parts of speech), merely implicitly moral, is an explicitly moral pattern of verbal action found in discourse about distinctively human activity and in much discourse about nonhuman activity, namely, mythology, astrology, theology, and the “acts of God” clauses of insurance policies. Such moral drama, where scenes of action (the when and the where) are ethically charged; where featured actors and their opponents (the who) are good or bad, or some variation thereof; where the actions they take (the what) atone for wrongdoing sacrificially through victimizing punishments or mortifying self-denial; where purposes and the means to achieve those goals (the why and the how) are morally and redemptively corrective, the protagonist in the drama hopes anyway, though he or she cannot be sure ahead of time; and where attitudes (the manner or “incipient actions”) are pious or impious, repentant or rebellious, morally constructive or perverse—such components of moral conflict fashion the very lens through which symbol users are fated to interpret even the nonsymbolic motions of stars and electrons, whales and microbes.

Up to this point, *behavior* gone wrong has occupied center stage in this gambit in dramatic criticism. A more comprehensive question to ask with respect to the inception of drama in discourse and life is this one: What, in a given context, may one not *do* or not fail to do, yes, but also not *believe* or not fail to believe, not *accept* or not fail to accept, or else—what? Belief “gone wrong” is often just as censurable as behavior gone wrong in the religious, political, or social life of the being Burke calls *Homo loquax*.

Start again with the example of language used most thoroughly and transcendently: theology. In orthodox Protestant Christianity, for instance, the formula is “Scripture alone, grace alone, faith alone.” What a person does or does not *believe* answers most directly what Burke calls the defining question for self-identity. “What are you being a Christian *against*” [italics added] (1969a, p. 34) (substitute for “Christian” any label you wish). It was not—and is not mainly today—material conduct that separated Protestant from Catholic or Christian from non-Christian, to cite but one set of examples of religious drama. The Catholic English Queen “Bloody Mary” (1553–1558) killed Protestants, and Calvin and Zwingli’s Protestants killed Anabaptists, for what those “heretics” *didn’t believe*. In 1648, Europe’s Peace of Westphalia ended a century of violent conflict between Protestants and Catholics substantially over the question of religious faith.

Protestant and Catholic Christians have put such physical enmity behind them, even in Northern Ireland. Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq, however, exemplify, in the Muslim world, that the extremes of religious drama are still extant and problematic, even in the 21st century.

Look for the same “faith” dynamic, with far less bloodshed to be sure, on display in the ongoing dispute

between neo-Darwinian evolutionists and advocates of Intelligent Design that's come to verbal blows even in a court of law. Dover, Pennsylvania, was the venue, in 2005. Kansas has seen a similar confrontation. Strict orthodox evolutionists prescind from the fellowship of the righteous even those who believe in an élan vital or "emergent" or "creative" life force (Bergson, 1911; Chardin, 1959; Whitehead, 1929) that has complexified and "improved" living beings in the direction of heightened powers of adaptation. Biology, to Neo-Darwinians, is founded on principles of nonteleological mutation and "natural selection."

Creationists and defenders of Design say, no, life forms on earth are too wondrously complex and symmetrical in form for explanations founded on blind accident. A transcendental Power capable of intentional action must have planned it all, or even intervened at crucial moments, as in the generation of eyes.

The dramatic point is that Designers don't get published in mainstream scientific journals and neo-Darwinians are anathema at the pro-Design Discovery Institute. Beliefs, more so than physical actions, morally separate "good" scientists from "bad" scientists, "good guys" from "bad guys," on this seemingly persistent issue—depending on which direction you're coming from!

An Example of Dramatic Conflict, Actual or Potential, One Will Have Had to Experience to Get to College

Preschool children turn 5 or 6 and have to leave the rule-governed enclave called "family," at least for part of each weekday. They go to school. They go to kindergarten, then elementary school, then middle school, then high school. Maybe later, they go to college. Talk about tightly controlled, rule-governed environments!

Take, for instance, the drama of human relations at the high school level. Ideally, a student has to fulfill a set of stated requirements to pass a particular course, based on things such as homework, tests, compositions, and class participation. The student has to successfully complete a certain number of courses to advance to the grade above and/or perhaps achieve a cumulative grade point average established by the school directors, principals, and faculty, the big wheels, the rule makers, in this particular hierarchy/institution. Proceeding satisfactorily through all four grades—freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior years—the student graduates with pomp and circumstance, family hugs and kisses, and photographs proudly framed.

Assume that the general requirement for each course is a 60% average on work submitted and an overall 2.5 grade point average for one's entire schedule of subjects. That means, get an average of 70%, or a "C," on all your schoolwork and no less than a 60%, or "D," in any one course. Those are the rules. They establish a certain "moral order"

in school and community. Nobody gets a diploma from Jonesville High without producing work at this level of competence.

In high school, then, the curricular drama begins with posted "course and graduation requirements." Things begin to go wrong for students at Jonesville when their grades slip below 60% in one or more courses at the end of a marking period. "Failure notices" go out to parents. A guidance counselor requests an interview. Athletic coaches admonish about potential ineligibility for sports. Detention hall or extra in-school study time may loom. A period of "probation" might be officially invoked. The "finger of blame" points ever more directly and threateningly at these errant scholars. Overtly dramatic elements pervade their rhetorical context.

If low enough grades continue across two or three or more courses, "failing" students may have to "take the year over." They are "held back." Or they are forced to go to summer school when they'd rather be working and earning money, or vacationing at some camp for athletes or cheerleaders or other youth groups. They must "pay a price" for their academic missteps.

The "price having been paid," their "lesson having been learned," improvement having been shown, formerly "failing" students, students "at risk," often become successful students in the academic year(s) to follow. Their "suffering" has brought them new perspectives and understandings. They see things differently now, oftentimes anyway. They work harder and go on to better grades and ultimate graduation.

Course requirements, low grades, warning notices, and maybe academic probation, a failing effort across one's academic load of classes, being held back or suffering through summer school; then, one hopes, improvement and success and eventual graduation: These are the stages of moral drama as construed and applied in the theater of life called high school.

The word *potential* appearing in the heading above is implicit in drama in any sphere of human action, certainly including high school. Recall the featured definition in page 267 of this chapter. Drama: moral conflict to set right a situation gone wrong or *keep right, a situation that could go wrong*. Elements of drama are tacitly in play even in messages that seek to prevent the rule violations that inaugurate the "rising action" of moral conflict. Even when things are going fine for a person in an institution or other venue of drama—a family, a school, a corporation, or any large or small grouping—a threat hangs in the air. Children, students, employees, citizens, members of whatever organization or polity you can think of *might* break the rules. "Police" are on guard in the form of parents, teachers, hall monitors, foremen, gossips, tattletales, surveillance cameras, the cop on the beat, a standing army, you name it, to protect against just such a contingency.

Temptation is omnipresent. Humans can be morally weak, out of control, potentially ambivalent, subversive of

attitude, uncaring, or physically and mentally incompetent in the face of the rigors of rule-governed social life. When she called you at 6:15 a.m. to wake up, get up, get washed and dressed, and fed a bit of breakfast (the school bus comes in 1 hour!), Mom was summoning you to sacrifice, self-discipline, in the face of possible demerit. Proleptic guilt, as it were, tense anticipation of what might happen *if*, motivates as a deterrent to potential “crime” even before the fact. In the midst of moral order on the human plane, moral disorder hovers within and around as a menacing possibility.

Overlapping scenes of dramatic action complicate this picture yet further. Social expectations now stigmatize the high school “dropout.” A 100 years ago, an eighth-grade education was an acceptable norm. Not so today. It’s a high school diploma, then college or trade school or a job. Dropouts who then loiter and loaf are doubly targets of social censure.

Mom’s wake-up call summoned you to constructive moral action on multiple fronts.

Future Directions

An unresolved question, perhaps an unresolvable question, in the philosophy of language is this one: How creative is discourse in its relationship to the “real world” of rocks and trees, oceans and mountains, atoms and stars? What’s been called the “naïve verbal realism” of the 17th-century philosopher René Descartes may still be in fashion in scientific communities. Such a representationalist, empiricist, even positivist point of view is not, however, in general favor today among philosophers, rhetoricians, or literary and cultural critics. A “Postmodern” conception of language has been particularly influential from, say, 1970 to the early 21st century. In such a view, Richard Tarnas (1991) has argued, all “truth,” argument, and validity are “multiple, local, and temporal.” (pp. 397, 401). There are no universals. There are no foundations to knowledge. Indeterminacy reigns. “Reality” is socially constructed, via language, at a time and place. “All human understanding is interpretation, and no interpretation is final” (p. 397). Language, to the Postmodernists, the communication scholar Trevor Melia says, is something like an untethered balloon, ungrounded in the hard resistances of this universe.

Burke (1954) appears to take a middle position on this subject. All human understanding is interpretation, yes, and no interpretation is final—up to a point. That point is the ontological nature of symbolizing animals themselves, the “what they are” in partial contrast to “what they can know.” Humans are universally immersed in language and drama, Burke (1966) suggests. That’s a foundation of a kind, an ontological foundation. And the symbolic constructions that humans bring to their “reality,” though both interpretive and time and place bound, are disciplined by the “recalcitrance” of that material world, Burke (1954) maintains. Language necessarily superimposes dramatic

meanings on the world of objects, that’s true. In the process, however, it not only “selects” via abstraction and “deflects” by way of its inherent burden of tunnel vision, but it also “reflects” a portion of that reality, if not representing it in some Cartesian, “mirror-of-nature” manner or scheme (Burke, 1966). Symbolizing animals, maybe in fits and starts, adjust their symbolic actions to the counteractive motions of their animate and inanimate surroundings.

Drama in life, language, and interpretation is thus omnipresent but not likely insular or totally arbitrary.

What to Take Away

If discourse and human striving are infused with drama, and are, essentially, symbolic actions, those who dwell in the house of language ought to be on the lookout for two generic temptations: conflict and self-aggrandizement out of control. The “negative,” symbolic action in its purest form, tells why. What is “not there” never ends, is without number, and ultimately is without peer. Or what is “not there” goes on forever, extends to infinity, and puts to shame everything material and mundane. When other animals are sated, they stop eating, drinking, mating, aggrandizing, or whatever. Too often, humans can’t get enough. They seem goaded by that vision of the eternal and the infinite to make it immanent, struggle for ever more in the here and now. Keep up with the Joneses? A nice intermediate step, yes. Better still, *beat* the Joneses, surpass them, and grind them into the dust, if need be, so they never pose a threat again.

Symbolizing animals demonstrate way too often, Burke (1966) says, that they are “rotten with perfection.” Moderation, modulation, measured human endeavor, based on maximum self-consciousness, more humble self-awareness, is the key, Burke (1984) maintains, to personal and social well-being in the large.

“Comic” ambivalence, humility, and charitability, not “tragic” certainty, pride, and hostility, are the prescription. *In nuce*: This is the formula for the “purification of war” (Burke, 1969a, 1984).

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RHETORICAL EXIGENCY, STRATEGY, AND ARGUMENTATION

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Aristotle's concept of rhetoric as "the ability to find for any subject, the available means of persuasion" (Hill, 2003, p. 63) focuses on a process of discovery. His *Rhetoric* cataloged means by which elements of the speaker's character (*ethos*), emotional appeals (*pathos*), and logical arguments (*logos*) could be brought to bear for persuasive effect. A person thoroughly examines the issue being confronted and selects those means of persuasion that are best able to move an audience to accept his or her way of thinking.

Life presents us with numerous opportunities and challenges. This chapter focuses on one way in which communication can be used to engage others in helping us respond to them. Argumentation relies on Aristotle's *logos* to achieve its persuasive effect, but the body of knowledge surrounding argumentation has expanded well beyond the *Rhetoric*, and provides insight into how to appeal to the rational side of human nature. From the rhetorical tradition, the concept of strategy helps us find appeals. Strategy is a process of analyzing the situation we find ourselves in, and the circumstances that produced it, so we can make choices about what and how to communicate that maximize our chances of successfully engaging others. The rhetorical exigency precipitates strategic thinking.

Rhetorical Exigency

If we think of an exigency as the difference between what is and what ought to be, that exigency becomes

rhetorical when communication is the means we use to reach the desired state. Kenneth Burke's (1966) concept of the motion-action dichotomy illustrates the point. Motion occurs in nature, and Mother Nature doesn't use symbols to change the physical world. She just sends Hurricane Katrina to devastate New Orleans and other areas on the Gulf Coast. For Burke, action was the human counterforce to motion. We are part of the natural realm, but we use action to try to overcome nature and respond to events such as natural disasters. Standing on your porch as a hurricane approaches and commanding it to spare your property would be not only ineffectual but also suicidal. However, an appeal for government assistance, volunteers, and donations to assist communities devastated by a hurricane in recovering from the effects of the storm can produce results. It would be incorrect to assume that an exigency can only be the product of motion, because Burke noted that we also act in response to the actions of our fellow humans.

Lloyd Bitzer (1968, 1980) provided a comprehensive discussion of exigency and noted that it is the product not only of events but of people and relationships as well. An exigency is not just something we notice but something perceived to be salient; something that is or should be a matter of concern; something that requires a response because it is a pressing problem. We respond by communicating with others if we think doing so can help resolve the situation, which implies three beliefs about the audience. First, by communicating with others we cast them

in the role of agents of change and assume that they are actually capable of doing something about the problem. Second, we hope they share our perception of the problem but need to realize that they may have their own, decidedly different perceptions. Third, we assume that they are capable of being influenced by our message to come around to our way of thinking and doing something about the problem.

Suppose you've been offered a summer internship in the promotions department of a major league baseball team, your dream job. Unfortunately, it's an unpaid internship. You have to figure out not only a way to cover your living expenses while interning in a major metropolitan area but also how to pay for next year's tuition, room, and board since you won't be able to take the summer job you've had since you were a freshman in high school. You face an exigency. Maybe your family could help with expenses, except that the summer job is in your family's seasonal amusement park business. If you aren't there, they'll have to train someone to replace you, an experienced employee who they dream will graduate from running the merry-go-round to running the business one day.

This illustrates that there may be multiple exigencies in a situation, and perception of which one is most salient can depend on who you are and where you stand (Hunsaker & Smith, 1976). For you, the need to do the internship is salient, but your family may view the question of "who is going to run the merry-go-round" as most pressing. Donald C. Bryant's (1973) concept that the central function of rhetoric is "adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas" (p. 19) focuses on the transaction between the creator of the message and its audience. Since ideas must be modified so what the audience is asked to accept is reasonable to them, we should not attempt persuasion without thinking about our audience. That is certainly an important strategic consideration but not the only one.

Strategy

The choices made in deciding what to do or say in response to an exigency are strategic in nature. In discussing Aristotle's definition of rhetoric, we noted that he cataloged all the ways in which a speaker could persuade an audience by playing on their emotions, appealing to their reason, or trading on what they knew about his character. Once the speaker discovered all the ways he or she *could* persuade his or her listeners, only those most appropriate to the audience and situation *would* be used, a strategic choice. If your prior reputation with your family includes incidents of irresponsibility or not thinking through the consequences of your actions, using arguments based on your *ethos* to persuade them to help support your internship opportunity financially would be a poor strategic choice.

In describing the rhetorical situation, a model that communication critics use to explain why speakers were successful or unsuccessful in responding to an exigency, Bitzer (1968, 1980) called attention to the presence of what he called *constraints* and the impact they have on shaping strategic choices. A constraint is something that confines, restricts, forces, or compels choices about what to say on the speaker's part. Constraints can work to the speaker's advantage or disadvantage. They arise from practically anything: the characteristics of the speaker, the audience, or the environment in which communication takes place.

We have already touched on the role a speaker's *ethos* can play. It should be noted that an individual's social status, knowledge of the issue, and beliefs and attitudes are all potential constraints. Someone with high status may be able to successfully bluff his or her way through a situation where he or she has little knowledge of an issue, where a person with lesser status or whose status is unknown to the audience may not. Think of the frequency with which you see celebrities endorsing products or actors in white lab coats, which imply technical or scientific expertise, pitching products.

How an audience processes a message plays a role in making strategic choices. The elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) posits that we process persuasive messages along one of two routes: the central or the peripheral. A message has to hold some relevance for us to process it in the first place. If we have a high degree of involvement with its subject, are willing to take the time to think about it, and perhaps supply some of our own knowledge and experience in creating meaning for it, we are processing along the central route. If a message seems less relevant and we don't want to take a great deal of time thinking about how we will respond, we rely on simple cues such as the messenger's credibility as the basis for our involvement and process along the peripheral route. Taking this kind of mental shortcut is a matter of efficiency, given the number of messages we must respond to, and the cue we rely on can come from anything in the message, context, or situation. Since the existence of multiple, competing exigencies concerning your internship opportunity probably means that if your family processes the issue along the peripheral route, you face another summer of running the merry-go-round; you need to think about how to get them on the central route with you.

Audience knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs are important as well. If the audience is aware of and shares an interest in responding to the exigency, as was the case when stories of hurricane victims stranded on roof tops or huddled at the Louisiana Super Dome were all over the media, all that may be needed is a very specific appeal directing audience members how to volunteer or where to send their donations. If the audience is aware of the exigency but doesn't share an interest in responding to it, the people assume that the government is taking care of the problem and they pay taxes, so

they have done their part. Consciousness-raising communication about the limitations of what government can and is doing must precede the call for individual action.

The environment in which communication takes place can also act as a constraint, and it is one that the speaker may have little or no control over. Communication environments impose time, place, and manner restrictions on our behavior. This is most easily seen in circumstances where speakers are forced to use channels of mass communication such as television to reach their audience, as is the case when the president addresses the nation after a natural disaster has occurred or advertisers try to sell us cars and toothpaste.

The president's access to the airwaves in such circumstances is free of charge because of the newsworthiness of the event, and the length of his presentation is constrained largely by how long it will take to get his point across. Once the president chooses where to speak from, television shapes the performance. If the location is the Oval Office, the lighting will be artificial; he will be seated behind his desk, restricted in his ability to move, speaking directly to the camera, which continually focuses on him. If he is speaking from the scene of a disaster, the lighting will be natural; he will be standing behind or holding a microphone, much freer to move and gesture, speaking to a live audience that the camera may cut away to. While the decision to wear a business suit in the office and more casual garb in the field may seem normal, it is part of the theatricality of "appearing presidential" that television creates and presidents exploit. At the height of the energy crisis of the 1970s, President Carter addressed the nation from the White House wearing a sweater, seated in a rocking chair next to a fireplace, and encouraged the American people to turn down their thermostats.

Advertisers, on the other hand, pay a steep price for air time depending on the size and composition of the audience they seek to reach. Since the amount of time available for advertising at various times is limited by Federal Communications Commission regulations, their messages must be brief. This goes a long way toward explaining the presence of those celebrity endorsers and lab-coated actors who encourage peripheral route processing in deciding what make of car or brand of toothpaste to buy and indicates how various constraints that shape strategic choices can be interrelated.

Families also have communication rules that may impose time, place, and manner restrictions on behavior. Since the internship opportunity is something you need to discuss with your family, is there a right time or place to bring it up? More important, is there a wrong time and place? If your family's custom is to eat some of their meals together rather than grabbing something as they are headed out the door to another activity, is the dinner table someplace where conversation is free to range over a variety of subjects of world and personal importance, is conversation restricted to praising the pot roast

and complimenting the cook, or do you eat in silence while watching television? Is this the kind of issue that must be discussed face-to-face, or would a phone call or e-mail conversation be an appropriate manner of communication?

A communication strategy emerges from the choices made to maximize the probability of accomplishing a specific objective, be it marshalling support to aid the victims of a natural disaster or getting your family to help you live out your dream of interning with a major league baseball team. A successful communication strategy results in the creation of what Bitzer (1968, 1980) referred to as a fitting response. A fitting response is one that is appropriate to the rhetorical situation: exigency, audience, and constraints.

Argumentation

Arguments arise between people when there is a difference of opinion, such as whether or not your desire for a summer internship is a good idea, and can turn into a contest between those holding opposing points of view, in which one wins and the other loses. Happily that does not always have to be the case, since the process of argumentation can also function as a means of decision making and achieving consensus, a method of collaborating to work out differences of opinion (Walton, 1992). We define argumentation as "a form of instrumental communication relying on reasoning and proof to influence belief or behavior through the use of spoken or written messages" (Rybacki & Rybacki, 2008, p. 3).

Because they seek to influence belief and behavior, practitioners of the art of argumentation are persuaders, but that does not mean that argumentation and persuasion are the same. Argumentation relies on proof and reasoning, logical appeals to the rational side of human nature to influence audience belief and behavior. While persuasive messages can include logical appeals, they can also include emotional appeals, and some messages rely solely on eliciting an emotional response from the audience to achieve their suasive purpose.

Moreover, argumentation relies on the audience following the central route in the elaboration likelihood model when they process the information they read or hear. This requires a significant time commitment on their part, attending carefully to messages, supplying some of their own experiences to supplement the information supplied by the arguers, and thinking critically about these messages. There is also a significant time commitment required of those who create arguments. Choosing to engage in argumentation commits you to becoming thoroughly knowledgeable about the subject so that not only can you offer the best proof and reasoning in your own arguments, but you are also able to think critically about and respond to the arguments offered by those you are arguing with. The nature of the controversies that people argue about are usually

sufficiently important to them and their audiences to warrant the level of involvement necessary to cause people to follow the central route.

A distinction between persuasion as a whole and its subset argumentation is that while argumentation always follows the central processing route, many persuasive messages rely on the peripheral route. Persuasive messages based solely on pressing some hot-button emotional issue for the audience encourages peripheral route processing. If we thought critically along the central route about the proof and reasoning these messages offer, if there is any, we may not be as likely to buy what they are selling. To understand the relationship between argumentation and persuasion, think of persuasion as the term used to describe a universe of messages designed to alter belief and behavior, in which is included a constellation of messages using the techniques of argumentation to achieve that end.

If you think about your family's initial reaction to your request that they provide the financial support that will enable you to accept a summer internship and return to school next year, it's likely to be negative. While you may feel that their reaction is rooted in emotion, which it may be, realize that they believe or behave as they do for a reason. Argumentation is rooted in the idea that as rational creatures we are capable of changing our beliefs or behavior but will only do so if we are given good reasons. What are good reasons for them to support your plans?

Fields of Argument

Argumentation is rule-governed behavior that takes place in a specific context. Like other forms of communication, some rules are specific to the context, while other rules are universal and transcend contexts. To be successful in argumentation, you have to know the rules. Stephen Toulmin (1958) uses the term *field* instead of context, and it's a useful metaphor. We can think of a field like a playing field, a figurative ground in which arguers and audiences function. We can also think of a field in the professional sense, such as the field of law, medicine, education, or politics, or in the sense of a context, such as the family, service organizations, or social groups we belong to.

This latter category of fields produces rules of argument that are *field dependent*. The most obvious difference between various professional fields is the unique jargon each has developed. You've seen this in your undergraduate career as you've taken courses in different academic disciplines and realized that to make sense out of lectures and textbooks you had to learn how to solve the linguistic puzzles they contained. While members of a profession have no problem using this jargon, you need to be sure that you've mastered it and can use it correctly if you are addressing arguments to an audience comprising members of the profession. Families, groups, and organizations can also develop their own unique linguistic style. Beyond

their unique language, argumentation in professional and social fields is often shaped by field-dependent rules of engagement, the degree of precision they demand in arguments, and the mode of resolution used to settle disputes (Toulmin, Rieke, & Janik, 1984).

Law is a field with very clearly specified *rules of engagement*, and if those rules are not followed, a breach of proper legal procedure could result in a mistrial or be the basis for an appeal that might overturn a conviction. In a criminal case, after opening statements by both sides, the prosecution presents its witnesses and evidence and the defense has the opportunity to cross-examine. Following the presentation of the defense's witnesses and evidence, which are cross-examined by the prosecution, the trial proceeds to closing statements by both sides and the judge's instructions to the jury. The appropriateness of any question or the admissibility of any piece of evidence can be challenged, with the judge ruling on the objection before things proceed any farther. Compare legal rules of engagement with what happens in a typical academic dispute.

When Lloyd Bitzer published his initial article on the rhetorical situation in 1968 in a peer-reviewed academic journal, some in the discipline were concerned by its modernist, Aristotelian underpinnings. They published their critiques in similarly peer-reviewed journals. Bitzer's rejoinder appeared in an anthology published in 1980 and produced additional commentary into the 1990s. The rules of engagement for most academic controversies historically involved presentations at professional meetings or publishing in scholarly journals, although e-mail and listservs now speed up the discussion among those who elect to participate.

Fields also differ in the *degree of precision* they demand in arguments. This is especially true in the degree of rigor they apply in determining what constitutes acceptable evidence. When the medical profession tests drugs for their efficacy and side effects in the process of seeking Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval, it imposes extensive controls. Some subjects get the drug, some get a placebo, and another similar group may get nothing at all. Subjects receiving the drug or the placebo are not informed whether what they are receiving contains active or inert ingredients. If the study is double-blind, even the persons dispensing the drugs are unaware of which is which. That way, differences between the groups can be ascribed to whether or not they received the drug.

The FDA is a federal regulatory agency which, among other things, has attempted to find out whether direct-to-consumer drug advertising encourages people to consult their physicians about a medical condition. They have concluded that it does on the basis of surveys sent to doctors asking them to report the frequency of patient contacts. The problem is that drug advertising is so ubiquitous that it is impossible to have a control group who are unexposed to advertising and see how their behavior compares. While the FDA is comfortable with the data showing that millions of people exposed to advertising for prescription

drugs consult their physicians about what they have seen advertised, the medical profession wouldn't accept the FDA's evidence as valid proof.

The rhetorical exigency, which gives rise to argumentation frequently, represents a controversy or significant problem that needs to be resolved. The leisurely manner in which we suggested academic disputes unfold is not the case when the issue is a really serious one, such as a charge of plagiarism or faking data. In the field of politics, the *mode of resolution* is voting, although what is voted on may have been amended to represent a compromise that a majority can agree to. In the field of labor management relations, negotiation, mediation, or arbitration may be used to resolve a controversy.

A family may not have formal rules of engagement; a sense of the degree of precision they expect in arguments; or a method for resolving disputes other than the kind of time, place, and manner restrictions we discussed previously. However, families that have experienced some kind of professional intervention, such as marriage or family counseling, may have procedures as elaborate as the field-dependent rules of any profession that need to be observed. Regardless of the field-dependent rules that are in play, there are other rules all arguers need to observe.

If something does not change from field to field, it is said to be *field invariant*. Learning the field-invariant rules of argumentation means that when you move from field to field, when you move between home, work, and social engagements, the only thing that needs to change in the way you practice argumentation is the field-dependent rules you follow. Field-invariant rules of argumentation deal with the way people think and how they decide what information they can rely on to aid their thinking. Since our definition of argumentation indicates that it employs reasoning and proof, this should come as no surprise.

People employ reasoning to make sense out of their world, and the forms of reasoning that humans use are limited in number. While what people reason about may vary from field to field, the forms of reasoning are constant across all fields. Generalization is a form of reasoning in which you look at a number of similar individuals, objects, or events and reach a conclusion about the universe of individuals, objects, or events they represent. If you've ever decided whether or not to buy a bunch of grapes by popping one or two into your mouth to see if they were juicy and tasted good, you were generalizing (as well as aggravating the manager of the produce department). You don't have to eat the whole bunch to make a conclusion; if those grapes were alright, so are the rest.

The medical profession may scoff at FDA studies of the effect of direct-to-consumer drug advertising, but both the medical profession and the FDA employ generalization as their method of reasoning. Medical researchers use test groups representative of all those with a particular medical condition to determine if the drug they are testing is an effective treatment. The FDA surveyed a representative

sample of physicians to find out if patients asked them about drugs promoted in advertising campaigns. Based on what they learned from their respective samples, both the medical researchers and the FDA generalized that what was true of the individuals in their samples would probably be true of all individuals in the target group. This illustrates the first field-invariant process—people in different fields of argument use the same patterns of reasoning to reach conclusions.

The second field-invariant process is that people in different fields of argument use the same means to determine if the evidence used in reasoning is sufficient to produce a sound conclusion. The means that medical researchers and the FDA use to decide if their evidence was adequate to support a generalization are the same. For a generalization to be valid, it must be based on a sufficient number of instances or cases that are representative of the group they are randomly drawn from. If any instances or cases point to a different conclusion, they must be explained. Medical professionals think that the FDA's evidence is inadequate because of a field-dependent rule of epidemiological research—an adequate research design must include a control group—not because the FDA lacked a sufficient number of cases on which to base its generalization.

You've been making a list of good reasons that you hope will influence your family to support your summer internship aspirations. Now you realize that there is going to be more involved than asserting "It will help me get a job after I graduate." Your family is probably going to want more than your word on this and may look critically at whatever evidence you offer. You need to be sure that your proof is something you and they can rely on. You also have to be sure that the connection between this information and the point you are trying to make follows logically, that it uses one of the patterns of thinking, such as cause, sign, generalization, parallel case, analogy, or dilemma (Rybacki & Rybacki, 2008), that people use to make sense of the world. Your family is likely to think of your proposal in terms of the dilemma it poses: If they let you do the internship, it's going to cost them money; if they don't let you do the internship, it's going to cost them relational currency with you.

Presumption

The concept of a field of argument has uses beyond helping us identify the field-dependent and field-invariant rules we need to follow. We can also think of the concept of field in terms of a playing field, a piece of figurative ground. To get off to a good start in argumentation, you need to identify the beliefs or behaviors that occupy the figurative ground and would continue to occupy it if no good reasons were offered to change things. Since the ground is the space in which arguers and their audiences function, ask yourself who possesses the figurative ground, who has the home court advantage. Doing this enables you to determine where presumption lies.

The Anglican Archbishop Richard Whatley (1828/1963) contributed greatly to our knowledge of presumption. Using the analogy of a group of soldiers inside a fortified position, he asked whether it was more sensible for them to remain where they were behind thick stone walls or abandon their position and engage the enemy on an open battlefield. Should they trade the safety and comfort of what they know for the uncertainty of what they don't? Should they leave things the way they are or opt for change?

Natural presumption favors that which presently exists, and we can find sources of natural presumption by examining institutions, traditions, documents, and practices. Suppose one of the reasons you want to do an internship is that it is a graduation requirement in your program of study. Because this requirement has been around for a while, presumption favors it. You may never have thought to question it, assuming that there must be a good reason for its existence, such as "It'll help me get a job after I graduate," and not given it much more thought. Most, but not all, fields of argument employ natural presumption, and it can be used as a tool for audience analysis to discover what knowledge, beliefs, and practices the audience likely accepts at face value.

Artificial presumption is used in the legal field. The presumption of innocence is artificial and means that the accused goes unpunished if the prosecution cannot offer good reasons to believe that he or she is guilty. The prosecution gets to present its case first, because if it does not offer good reasons, the defense can ask the judge to dismiss the charges against the accused without offering its own good reasons to believe that he or she is innocent. Thus, an additional value of understanding presumption, both artificial and natural, is that it can serve as a decision rule: We should continue to rely on presumption unless good reasons exist to do otherwise.

Artificial presumption is also used in hypothesis testing, "where there is an issue or question that is open in the sense that the relevant, available evidence does not resolve the issue one way or another with sufficient weight to close discussion of the issue" (Walton, 1992, p. 42). The reason for testing the efficacy of drugs and studying the effect of direct-to-consumer drug advertising is to resolve such open questions. Researchers typically start with what is called a null hypothesis—there is no effect—and attempt to discover whether sufficient evidence exists to reject the artificial presumption it articulates.

Natural presumption suggests that your family believes that you should not do the summer internship since you've been working at the family amusement park since your freshman year in high school. You are going to have to overcome that presumption with good reasons. Unlike the prosecutor trying to overcome artificial presumption and convince an impartial judge and jury of the accused's guilt, you face the challenge faced by many who challenge natural presumptions: You need to convince your

audience to give up beliefs and behaviors they are comfortable with and venture into the realm of the unknown.

Burden of Proof

The burden of proof is the logical opposite of presumption. If presumption weighs in on one side of the issue, the burden of proof counterbalances it. The weight of proof and reasoning must be sufficient to allow the audience to be comfortable with the decision to shift its allegiance from what presumption favors to the change being proposed (Walton, 1988).

However, unlike presumption, which is static and consistently favors one side of an issue, the burden of proof is dynamic and a responsibility of all parties to the controversy. If those who challenge presumption uphold their burden of proof and shift audience sentiment away from it, those who oppose the change that would result must accept their own burden of proof since they can no longer rely on presumption. After the prosecution has presented its case, the defense cannot just say "Presumption of innocence, my client goes free" and expect to prevail. The defense must present good reasons either for the judge to dismiss the charges or the jury to find the accused not guilty. A basic rule of argumentation is "Those who assert must prove."

The scope of the burden of proof is specified in some fields of argument, such as the legal field. If the charge is theft, the prosecution must prove that something was stolen and the accused did it. Testimony by the store owner and police pictures of the crime scene would prove the former, while circumstantial evidence, the accused's fingerprints at the scene of the crime, and direct evidence, the discovery of the stolen merchandise in the trunk of the accused's car, would prove the latter. This would constitute a *prima facie* case of the accused's guilt, one that "on the face of it" is sufficient to suspend reliance on presumption at least temporarily until the defense has had its say. Evidence that the accused has unpaid parking tickets, overdue library books, or poor oral hygiene would be irrelevant.

In fields where the scope of the burden of proof is unspecified, audience analysis can provide some guidance. An audience inclined to favor change will require less convincing than an audience inclined to oppose it. An audience that already knows something about the issue needs to have less information provided to them than an audience that knows nothing, unless what they know causes them to oppose change, in which case you will need to provide them with a lot more. While one audience will differ from another in many ways, one way in which they are similar is with regard to the kind of questions they want answered in deciding whether to embrace or reject change. Although the subject of these

questions will vary, their substance will not. These questions are the stock issues in argumentation.

Stock Issues

The concept of stock issues is field invariant in argumentation. The prosecutor does not have to search for what to argue in bringing a charge of theft against the accused, and the defense attorney is not in the dark either. You do not have to search for what to argue, since stock issues exist that don't change from field to field. That is true because, while the subject matter may change from field to field, people basically argue about four things: (1) how something should be classified (definition), (2) what is probably true about something (fact), (3) how something should be judged (value), and (4) what should be done about something (policy).

Your internship aspirations come down to a policy issue: My family should provide the financial support necessary for me to do a summer internship with a major league baseball team. There are three stock issues concerning policy: (1) What is the reason for change? (2) What is entailed in the proposal for change? (3) What are the consequences of change? Because your family is also your audience, it is important to remember that the focus needs to be on why they should support you, not just why you want to do this.

While there might be many reasons for doing this internship (it satisfies a graduation requirement, it would be fun, it would be prestigious, an internship can lead to a job, what you learn could be used to enhance the family business), you should limit yourself to the strongest reasons. The strength of arguments is a function of both what you are best able to prove and what your audience will find most compelling. If you think that your family fears your loss of interest in taking over the business, the "enhance the family business" argument might allay that fear, but you need to be careful. Arguers, like other communicators, have an ethical responsibility not to deceive their listeners, and if you don't plan on staying on at the amusement park following graduation, you don't want to create the opposite impression.

Thinking about the issue from the other side's perspective is important because it can help you anticipate objections and avoid problems. From spring training through the World Series, the baseball season stretches from mid-February to late October. Why does the internship have to be in summer, when we'd have to find someone else to run the merry-go-round, might be an objection your family would raise. You should certainly be prepared to respond to it and may decide to preempt the question by bringing it up yourself. Choosing to preempt the other side's arguments gives you the advantage of framing them from your perspective but runs the risk of causing problems by introducing issues that might never have been raised and creating the impression that you are acting defensively because your position is weak.

It is absolutely imperative that your position be consistent, without even the hint of contradiction. There is nothing more devastating and embarrassing than having something you've said turned against you. You anticipate that your family's concern about finding someone to replace you at the amusement park if you do a summer internship could be a barrier to winning their assent. You decide to address that in part of your proposal for change. You have a replacement lined up, a classmate, who thinks you've got the greatest summer job in the world. He'd love to run the merry-go-round, is a quick learner whom you could train in a couple of days, and will work dirt cheap because he can get internship credit for working at the park.

If that doesn't prompt your family to inquire why you can't get internship credit for the same thing, it's only because they aren't listening. Perhaps you can't get credit because your school requires an "arm's-length" relationship between intern and site supervisor so that evaluation of the intern is unbiased. Telling your family that at the outset as part of an argument about internships being required for graduation makes you seem knowledgeable and forthright. Offering it as an explanation when questioned may cause suspicion that you're making things up as you go along.

Alternative Perspectives

Our discussion of the manner in which argumentative message are created represents "conceptions of knowledge and truth that are accepted and articulated today [that] have been shaped throughout history by the male-dominated culture" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Traule, 1986, p. 5). Feminists argue that theories of argument generated by this culture lead to simplistic conclusions, monocausal position statements, and tests of knowledge. Women "tend to fuse ideas and opinions rather than claiming one opinion is true and all others must therefore be false," they are "connected knowers" (Rybacki & Rybacki, 2002, p. 210). According to feminist theory, the sexes are conditioned by culture to use argumentation and reasoning in different ways.

While we have focused on the use of argumentation to resolve differences of opinion, achieve consensus, and make decisions, it can also be employed to discover knowledge (Rowland, 1987). *Pragma-dialectics*, developed by Frans van Eemeren and Rob Grootendort (1992), can be employed in the production of knowledge. Pragmatics (*pragma*) is the study of how the language we use changes belief and behavior. *Dialectic* is concerned with the way people interact, a normative model of rules concerning what arguers can and must do in the case of pragma-dialectics. For example, you *can* ask someone to clarify their argument. You *must* clarify your argument if asked to do so. The rules of pragma-dialectics can also be used to evaluate encounters to determine why they failed to produce results.

Conclusion

Argumentation is rule-governed behavior used to produce reasoned discourse. It requires its practitioners to invest the time necessary to become thoroughly knowledgeable about their subject and carefully craft reasoned messages about it. Like all forms of communication, it is most effective in achieving its purpose when the interests of the other parties to the conversation are taken into account. This requires strategic thinking on your part. In the end, it is well worth it since argumentation can be an effective way of responding to a rhetorical exigency, enlisting the support of others to solve a problem or take advantage of an opportunity.

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SOCIAL SUPPORT

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If you have a situation that's upsetting you, you might have a friend who listens attentively and makes you feel better by conveying understanding and sympathy. If you have a problem and can't figure out how to solve it, a coworker might offer some advice that enables you to improve the situation. And if your car has broken down and you need help getting places until it's fixed, a family member might offer to drive you around. Communication scholars would describe the friends, coworkers, and family members in these scenarios as providing you with *social support*, where this term refers to assistance provided by family, friends, or acquaintances rather than professionals (e.g., counselors or therapists). Most of us not only appreciate but come to rely on social support and are providers of support in return. As the Beatles put it, we "get by with a little help from our friends."

Communication researchers were not the first to focus attention on social support; that distinction belongs to scholars in sociology and epidemiology. (For a historical overview, see Burlison & MacGeorge, 2002.) Since the pioneering research in the early 1970s, social support has been defined and studied in a variety of ways, depending in part on the academic disciplines in which different scholars are trained. Sociologists, for example, tend to conceptualize social support as *social integration*—that is, the extent to which individuals are embedded in relationships and groups, participate in social activities, or experience a sense of community and belonging. Sociological research has demonstrated that people with greater social integration tend to be healthier and live longer. Psychologists have typically taken a somewhat different approach by focusing on *perceived support availability*—that is, the individual's perception that caring behavior from others will be accessible if the need arises. Psychological research on social support has shown that high levels of

perceived support availability can "buffer" or prevent some of the negative influences that stress can have on health.

Not surprisingly, when communication scholars began to study social support in the 1980s, they introduced a unique perspective in which social support was conceptualized as *supportive communication*. In a seminal book that defined this emergent perspective, Burlison, Albrecht, Goldsmith, and Sarason (1994) argued that "social support should be studied as communication because it is ultimately conveyed through messages directed by one individual to another in the context of a relationship that is created and sustained through interaction" (p. xviii). Correspondingly, communication scholars have focused much of their research on "verbal and nonverbal behaviors intended to provide or seek help" (Burlison & MacGeorge, 2002, p. 384). These scholars have a special interest in identifying what kinds of supportive communication have a more (or less) positive effect on recipients; why certain behaviors are more effective than others, either in general or for specific types of people, problems, relationships, or situations; and why some people are more (or less) likely to provide others with high-quality supportive communication. In contrast to sociological and psychological perspectives on social support, communication scholars are not content with knowing that social relationships are beneficial (the sociological perspective) or that feeling loved and cared for is good for you (the psychological perspective); they want to know about the details of supportive behavior—that is, what works best and why, and who provides the best support.

This chapter provides an overview of theory and research on supportive communication. It begins by discussing different types of supportive communication and what is known about the features that make comforting and

advice giving more or less effective. This is followed by an overview of theory that helps explain how and why social support can produce positive outcomes for recipients. Subsequent sections address the question of who provides effective support and how researchers study supportive communication. The concluding section considers the future of research on supportive communication.

What Makes Supportive Communication Effective?

Types of Supportive Communication

As suggested by the opening paragraph in this chapter, social support scholars frequently distinguish between different types of supportive communication. Perhaps the broadest distinction that can be made is between communication that is intended to be supportive and communication that is not. Most people have had the unpleasant experience of seeking support from another person and receiving a response that conveyed overt rejection or disinterest. This type of communication is most probably not intended to provide support, nor is it likely to be perceived as supportive by its recipient. However, it is important to note that there can be consequential differences between the intentions of support providers and the perceptions of recipients. For example, support providers sometimes say things that downplay or minimize the importance or seriousness of a problem, perhaps with the intention of making the other person feel better (“It’s not that bad. Life will go on.”). In many cases, these minimizing behaviors are viewed negatively by support recipients even when they recognize the supportive intention behind the message (Burlleson & MacGeorge, 2002).

Another distinction is often made between *emotional support* and *instrumental support*, with the former understood to be focused on relieving a recipient’s emotional distress and the latter focused on improving a recipient’s problem-solving abilities. This is both an important difference and an oversimplification of how supportive communication really looks and functions. Support providers often attempt to provide both types of support, even in the course of a single message or interaction (MacGeorge, Graves, Feng, Gillihan, & Burlleson, 2004). Furthermore, we can distinguish different types of emotional and instrumental support. For example, some scholars have found it useful to classify messages of caring, concern, and sympathy (emotional support) separately from those that convey affection and respect (esteem support), while others may group these types of support together under the heading of emotional support. Again, the effect of a particular type of support may be different from what is intended. For example, advice about what to do could help someone feel better without having any real effect on resolving the problem.

Considering the broad categories of emotional and informational support, research suggests some generalizations about the effects of these support types. Overall, recipients often respond more positively to support providers’ emotional-support efforts than to instrumental-support efforts, perhaps because emotional support is relevant to a broader range of circumstances. For example, instrumental support is often perceived as less applicable to problems that cannot be solved (e.g., bereavement; see Servaty-Seib & Burlleson, 2007). However, as you may have experienced for yourself, there is considerable variation in the quality of support, whether emotional or instrumental. Some support providers in some situations say things that do an outstanding job of helping reduce distress, promote coping, and resolve problems, whereas others’ support efforts have little or no impact and may even make things worse. Correspondingly, supportive-communication researchers have focused considerable attention on the features or characteristics of emotional-support messages that lead to more (and fewer) positive responses and outcomes for recipients. A smaller but growing area of research has examined the same issues with respect to instrumental support, especially advice giving.

Communication of Emotional Support

In the supportive-communication literature, the communication of emotional support is often referred to as *comforting*. Comforting can take a variety of forms, as evidenced by the comforting efforts of toddlers, who may direct simple behaviors (hugging, offering a toy, saying “I’m sorry”) toward peers who are distressed. As children mature into adulthood, comforting retains important non-verbal elements but becomes increasingly verbal (Clark, MacGeorge, & Robinson, 2008).

The most influential research on the effects of comforting communication has been conducted by Brant Burlleson and colleagues, including Wendy Samter and Suzanne Jones. In this paradigm, comforting messages are described as varying in *person centeredness*, defined as the extent to which messages reflect “an awareness of and an adaptation to the subjective, affective, and relational aspects of communicative contexts” (Burlleson & Caplan, 1998, p. 249). Comforting messages low in person centeredness deny another person’s feelings and perspective by criticizing the feelings, challenging their legitimacy, or telling the other how he or she should act or feel. Comforting messages moderate in person centeredness implicitly recognize another’s feelings by attempting to distract the other’s attention from the distressing situation, offering expressions of sympathy, or presenting explanations of the situation that might function to reduce distress. Comforting messages high in person centeredness explicitly acknowledge and legitimate another’s feelings by helping articulate those feelings, elaborating on reasons why the other might feel that

way, and trying to place the feelings within a broader perspective. Overall, highly person-centered messages tend to be the most listener centered, emotion focused, and non-evaluative, with moderate- and low-person-centered messages exhibiting fewer of these qualities (see Burleson, 1994, for more details on the distinctions between different levels of person centeredness).

A very substantial body of research indicates that comforting messages high in person-centeredness are perceived as highest in quality (e.g., more sensitive and effective); messages of moderate person centeredness are rated somewhat lower and messages low in person centeredness, considerably lower (Burleson, 2003). Furthermore, recipients of highly person-centered messages (as opposed to moderate- or low-person-centered messages) actually experience greater improvement in their emotional states (Jones & Guerrero, 2001). Consistent with these effects of highly person-centered comforting, research also indicates that individuals who use this type of comforting are seen as more likable and attractive and are more accepted by their peers (Burleson, 2003).

The effects of person-centered messages are highly consistent across studies, but this research also indicates that effects vary somewhat as a function of certain demographic, cognitive, and situational factors. Some of the variables that appear to influence responses to person centeredness in comforting are gender, ethnicity, and cognitive complexity (Burleson, 2003); degree of distress has also become a recent focus of attention (Burleson, in press). Studies examining gender effects indicate that women evaluate highly person-centered comforting somewhat more positively than men, whereas men evaluate comforting messages low in person centeredness somewhat more positively than do women (MacGeorge, Graves, et al., 2004). Studies examining the influence of ethnicity or culture have found that Asian Americans, African Americans, and Chinese Americans distinguish somewhat less strongly between messages low, moderate, and high in person centeredness than do European Americans (Burleson & Mortenson, 2003; Samter, Whaley, Mortenson, & Burleson, 1997). Research on interpersonal cognitive complexity, which refers to the sophistication of cognitive schema for thinking about people and social situations, indicates that individuals with higher cognitive complexity evaluate highly person-centered messages as higher in quality (and messages that are low in person centeredness as lower in quality) than do individuals who are lower in cognitive complexity (Burleson, in press). Finally, a moderate level of distress appears to produce more discriminating evaluations of comforting messages than either low or high levels of distress, with moderately distressed individuals rating messages high in person centeredness more favorably (and messages low in person centeredness less favorably) than people with low or high levels of distress (Burleson, in press).

All this research indicates that the effectiveness of highly person-centered messages is moderated by features of persons and contexts. Recently, Burleson and colleagues have advanced a theory to provide a comprehensive explanation for much of the variation in comforting-message evaluation that is linked to these individual and contextual variables (Bodie & Burleson, 2008; Burleson, in press). This theory, labeled a *dual-process approach*, argues that responses to supportive communication depend to some extent on how much the recipient attends to and thinks about (i.e., “processes”) the actual content of a supportive message. Imagine two support recipients with very different levels of message processing: one who pays very little attention to what a support provider actually says and one who carefully thinks about every word. In this case, Burleson and colleagues argue that the first recipient will perceive less of a distinction between comforting messages representing different levels of person centeredness and be less affected by this aspect of the message. In contrast, the second recipient will discriminate carefully between messages with different levels of person centeredness and will be substantially affected by whether the message is high, moderate, or low in person centeredness. According to this theory, factors such as the level of distress help determine how much processing recipients give to comforting messages and thus influence their evaluations and responses to those messages. For example, having a moderate level of distress should increase both the ability and the motivation to process compared with a high level of distress (which decreases ability) or a low level of distress (which decreases motivation).

A fuller explication of dual-process theory is beyond the scope of this chapter, but recent studies have provided support for many of the theoretical claims (Burleson, in press). Thus, it may soon be possible to explain the hodgepodge of effects due to diverse demographic, cognitive, and situational factors through a more cohesive model. Despite the significance of this theoretical development, it is also important to emphasize that the influence of factors such as gender and distress on the evaluation of comforting messages is generally moderate; overall, research evidence indicates that highly person-centered messages produce superior outcomes across people and situations.

Communication of Advice

Instrumental support has been given less research attention to date than emotional support or comforting. Some research has indicated that instrumental support is not as generally beneficial as emotional support and also runs a higher risk of negative effects, perhaps because information or advice is more likely to be unnecessary, unwanted, or poorly matched to a recipient’s needs (MacGeorge, Feng, & Thompson, 2008). However, there is an increasing body of research on advice, motivated in part by studies

indicating that advice may be the most commonly offered form of support (MacGeorge, Graves, et al., 2004) and in part by an interest in identifying the characteristics of advice messages that cause them to be viewed more or less positively.

Focused research on advice as a form of instrumental support was initiated by Daena Goldsmith (1994), who observed that advice has the potential to threaten the *face* or public self-image of the recipient. Specifically, because advice tells or recommends what another person should do, think, or say (MacGeorge et al., 2008), it may be in conflict with the recipient's sense of independence or feelings of competence. However, as Goldsmith argued, advice givers can alter the manner or style in which the advice is given and thereby potentially reduce face threat. For example, a recipient's sense of independence might be better preserved if the advised action is presented as a suggestion ("Maybe you could . . .") or, even more indirectly, in a story about what the advice giver did when dealing with a similar problem. Of course, face threat could also be increased by the style in which advice is given; advice can come across as patronizing, critical, or even rejecting of the recipient ("Well, duh. Isn't it obvious that you should . . ."). Research by Goldsmith and others indicates that face threat is a salient issue for advice recipients: When advice is perceived as more face threatening, it is viewed as lower in quality and does less to facilitate the recipient's ability to cope with the problem; advice with a higher degree of perceived face threat is also less likely to be implemented (Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000; MacGeorge, Feng, Butler, & Budarz, 2004). The research findings are less clear about the specific linguistic strategies that do the best job of reducing face threat. Some work suggests that strategies may be best when used in combination (MacGeorge, Lichtman, & Pressey, 2002). For example, "I know you will get this worked out. I only have one little suggestion . . ." contains language that conveys respect for the recipient's competence *and* independence.

Erina MacGeorge, Bo Feng, and colleagues (2004) noted that advice recipients were likely to be influenced by the *content* of the advice message as well as its style and have undertaken research focused on recipients' perceptions of advice content (i.e., what they think about the action being advised). Advice recipients are strongly influenced by what is termed *response efficacy*—that is, the perceived likelihood that the advised action will actually help resolve the problem (Feng & Burleson, 2008). Specifically, when response efficacy is perceived to be high, advice recipients rate the advice more favorably, feel better able to cope, and are more likely to implement the action. Other content factors that also influence advice recipients include the perceived feasibility of the advised action ("Can I do it?") and the potential limitations or drawbacks of the action ("Will doing this create more problems?") (MacGeorge, Feng, et al., 2004). Research on advice content also shows that advice givers

can influence recipients' perceptions of advice content, such as response efficacy or limitations. In one recent study, advice messages that contained arguments that supported response efficacy (e.g., "You should do [advised action]. *I know this will help you because I did this when I had the problem with . . .*") caused advice recipients to perceive more response efficacy and rate the advised action more positively than messages that stated the advised action but did not make any further argument in its favor (Feng & Burleson, 2008).

A handful of studies have examined whether demographic or situational factors influence how advice recipients respond. Gender appears to have relatively little influence, with men and women liking advice to about the same degree and being affected to the same extent by style and content factors (MacGeorge, Graves, et al., 2004). Other factors appear to be more powerful influences: A collection of studies show that advice is evaluated more favorably when it comes from advice givers who are seen as experts, who evince confidence in their opinions, and who are in closer relationships with the recipients (MacGeorge et al., 2008). In addition, several studies indicate that the interactional sequencing of advice can have important influences on its outcome. Two studies have indicated that advice is viewed as less face threatening when it is requested, directly or indirectly, than when it is given without being requested (Goldsmith, 2000; Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997). In addition, advice is preferred when it is presented subsequent to efforts at emotional support and problem analysis, indicating that there are complex relationships between comforting, advice, and discussion of the problem (Feng, 2009).

There is relatively little focused research on supportive communication that is not classifiable as either comforting or advice; the study just mentioned (Feng, in press) is one exception. Another exception is Goldsmith (1994), who noted that offers of tangible help (e.g., "Can I help you study for the next exam?") can create many of the same face concerns as advice. However, offers have not received much attention as a type of support. Given that many supportive interactions include behaviors apart from comforting or advice, additional research is needed to understand what features cause these behaviors to have a positive or negative impact on recipients.

How and Why Does Supportive Communication Help?

As may be evident from the prior section, research on supportive communication has been strongly focused on determining "what works" when people engage in supportive communication. In the process of answering this question, scholars have drawn on a potpourri of theoretical perspectives, and it is probably fair to say that the questions of "how" and "why" have often been placed backstage.

Nonetheless, as the study of supportive communication has matured, the importance of theory has become increasingly evident. Without theory to explain how supportive messages affect recipients or why some supportive messages have better or different outcomes than others, it is difficult to build a comprehensive understanding of supportive interactions, or to help people become better support providers.

Short-Term and Long-Term Effects of Social Support

To address the question of *how* social support is helpful (or unhelpful), it is useful to make a general distinction between short-term and long-term, or *proximal* and *distal*, effects (Burlleson & MacGeorge, 2002). Supportive communication can—and does—have effects that occur either immediately or within a relatively short time after interacting with a support provider. These effects can include improvement in emotional state, increased capacity for coping, an intention to undertake an advised behavior, and feeling respected. Other short-term effects may include conversational satisfaction, a liking for and attraction to the support provider, and satisfaction with the relationship. Of course, short-term effects are not necessarily positive; to the extent that supportive communication is insensitive and ineffective, there can easily be increased distress, diminished capacity for coping, negative perceptions of the support provider, and similar undesirable consequences (Burlleson & MacGeorge, 2002).

In research on supportive communication, these short-term personal and relationship outcomes have typically been emphasized. In fact, the recognition that supportive behavior has important, and relatively immediate, consequences is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the communication perspective on social support (Burlleson & MacGeorge, 2002).

In contrast, psychologists, sociologists, and others who study social support have typically emphasized longer-term outcomes of social support, such as physical and psychological health (Cohen, Gottlieb, & Underwood, 2000). This emphasis is quite consistent with conceptualizing social support as social integration or perceived support availability. People tend to have relatively consistent levels of social integration and perceptions of support availability over time (unless significantly disrupted by life transitions or crises), so that it makes sense to examine how different levels of social integration or perceived support availability might affect physical or psychological health over time. In contrast, any single supportive message or interaction is probably less likely to have a detectable influence on health—though one can imagine exceptions, such as advice that prompts someone to immediately stop an unhealthy behavior. It is more likely that the quality of supportive communication could have a *cumulative* long-term effect on psychological or physical health such that those who receive high-quality supportive messages across time (perhaps from multiple individuals) are healthier than

those who receive lower-quality messages. Research is needed to examine this (and similar) possibilities.

Explaining the Benefits of Social Support

The distinction between the short-term and long-term effects of social support continues to be important when considering *why* social support has positive (or negative) effects because different kinds of theoretical explanations are relevant to these different kinds of effects. To explain the differences in the short-term effects of supportive communication, theorists have offered a variety of explanations, including (a) perceived supportive intent, (b) change in face (i.e., public self-image), (c) information and motivation, and (d) reappraisal (Burlleson & MacGeorge, 2002).

One explanation for why supportive communication succeeds or fails at improving affect, coping, and so forth is that it expresses the *supportive intention* of the provider. To the extent that a support recipient recognizes a provider as communicating with the intention to be supportive, the recipient is probably more likely to feel cared for, liked, and valued than if this perception is absent. These feelings should, in turn, affect their emotional state and capacity to cope. In some cases, support recipients may recognize and benefit from the supportive intention even when the communication itself is less than ideal. On the other hand, the perceived supportive intention may not “override” the impact of a poorly conceived message.

A second explanation for the differing outcomes of supportive communication draws from the *theory of face*, which has informed much work on advice. Having a problem or needing assistance prevents a person from presenting a public self-image of complete independence or competence; thus, it is potentially face threatening. In addition, many provider behaviors can themselves threaten face, even when the supportive intention is strong (Goldsmith, 1994). Asking questions about the problem can invade privacy, offering advice can come across as critical, and offering emotional support can suggest that the recipient is (overly) dependent on others (Burlleson & MacGeorge, 2002). Perceptions of face threat are closely tied to negative feelings such as embarrassment, shame, guilt, and anger. Thus, supportive communication may benefit recipients to the extent that it “rebuilds” any damage to face that occurs, either from the original problem or as a result of the support provider’s actions.

A third explanation for why supportive communication does (or does not) help has to do with the *informative content* of support messages. This idea is easy to illustrate with respect to advice because the information being given is about some action that the recipient could take to resolve the problem: To the extent that an advised action is perceived as efficacious or feasible and is implemented by the recipient, the information may affect the recipient’s outcomes. In addition, the information in advice messages may affect self-efficacy or motivation. Information can

also come from other kinds of support messages: Even comforting messages contain certain kinds of information, such as ideas about the normality or legitimacy of the feelings being experienced by the recipient. These feelings could affect recipients' perceptions of their problems and their subsequent actions (Burlison & MacGeorge, 2002).

A fourth explanation, based on the idea of *reappraisal*, has been given the most formal presentation as a theory. Burlison and Goldsmith (1998) advanced the idea that supportive communication works to reduce emotional distress when it encourages recipients to produce detailed, emotion-focused narratives about their problems. Doing this, in turn, helps recipients make sense of their problems and their feelings and, ultimately, helps them "reappraise" the situation in a way that reduces emotional distress. Burlison and Goldsmith argued that this reappraisal process is most likely to result from highly person-centered messages, which legitimate and encourage emotional expression. However, they also connected reappraisal with a larger conversational process that incorporates problem analysis and advice giving.

Although these theoretical ideas are all consistent with at least some existing research evidence, there has been little direct testing. One recent exception is a study testing Burlison and Goldsmith's reappraisal theory (1998). In this study, Jones & Wirtz (2006) asked research participants to disclose actual problems and to participate in interactions with confederates (research assistants pretending to be other participants). The confederates were trained to provide responses that were high, moderate, or low in person centeredness. In this study, participants who received highly person-centered comforting used the most "emotion words" to describe their experiences (i.e., words such as *sad*, *angry*, or *frustrated*) during the interaction and showed more improvement in their emotional states and a greater change in perspective on the problem (i.e., reappraisal) after the interaction. In addition, there was evidence that these variables formed a causal chain that begins with receiving highly person-centered comforting, continues with the use of emotion words, leads to reappraisal, and then results in emotional change.

Not surprisingly, theory about the long-term effects of social support has developed primarily within the psychological and sociological traditions and, consequently, has focused on social support as social integration or perceived support availability rather than supportive communication. In these traditions, theories of support effects can be loosely classified into *main-effect* models and *buffering-effect* models (Cohen et al., 2000). In main-effect models, increased social support is theorized to have a positive, direct impact on health regardless of stress. Research support for these models has come primarily from studies in which social support is conceptualized and measured as social integration. Thus, it appears that being more fully integrated in a network of social relationships and activities leads to health benefits, perhaps because tangible support, information, and social influence combine to produce

healthier behavior. In buffering-effect models, increased social support is theorized to "buffer" or prevent the deleterious effects of stress on health, such that when stressors occur, those who feel that they have more social support available are less likely to experience negative health effects (or they experience fewer negative health effects) than those who have less social support. This is thought to occur because perceived availability of support influences how people view or "appraise" their problems, so that those who have greater availability of support see their problems as more manageable, experience less stress, and consequently suffer fewer of the physical and emotional consequences of stress.

Theory on the short-term effects of supportive communication and theory on the longer-term effects of social integration or perceived support availability are yet to be systematically integrated. However, it is not difficult to see how integration of this type could proceed, especially with respect to buffering effects. It is possible, for example, that high-quality supportive communication, provided in the wake of a stressful event or a series of stressful events, leads to stronger perceptions of support availability (among other effects), which in turn, cause these recipients to be less susceptible to the noxious effects of stress on health when subsequent events arise. Efforts to develop theories that provide integrated accounts of the short-term and long-term effects of supportive communication are likely to emerge as a particularly important research area.

Who Provides Effective Supportive Communication, and Why?

For most people, supportive communication is exchanged in the context of close relationships, such as marriage, dating relationships, friendships, and family relationships. Support provision also occurs between work associates, though this is probably more likely when there is a friendship that extends beyond work-based roles. Less frequently, supportive communication may come from what sociologists call "weak ties," including acquaintances and people engaged in service roles that bring about consistent contact with clients (e.g., hairdressers or restaurant employees with their "regulars"). Although it is also possible to conceive of social support coming from medical and mental health professionals (e.g., doctors or psychologists), most research on social support focuses on non-professional helpers.

From both theoretical and practical perspectives, the question of who provides support is probably less important than discovering who provides *good* support. Answering this question has been an important part of the research on supportive communication, though virtually all the studies have focused on predictors of the person centeredness of comforting, leaving the question largely unaddressed with respect to advice. The most-studied predictors of skill at person-centered comforting are age, sex, and cognitive

complexity. In general, the person centeredness of comforting increases with age through adolescence, reflecting developments in the cognitive, emotional, and communicative capabilities necessary to support sophisticated verbal comforting efforts (Burlson, 2003). Gender appears to be a significant predictor of comforting quality throughout the life span, with ample and consistent evidence that girls and women, on average, provide comforting with a higher level of person centeredness than do boys and men (MacGeorge, Graves, et al., 2004). Cultural or social factors probably explain much of this difference: In most cultures and societies, women's gender roles include the expectation of nurturing and comforting others, and the traditional activities of girls and women (e.g., child care) provide greater opportunity for practice at comforting.

Complementing this research on demographic factors are studies that have examined cognitive complexity as an influence on comforting behavior. As previously discussed, cognitive complexity refers to the sophistication of cognitive schema for thinking about people and social situations (Burlson & Caplan, 1998). Several studies indicate that individuals who are higher in cognitive complexity typically produce comforting messages that are higher in person-centeredness. Furthermore, these studies indicate that differences in cognitive complexity help explain the previously reviewed differences in person-centeredness due to age and gender. Specifically, there is evidence of a causal chain in which being female (vs. male) predicts higher cognitive complexity, which in turn, predicts the use of comforting messages with greater person-centeredness. The same is true for age, though only between early childhood to adolescence. Thus, cognitive complexity not only predicts the person-centeredness of comforting but also helps explain the effects of the other variables.

How Is Supportive Communication Studied?

Researchers have used a variety of methods to conduct research on supportive communication. Most research methods can be classified into one of four types or "paradigms": (1) naturalistic, (2) interaction analysis, (3) message perception, and (4) experimental (Burlson & MacGeorge, 2002). Each of these has contributed to the current understanding of supportive communication, and each has strengths and weaknesses that are complemented by the other paradigms.

The *naturalistic* paradigm includes research studies with participants who have actually experienced a specific kind of stressful event, either chronic (e.g., an ongoing medical condition) or acute (e.g., the loss of a job). Through interviews or questionnaires, these participants provide reports regarding "helpful" and "unhelpful" communication (and other behaviors) they have received from others. A classic study in this paradigm was conducted by

Lehman, Ellard, and Wortman (1986), who interviewed bereaved spouses and parents to determine the types of support they had received, who provided the support, and how these types of support were evaluated. The primary strength of this paradigm is what is termed *ecological validity*—that is, it examines supportive communication in the "real world," as actually experienced by people experiencing problems. However, there are important limitations to this paradigm as well. People are not especially good at remembering what others actually say to them, especially when weeks or months have passed, so that participants in these studies often provide general descriptions of intentions and outcomes ("She really tried to be helpful; she made me feel cared about") rather than the details of what was actually said. This can make it very difficult to determine what would be helpful or unhelpful for other support providers to say in the same or similar situations.

The *interaction analysis* paradigm includes studies with pairs of participants in a laboratory context; their interactions are audio or video recorded and subsequently transcribed. The transcriptions are then coded (i.e., classified) for different types of supportive communication (e.g., emotional or instrumental) so that the frequency of these support behaviors can be used to predict outcomes of interest (e.g., reduced distress, improved coping, conversational satisfaction). For example, the author of this chapter is currently conducting a study in which college students talk with friends about a current personal problem; the conversations are both videotaped and audiotaped. One obvious advantage of this paradigm is that the actual supportive behaviors are "captured" for subsequent analysis. In addition, researchers have the opportunity to measure (usually via a questionnaire) multiple outcomes of the interaction as well as predictors of what happens during the interactions. In the author's study, for example, questionnaires are used to measure variables such as the closeness of the relationship between the friends and the intention to implement any advice that was offered during the interaction. The major disadvantage of this paradigm is that participants may react to the laboratory setting by, for example, providing or responding to supportive communication in ways they ordinarily wouldn't. The quality of studies in this paradigm also depends significantly on what the researchers choose to code; in general, large-scale classification of behavior (e.g., emotional vs. instrumental) does not yield as much useful information as more fine-grained classification (e.g., coding messages for person-centeredness).

In the *message perception* paradigm, researchers present participants with sets of supportive messages designed or selected to represent features of theoretical interest (e.g., person centeredness or different types of facework). Such messages may be presented as lists or in scripted conversations, on paper or video, or, more recently, via computer. Participants evaluate these messages as third-party observers (e.g., "What do you think of what Jack said to Jane?") or as hypothetical recipients (e.g., "What would you think if someone said this to you?"). Such evaluations are

made on whatever dimensions are of interest to the researcher but typically include one or more factors such as supportiveness, helpfulness, effectiveness, and so on. A recent example of research in this paradigm tested the influence of “argument explicitness” (Feng & Burleson, 2008). In this study, research participants read and evaluated advice messages that either did or did not contain various kinds of arguments in support of the advised action. Because this paradigm allows researchers to focus directly on message qualities of theoretical interest and can be easily carried out with large numbers of participants, it is a particularly popular choice. However, there are obvious differences between actually experiencing a supportive message and making judgments about a message directed at others or imagining oneself as the target of a message in a hypothetical situation. There is also a difference between evaluating a message (e.g., for supportiveness or helpfulness) and assessing its predicted outcome (e.g., reduction in distress), though researchers using this paradigm are increasingly doing both or the latter (MacGeorge, Feng, et al., 2004).

The *experimental* paradigm encompasses studies in which researchers induce stress or upset (usually mild) in participants and then expose them to supportive messages generated by the researcher or by experimental confederates (i.e., people who are pretending to be ordinary participants but are actually trained by the researcher to do and say specific things). After reading or hearing the messages, participants provide assessments of relevant message evaluations (e.g., helpfulness or sensitivity) and outcomes (e.g., reduction of distress). An important example of work in this paradigm, conducted by Suzanne Jones (Jones & Wirtz, 2006), was described previously as a test of Burleson and Goldsmith’s reappraisal theory. The experimental paradigm brings together the strengths of the interaction analysis and message perception paradigms, permitting the systematic manipulation of specific message features and the evaluation of multiple message effects and outcomes. One obvious challenge in using this paradigm arises from the ethical concerns inherent in inducing upset or stress in research participants; participants cannot be unduly upset, and they must be carefully debriefed (i.e., counseled by the researcher) so that little or no distress remains when the experiment is over. In addition, this research method is typically expensive in terms of time and resources. For this reason, the experimental paradigm is the least used, though its use is on the rise as supportive-communication researchers devise skillful ways to manage ethical issues and train confederates (Jones & Guerrero, 2001).

Collectively, each of these paradigms has been demonstrated to be useful toward building a base of knowledge and will continue to be used as their methods prove relevant to questions being addressed by researchers. To illustrate, although the naturalistic paradigm may seem the most limited, it is often an important starting point for understanding supportive communication in specialized populations, especially if there is reason to believe that the

experience or evaluation of support may be somewhat different in those populations than in the general population. Other research methods are also beginning to show promise (Burleson & MacGeorge, 2002).

The Future of Supportive Communication Research and Theory

Although scholarly interest in supportive communication does not have the lengthy history of some other areas in the communication discipline (e.g., persuasion), the past two decades have seen considerable development in theory and research and an increasing numbers of scholars who focus their work in this area. Many, if not all, are motivated by the practical nature of research on social support: Findings have high potential for translation into ways of improving support processes and thereby the lives of all who give and receive support.

As research on supportive communication continues to develop, there are at least three areas that are likely to (and should) receive special attention. First, as discussed in the section on how and why supportive communication is effective, there is a need to move beyond identifying what works to explaining why it works. Part of this endeavor will include making further links between psychological, sociological, and communication perspectives on social support. Second, more research needs to be focused on supportive communication in particularly difficult contexts, such as bereavement (Servaty-Seib & Burleson, 2007), and with specific populations, such as those experiencing major health issues (Goldsmith, 2004). Third, work is needed in the area of training in supportive-communication skills. With all the practical knowledge that is now available about how to provide effective comfort and advice, communication scholars and practitioners need to do considerably more to develop, implement, and evaluate ways of helping people acquire better skills in this area (Burleson, 2003).

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PART VI

KEY COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIPS

SPOUSES AND OTHER INTIMATE PARTNERSHIPS

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Communication and the quality of romantic relationships are strongly related. Generally, people think that bad communication leads to bad relationships and good communication leads to good relationships. Unfortunately, it is not that simple. There is little agreement on what constitutes good communication. For some people, hashing out every minute detail of their thoughts is critical, while others prefer to keep to themselves. Similarly, perceptions vary widely on the elements that make up a good relationship. One person's dream relationship may well be another's nightmare. Nonetheless, my goal in this chapter is to present some ideas as to how spouses and other intimate partners communicate in effective and not so effective ways.

Our beliefs influence our behavior, so I begin by presenting some commonly held irrational and dysfunctional beliefs surrounding relational communication. This is followed by a discussion of both communication skills and different types of couples. In addition, I will outline research findings concerning communication processes, in the context of intimate relationships, such as self-disclosure, conflict, support, sexual communication, and small talk. I consider an area of research known as relational maintenance, and I close by offering some practical suggestions for improving communication in intimate relationships.

Dysfunctional and Irrational Beliefs Concerning Communication Skills

Numerous dysfunctional or irrational beliefs surround communication in intimate romantic relationships. Holding such beliefs is linked to problematic relationships. Here are a few such beliefs regarding relational communication:

- Poor communication is the number one problem in relationships.
- Poor communication is the primary cause of bad relationships.
- Increasing communication improves relationships.
- Partners should be completely honest with each other.
- Gender differences in communication cause relational difficulties.

Poor communication is widely viewed as the major problem in relationships. The idea that bad communication is the root of all (or most) evil in relationships is deeply entrenched in our culture. When poor communication is seen as the problem, then improving or increasing communication is typically seen as the solution. Indeed, improving communication (learning better communication skills) is the number one prescription offered by pop psychologists for

troubled couples. However, communication itself is seldom the real problem. Rather, fundamental conflicts in values or beliefs are the major cause for most relational problems. Improved communication might help individuals understand the problems better and perhaps provide a means for tackling them. Yet even then, understanding a problem and agreeing on the solution are not the same. Many problems in relationships occur because of disagreements as to how to spend money, different standpoints on religion, dissimilar views of the roles of women and men in marriage, and many other ingrained values or beliefs. Consider a situation in which one partner desires children and the other does not. The couple can talk until they are blue in the face, with great skill; nonetheless, no amount of good communication will resolve this basic difference in desires. This is not to say that the way you communicate is unrelated to the quality of your relationship. We just must be cautious in the belief that communication is some magic panacea for relationships. Otherwise, real problems remain hidden.

Though communication skill training is frequently prescribed for multiple problems, usually communication skill training can only fix *communication* problems. Let us consider the following scenario. A wife feels as though her husband is not paying attention to her, though in actuality, he is; the husband just does not display the nonverbal cues that the wife finds consistent with being heard and understood. Communication skills training could teach the husband to use more eye contact and offer some “huh huhs” to help the wife feel that she is being listened to. On the other hand, if the husband simply does not want to pay attention to his wife or doesn’t care if she feels listened to or not, that is, if he has little motivation, there is little to be gained from skills courses that “teach” him to use eye contact and offer feedback.

If bad communication is believed to be the problem in relationships, this logically leads to the next belief that *bad communication causes bad relationships*. Though labeled as a dysfunctional belief, poor communication *can* actually lead to poor relationships. The belief is dysfunctional if we fail to recognize that bad communication is unlikely to be the primary problem. It is also dysfunctional when we believe that poor communication skills always precede a bad relationship. We can just as easily turn this idea around. That is, studies that suggest having a distressed relationship leads to poor communication. Often, both partners are highly skilled communicators when talking with people other than their partner. Such skills simply disappear when interacting with their own partner. This indicates that due to dissatisfaction with the relationship, one partner or both no longer bother to try to communicate successfully. They let ill feelings impede their motivation to try to use their skills.

Perception plays a part in these circumstances. If you and I are in a relationship, and I perceive our relationship to be on the rocks or have decided I do not care for you anymore (regardless of the reason), these negative feelings lead to negative perceptions. This makes it quite difficult for me to see your communication as positive or even neutral

because I am expecting negative communication. Consider the simple comment, “You got a haircut.” If this comment comes from someone with whom I have a positive relationship, I am likely to interpret this as a compliment. If it comes from someone with whom I have a bad relationship, I am more likely to see it as a criticism. In other words, troubled couples are more likely to interpret everyday remarks or simple observations as criticism and thus become defensive. This leads to worse communication and a worse relationship. This, in turn, leads to even worse communication. The couple is in a downward spiral. Alternatively, an everyday neutral comment between satisfied partners can be misperceived as a positive statement, such as a compliment, and rather than a negative cycle, a positive one occurs.

In short, when it comes to good and bad communication and good and bad relationships, we have a question of the chicken and the egg: Which came first? We do have evidence that poor communication can lead to relational troubles. Still, this is not the case nearly as often as most people think it is. The reverse is just as, if not more, likely: A bad relationship or negative perception of one’s partner leads to poor communication and even to seeing negative communication when it is not there. The probable case is that bad communication (or perceptions of bad communication) is not the heart of the problem. Rather, such communication and perceptions are symptoms of the problem, symptoms that cannot be ignored. If we can improve our relationship and our perception of our partner, better communication skills can follow without necessarily trying to improve our communication.

Still, the belief holds that communication is the problem and two people simply need to communicate more. As a culture, we tend to believe that increasing communication helps relationships. Many pop psychologists and self-help books reinforce this belief. Yet when people say they wish they could communicate more, they might want to remember the adage about being careful what you wish for. Increasing communication incurs the risk of increased negative communication. If we consider that poor relationships might lead to poor communication, increasing communication could simply lead to increased poor communication, leading us further along a downward spiral.

Partners should be completely honest with each other. As foreshadowed in the previous paragraph, this thinking is also flawed. In the 1960s, slogans such as “Tell it like it is” became mainstream. With this generation, came the belief that relational partners should be completely open and honest with each other. Partners should not live a lie, and if a relationship was not strong enough for the full truth, it was not a relationship worth having. Such views radically changed the way people thought about communication. An overemphasis on complete disclosure and complete honesty led us toward a belief system that still surrounds today’s relationships. Research has clearly documented that many messages can be honest but hurtful, and more often than not, such messages result in negative consequences for the individual and for the relationship.

The final irrational belief presented here, a bit different from the others, is that *the sexes communicate differently*. This is the idea that women and men differ in their communication in such fundamental ways that communication problems are inevitable. If this were true, by this logic, homosexual relationships should be conflict-free, whereas heterosexual relationships should be much more distressed. Research has found, however, that neither homosexual nor heterosexual partnerships are better than the other at communication within their romantic relationships. Yet among heterosexual couples, the way females and males communicate has taken much of the heat for relational problems. Though some strongly believe that there are gender differences in communication and that such gender differences can cause harm, many social scientists argue that gender differences in communication (and ways of thinking and acting) are minimal. Numerous meta-analyses (studies of studies) have found gender differences in communication to be small and largely inconsequential.

Why then do so many people think that such differences are prevalent? Perception, again, plays a role. We see differences, even when they are not there, because we expect them. A woman who talks little during a discussion of intimate topics is more likely to be seen as shy, whereas the same behavior in a man is attributed to males' dislike of discussing intimate topics.

The belief that women and men communicate differently is problematic because it often causes relational harm by obscuring or escalating the real problems. Why try to talk about an issue or work on a problem if that is just the way women and men are? I might be dissatisfied if my male husband does not open up to me, even if I assume that this is normal for a guy. I could completely miss the fact that he *wants* to talk with me but is shy. If I am too entrenched in my belief, I do not even notice his desire to talk or do not offer him the opportunity to talk then despite his desire. Therefore, he does not talk more, and I continue being dissatisfied that he does not.

People are more likely to interact in a manner similar to their partner than in a way predicted by gender. People tend to reciprocate behavior. If I attack you in conversation, you are likely to attack me, regardless of our genders. If I disclose to you, you are likely to disclose to me. In other words, how your partner argues or manages conflict is much more predictive of how you argue than is your gender.

Communication Skills

The idea of good communication is central to dysfunctional beliefs. Yet there is a difference between good communication (or good communication skills) and good communication within a relationship. The communication scholar Brant Burleson (2003) considers communication *motivation* as the desire and intention to achieve a certain goal, whereas communication *skill* is the ability to achieve the desired goal. Sometimes, when people think a problem is a lack of skills, the problem could well be a lack of motivation.

We also confuse communication behavior with skill. Communication *behavior* is the nonverbal and verbal activity individuals engage in. Communication is behavior and can be observed, unlike motivations and skills (abilities), which cannot be empirically examined. Whether or not a particular communication behavior is skillful can only be determined if indeed the person achieves the desired goal. This, too, relates to our idea that skill training is not helpful for many relationships. Just because someone has excellent communication skills, it does not necessarily mean the skills will be used to enhance the relationship. If my intent is to hurt or belittle my partner and I have the "good" communication skills to do so and use those skills to cause harm, I am not using my abilities to sustain or build a satisfying relationship. Skillful communicators can inflict much damage on each other and their relationship.

In sum, clearly communication skills are important and are linked to satisfying and stable marriages and intimate relationships. However, we simply cannot assume that poor communication is the problem in bad relationships. Many other problems from many other sources are more likely. If we focus only on improving or increasing communication, we miss the possibility that the problem is lack of motivation or even the inability to use or see positive communication with our partner because of some deeper issue. The deeper issue might be the source of the bad relationship and that bad relationship the source of worse and worse communication. We also cannot assume that a skillful communicator will choose or even have the ability to use those skills in a given relationship. Skillful communicators can intentionally hurt a partner. In addition, sometimes hurt is caused by what we think is supposed to bring us closer (e.g., complete openness and expecting certain types of communication based on gender). The point here is not to devalue communication. The point is to lead us beyond naïve, simplistic, and dysfunctional views of communication that are often propagated in self-help literature and by pop psychology. That being said, of course, some types of communication are generally more or less helpful for relationships.

Communication Processes and Typologies of Relationships

Communication Processes

Let us attend directly to specific communication processes that occur between spouses and other intimate partners. Some of these include self-disclosure, conflict, social support, sexual communication, and small talk. I will conclude this section by presenting two typologies of relationships.

Self-disclosure is credited as the ultimate means of relationship development. It has also been considered necessary for relational satisfaction and continuation. Self-disclosure does not always live up to individuals'

expectations for it. Self-disclosure does not equal satisfaction or stability. Sometimes we engage in self-disclosure to hurt the other person. Sometimes that is not our intent; nonetheless, the disclosure is still hurtful. Sometimes we engage in self-disclosure to get something off our chest without thinking about the ramifications of placing this burden of knowledge on the other person. Often times we choose not to self-disclose because we feel that the information is too private or personal or reflects too negatively on ourselves. Some satisfied couples limit their self-disclosure more than other satisfied couples do. Marital workshops wherein individuals are virtually forced to self-disclose have been known to do as much harm for certain marriages as they provide help for others. Within a marriage, an agreement as to the nature of self-disclosure or the need to self-disclose is more significant than the amount.

Social support is often overlooked as a vital aspect of spousal interaction. One scholar defined social support as “responsiveness to another’s needs and more specifically as acts that communicate caring: that validate the other’s worth, feelings, or actions: or that facilitate adaptive coping with problems through the provision of information, assistance, or tangible resources” (Cutrona, 1996, p. 10). Over the course of a relationship, numerous stressors occur at the individual level and at the couple level. Often, we expect our partners to provide emotional or physical support when we face life’s stressors. We might need our spouse to listen to us, to cheer us on, or simply to be there. We also need our spouse to do things for us (instrumental support) or to know that our spouse could if needed.

Problematically, not everything that is offered as social support by one person is accepted as such by the other. A well-intentioned “supportive” statement or action, such as “Let me help you with that,” can be viewed as patronizing. Attempts to cheer the other up, “Come on, it can’t be that bad,” might be seen as not taking the problem seriously. Though vital to strong relationships, offering, accepting, and agreeing as to what constitutes social support can be difficult for some couples.

Sexual communication is related to relational satisfaction. Oddly, in a society seemingly obsessed with sex, communication about sex has not been studied as much as many other communication processes. Often times, individuals seem to be able to engage in sexual activity more readily than they can talk about it. Many types of sexual communication occur. Given concerns with AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, research has concentrated on safer-sex communication among relatively new partners. Within a monogamous marriage or otherwise committed intimate relationship, sexual communication refers to each person’s ability to negotiate sexual activity (initiation and refusal) and to talk about likes and dislikes. Individuals need to know how to initiate sexual interaction in a manner acceptable to their partner. One person’s direct and overt statement of desire might be either welcomed or considered crass and offensive by the other. Sexual initiations can be verbally direct, verbally indirect, physical,

nonverbal glances, touching, and the like. Whatever the case, the ability for either partner to initiate and each partner to be able to recognize and appreciate the invitation of the other is essential for sexual satisfaction.

Equally important is the ability to communicate a refusal or rejection of the offer and the recognition of such a refusal by the other. Not all partners want to have sex at the same time, and seldom is the frequency of sexual activity agreed on. Instances of refusal are going to happen. Partners in a solid relationship recognize the refusal and realize that the rejection of a sexual advance is not a rejection of the partner.

Sexual communication does not stop with the ability to negotiate the when or if of sex. In addition, sexual communication entails the couple’s abilities to express likes, dislikes, and desires outside of or during sexual activities. Talking about sex is somewhat of a taboo topic, even within marriage. Individuals frequently find it quite difficult and feel it risky to express likes and dislikes. Furthermore, such expressions must be met with acceptance not defensiveness or feelings of inadequacy. It can be difficult to hear what we might feel is negative feedback about our performance, but not providing (and accepting) such feedback makes it extremely difficult for a couple to continue to develop a satisfactory sex life. Of course, such feedback does not necessarily have to be verbal as long as partners develop some manner of expressing (and accepting) each other’s preferences.

To make talk more comfortable, couples often develop their own “idioms” (nicknames) for the initiation or refusal of sexual activity or various sexual acts. Jointly created “code” can be less threatening, and perhaps even fun, for both members of the couple.

Satisfaction with sexual communication, sexual activities, and the relationship are all associated with each other. Improvement in any one of these areas should result in improvement of the other two.

Conflict

Perhaps more research has been devoted to conflict within marriages than to any other single communication process. This is because many scholars believe that the way couples manage their disagreements is a major predictor of the success of the relationship. Many different ways of handling conflict can be successful if both partners agree as to how conflict should be managed.

John Gottman (1994b) has gathered the strongest evidence to date for what are clearly positive and negative communication patterns between romantic partners whether married, cohabiting, engaged, homosexual, or heterosexual. He calls the four negative styles of interacting the “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.” If left unchecked, these will almost certainly trample any relationship. These negative communication tactics are *criticisms*, *contempt*, *defensiveness*, and *stonewalling*. The next section explains each of these and offers Gottman’s advice for countering or correcting them.

Criticisms focus on the character or nature of an individual. Specific complaints about individual behaviors do not carry the same negative weight. Consider the difference between the messages “You are a slob” and “I wish you would pick up your socks,” or “You are so inconsiderate” and “You didn’t call me when you were going to be late getting home.” Offering a valid complaint about a specific behavior is more likely to lead to less defensiveness and have a higher chance of resolving the issue. Such a complaint is probably more truthful as well.

Among dissatisfied couples, criticisms and even valid complaints are often met with defensiveness leading to a counterattack. For example, I say, “I wish you would pick up your dirty laundry,” and you might respond with “Who are you to talk? You are such a slob.” Satisfied couples are less likely to respond to either a criticism or a complaint with a negative reaction. However, the use of specific complaints instead of general criticisms or character assassination, makes it easier not to be negative in return.

When offered a complaint, our best course of action is to stay focused on the specific complaint and consider whether the complaint is valid rather than to become defensive. Do you leave your socks on the floor? Do you fail to call? Take responsibility for your role and make amends rather than engaging in a counterattack of your own. Using complaints instead of criticisms does not give us a license to hurl numerous complaints at our partners. No matter how gently worded, an abundance of even legitimate complaints about another’s actions will eventually take its toll. Gottman has proposed that every negative comment within a relationship has to be offset by at least five to eight positive ones.

Contempt is pure poison. Contempt belittles the other person. It is shown through behaviors such as rolling one’s eyes or sneering, offering sarcastic comments, hurtful humor, mocking, name-calling, and the like. Such behavior shows no respect and no willingness to listen or understand. Contempt ultimately indicates disgust with the other person. Contemptuous remarks lead to further contempt or criticisms and do nothing to resolve any issues. It should go without saying that the use of contemptuous behaviors is unhealthy.

Defensiveness often comes on the heels of criticism and contempt. When it comes to conflict, it seems that many people believe that the best defense is a good offense. Rather than responding appropriately, individuals defend themselves by being critical, contemptuous, or failing to take responsibility for their own actions.

Most individuals tend to reciprocate behavior. In other words, they tend to give back what they are given. This is truest for unhappy couples. Satisfied and dissatisfied couples are likely to return a positive remark with a positive remark. A major difference between satisfied and dissatisfied couples emerges when a negative comment is offered. Only individuals in a satisfied partnership seem to be capable of meeting a negative remark (e.g., a criticism) without becoming defensive. Satisfied couples are able to stop a negative spiral rather than fuel it.

Stonewalling shuts the other person out. It sometimes occurs later in a relationship than the other behaviors. It might develop after several months or years of criticism, contempt, or defensiveness. Stonewalling can involve physically leaving the room or home with no explanation, simply storming out or walking away. Stonewalling can also occur in the other’s presence through the silent treatment.

Sometimes when an issue becomes too heated or feelings are being hurt, a timeout can be helpful. There is a vast difference between informing the other you are too upset to talk right now, that you need to take a walk and calm down, compared with simply storming out and slamming the door or remaining an impassive stone.

Chronic use of criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling indicates little concern for what the other has to say. Though such negative communication is most readily evidenced in conflict situations, the same types of negative communication can also occur during nonconflict situations. Couples who use such communication tactics will likely end their relationships. Of course, if partners change the way they interact, the relationship prognosis changes.

Everyday Talk

We seem to be preoccupied with examining conflict and self-disclosure. However, most couples spend much more of their talk time in rather routine or mundane conversations. Moreover, such mundane conversation is vital. Indeed, the relational scholar Steve Duck (1995) argues that such talk is the stuff of which relationships are made. The day-to-day talk about the ordinary creates, sustains, and re-creates the relationship between people. According to Duck, relationships are never stagnant. They are always changing; they are “unfinished business.” Most scholars do share the view that relationships are constantly evolving. Duck argues that this occurs through the most mundane of discourse. Through such talk we reveal who we are, what we think, and what we think about our relationship, and we learn such things about our partner. In satisfactory relationships, most of our conversation with our partners is likely both mundane and satisfying. Similarly, other scholars have noted that much of our talk involves joking around, gossiping, catching up, covering logistics, and other such types of talk considered to be extremely ordinary.

Communicating to Maintain Relationships

Though the study of marital satisfaction and stability is long-standing, the area of research labeled *relationship maintenance* is comparatively new. The study of relationship maintenance has largely been concerned with the communication behaviors associated with relational stability, satisfaction, or other desired relational qualities, such as trust and commitment. Of course, scholars define *maintenance* in slightly different ways. Similarly, various scholars have

identified several means of communication linked to relational stability and quality. Most, if not all, of the communication behaviors discussed earlier could be considered maintenance behaviors. The broad study of relationship maintenance is much more recent than research on any one particular communication process, such as conflict or self-disclosure. The study of relationship maintenance attempts to tie these separate communication processes together and go beyond them. As a whole, relationship maintenance research considers not only the communicative processes between the members of the couple but also the role of social networks (e.g., family and friends) and perceptions and cognitions in maintaining relationships. For example, spouses' perceptions of their partners' use of maintenance behaviors (e.g., being positive) is related to their own satisfaction. Also, merely thinking about fond memories of your partner is related to maintenance.

Different types of couples use different types of maintenance behaviors. Maintenance behaviors also vary depending on the current state of the relationship. For example, a newly dating couple might use more openness, whereas a married couple of several years is likely to offer more reassurances. Maintenance activities are also varied based on a couple's circumstances. Couples in long-distance relationships must rely more on mediated means (e.g., telephone, e-mail) than those who are close. Cognitions (e.g., remembering past interactions and looking forward to future ones) appear to be a maintenance mechanism for couples who are physically away from each other. Furthermore, different maintenance behaviors are linked to differing relational characteristics. Assurances are strongly related to commitment, whereas being positive is strongly related to liking.

Though this brief presentation barely scratches the surface of relationship maintenance, it emphasizes the idea that there is no one type of communication that is right for differing types of relationships or even different points in time for the same relationship. Furthermore, research on maintenance reminds us that communication is not the only means of creating or solving problems in relationships. Our networks and our thoughts play a part. Many scholars who study relationship maintenance appear to view successful maintenance as the result of the maintenance activities. However, returning to our question of the chicken and the egg, it is not clear whether maintenance behaviors lead to positive relationships or whether they are reflections of positive relationships. In all probability, they are both. Such a comprehensive approach to relational success is likely to continue to help scholars further understand the connections between communication and successful relationships in the hope that advice that is more specific can be offered to couples.

Typologies

Research has shown there is no one right way to communicate or one good type of relationship. Different couples use different styles of communication and nevertheless are satisfied. Evidence comes from some researchers, such as Mary

Anne Fitzpatrick and John Gottman, who have identified general types of married and other intimate couples.

Mary Anne Fitzpatrick's (1988) typology of couples is based on their patterns of communication and their ideologies about marriage. She identifies three primary types of couples, which she calls traditional, independent, and separate. *Traditional* couples value interdependence over autonomy. They hold conventional views of marriage. For example, they tend to follow traditional gender roles and are more likely to see the man as the head of the family. They are intertwined and share time, space, and leisure activities together. They do not engage in frequent conflict or self-disclosure in many arenas, but they do engage in conflict and self-disclosure over issues they believe to be important.

Independent couples place importance on both connection and individuality. They have less conventional values about marriage. For example, they do not necessarily follow traditional gender roles, and they engage in more negotiation about who does what within the marriage. They are more likely than traditional couples to participate in separate leisure activities and to share less time together. Still, they are interdependent. They engage in high levels of self-disclosure and conflict over both relatively minor and major issues.

Separate couples hold conventional beliefs about marriage although they place little importance on interdependence. These couples spend less time together than either of the previously discussed couple types. They tend to avoid both self-disclosure and conflict.

Research indicates that about 60% of couples fall into one of these three types. All three of these can have satisfying and stable relationships. This leaves 40% of couples where the partners are of two different types. The probability of satisfaction is higher for individuals who share the same orientation than for those in mixed relationships.

Another typology of couples was developed by John Gottman (1994b). Gottman is interested in identifying satisfying and stable couples primarily based on how they handle conflict. He classified couples into one of five types, three of which are functional, whereas the other two are likely to terminate their relationships. The three stable types are the avoiders, volatile couples, and validators.

First are the *avoiders*. As their name suggests, these couples attempt to avoid conflict. They are more likely to agree to disagree than to confront the issue. They tend to minimize the importance of an issue, nevertheless they do accept the other person and listen to the other person's views. *Volatile* couples privilege independence. They seem to thrive on conflict and willingly engage in conflict. They are passionate and offer a great deal of both positive and negative affect. Finally, some couples are *validators*. These couples avoid many arguments except over issues they consider vital. During interaction, there is a great deal of verbal and nonverbal acknowledgment, indicating that each is paying attention and wants to hear the other.

Gottman has identified two additional couple types as dysfunctional and likely to end their relationships: the hostile-engaged and the hostile-detached. The *hostile-engaged* couple exhibits a pattern of complaining and criticizing

by one partner followed by defensiveness by the other. They seem to have little understanding of each other's points of view. The *hostile-detached* couple live relatively detached and separate lives. When they do encounter conflict, it is generally short and intense and consists of attacking and defensiveness, disinterest, or contempt.

Conclusion

When invited to write this chapter, I was asked to suggest how the knowledge included could help students with their own communication. In this conclusion, I offer some suggestions.

The generalities offered must be read with caution; it is important to remember that it is impossible to define "good" communication. One-size-fits-all prescriptions for good communication simply do not exist as no two relationships are the same. Though there are clearly some wrong ways to communicate, there is no one right way to communicate. That said, I attempt to offer general but, nonetheless, what I believe to be worthy pieces of advice.

First, I would challenge you to examine your beliefs about relationships, including those that are potentially dysfunctional. Do you strongly hold many dysfunctional views? Maybe, as an adult, it is time to revisit your views of relationships.

Similarly, think about what you consider good communication. Not everyone wants the same type of communication. Some of us thrive on conflict and disclosure and some of us prefer to avoid conflict and keep things more to ourselves. Some people believe that all issues and irritations have to be aired to have a true connection; others are quite happy with agreeing to disagree. The probability of a successful relationship increases when partners are similar not only in their values and beliefs but also in their communication preferences. Do not assume that your relationship is in trouble just because your partner seems to need to argue about everything. Similarly, do not assume that your partner does not want to be close to you just because she or he does not disclose as much private information as you might like. Before making a commitment, pay attention to your similarities and differences in communication preferences. A conflict avoider and a conflict engager will face the difficulty of not only resolving the issue but also resolving whether to engage in conflict. Last, within the realms of both sexual communication and social support, there is a need to recognize how sensitive and tricky negotiating the same meanings can be. It can require work to find ways of talking about sexual activity in a manner that is comfortable for both you and your partner or being able to offer support in a way that is not viewed as patronizing.

Next, I raise two issues that have not been addressed previously in this chapter. Little has been directly stated about amount or timing. I have mentioned that it is best if people agree on the amount of conflict or disclosure. There are other ways amount should be considered. For example, we generally do want positivity and reassurances from our

partner, yet someone who is constantly positive will probably get on our nerves. Perhaps we begin to wonder what is wrong, if our partner verbally reassures us of their love for us too many times a day. There might be a point at which we receive too much "good" communication.

The setting and the timing also factor into consideration. When and where one chooses to engage in conflict or self-disclosure, to offer social support, or even to attempt small talk can have major ramifications. Discussion of the same issue in private versus in front of friends or family members will affect the conversation. Or what might be taken as supportive communication or appropriate sexual communication in private might cause you to feel uncomfortable in public.

Raising an issue you desire to discuss when your partner is exhausted or stressed does not provide a great chance for either of you to use your best communication skills and successfully address the issue. Even small talk can be ill timed. It is not wise to attempt to engage in pillow talk as your partner is just on the edge of sleep. Your partner might not desire to be roused just to talk, and you might feel ignored.

We might not think about the where and when to engage in different types of talk with our partner, but a little consideration of such factors can go a long way toward setting up a situation that more readily lends itself to good communication. Some of us are rather selfish about our needs and want to talk about "it" (whatever "it" is) right then and there, without considering our partner's state or desire. We need to monitor our partner, and ourselves, and ask if this is indeed the right time or place. When either partner is overly exhausted, stressed, or emotional, even the best communicators are less likely to be motivated, or able, to use those skills in a positive manner.

Finally, I close with pieces of advice that I offer with the most confidence. Do not automatically assume that communication is the problem in a relationship; keep an eye out for the real issue. Keep in mind that problematic relationships *cause* problematic communication as well as *result from* problematic communication. As most problems are not communication problems, decide if the area of discontent is something you can live with or be willing to dig deep into real issues. If the problem is your communication, decide to work actively on your communication skills.

Do not reciprocate negative behaviors. Remember that most of us, including marital and other intimate partners, tend to give back what we are given. In a healthy relationship, partners are better able to counter negative behaviors with positive ones. Responding to a negative remark with a positive one can turn a downward spiral back upward.

Pay as much attention to your perceptions and attitudes about your partner and your relationship as to your communication within the relationship. If you are in a satisfying relationship, keep thinking positively about your partner and your relationship. Feed those fond feelings. If in a troubled relationship, keep in mind that you might see negative communication when it is not there and that you are probably not motivated to use your best

communication skills either. Rediscover the person you fell in love with and the great relationship you used to have. Maintaining a positive relationship or turning a distressed relationship back into a positive one, could just lead to good communication.

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CHILDREN, PARENTS, AND GRANDPARENTS

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Did you know?

In the year 2000 ...

U.S. Population Census, 2000

- Children under the age of 18 represented 26% of the population of the United States, and 90% (64.7 million) of those children live with at least one parent.
- Multigenerational households make up nearly 4% of all U.S. households.
- 2.4 million (42%) grandparents living in multigenerational households also had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren younger than 18.
- 43% women and 56% men ages 18–24 lived at home with a parent.

Families with children form a substantial number of households in the United States. In the best of times, families can be complicated, and the complex nature of families is not restricted to their structure (e.g., two-parent, single-parent, or multigenerational families). Unlike sociologists, whose main interests tend to be focused on family structures and the changing nature of families in the United States, communication researchers tend to be interested in the complexities of how families are created by both structure *and* interaction. That is, they tend to focus more on the private nature of interactions among family members than only on family structure itself. This is the purview of most 21st-century research in family communication: to study family interactions and the meanings that arise from them. This chapter does not undertake the complex task of presenting an exhaustive compilation of

research published in the field of family communication in general; numerous books and chapters have already completed that task with care (e.g., Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006a; Vangelisti, 2004). Rather, this chapter provides an overview of some history, theorizing, and research conducted on intergenerational communication by those identifying themselves primarily as communication researchers.

Brief History

Intergenerational communication refers generally to communication that occurs between individuals from different generations (e.g., parent-child, grandparent-grandchild). The study of communication among family members has a

long tradition. Research over the past 20 years has revealed to both clinicians and scholars that family communication is consequential to personal development and relational satisfaction. Family members are interdependent; that is, they influence and are influenced by each other, and family life is constituted through this social interaction. It is through communication that family members come to know family roles, rules, and expectations; how they form and maintain their relationships with one another; and how they learn to interact with others. The family is our first communication classroom. But, despite the centrality of communication in family functioning, it wasn't until the turn of this century that the field of communication supported a professional journal for the publication of original research on family communication.

Until the late 20th century, study of communication between and among parents, children, and grandparents perpetuated the trend across disciplines to focus almost exclusively on (Caucasian) mother-child communication. Historically, parenting was conceptualized as the domain of mothers, and the mother-child relationship was viewed as the primary intergenerational relationship in the family. It has been only recently that fathers, grandparents, and the role of culture and ethnicity have begun to play a significant role in family communication research. At the crossroads of the 20th and 21st centuries, communication research is now assuming a greater focus on the larger family system, on the complex nature of the family itself, and on understudied family relationships. The study of intergenerational communication is complex due to life span issues (e.g., from infancy to elder years), different family relationships (e.g., mother-daughter, father-son, grandmother-granddaughter), and family structure (e.g., single parent, two parent, biological parent, stepparent, multigenerational), along with a host of other complicating variables such as culture, ethnicity, and socioeconomics. Indeed, there is no one kind of family. There is no universal theory of families and no single recipe for effective communication. Families are diverse and have unique past experiences of communicating that carry into the present and have implications for the future. This makes the study of intergenerational communication such a challenge (and so much fun).

Communication Theories

Theories are important because they provide a lens through which we can describe and explain findings, and they provide direction for future research and understanding. Thus, to understand intergenerational communication research, it is necessary to become familiar with the theories that have been used to explain it. There is a long list of theories that have been employed to explain communication processes relevant to families; however, many of these theories originated outside the field of communication studies. Theories such as systems theory, attachment theory, and social learning

theory have historically been effectively applied to explain family functioning and communication interaction in family contexts. Nevertheless, until the latter part of the 20th century, there were few indigenous theories developed by communication scholars. As we enter the 21st century, this is changing. Braithwaite and Baxter (2006a) pointed out that several theories have been developed by communication researchers, and these theories have a presence in current research efforts to advance our knowledge and understanding of communication between and among parents, children, and grandparents. Communication-based theories of families and intergenerational relationships are guided by several assumptions explicated in the following sections. Whitchurch and Dickson (1999) argued that several assumptions describe how family communication tends to be conceptualized and that these assumptions imply a direction for intergenerational communication research efforts.

Assumption: Family Relationships Are Constructed Through Interaction

This assumption includes the belief that family relationships are constituted through verbal and nonverbal interaction, including the sharing and withholding of messages. There are four communication theories that serve to enhance understandings of intergenerational communication through a focus on the meanings that arise from that interaction: (1) communication privacy management (CPM), (2) family communication patterns (FCP), (3) necessary convergence communication theory (NCC), and (4) communication accommodation theory (CAT).

Communication Privacy Management Theory

Communication privacy management theory (CPM) (Petronio, 2007) maintains that people have a sense of ownership over their personal information; thus, they feel entitled to decide when to reveal personal information and to whom. In addition, people use privacy rules to control their personal information. When people share this information, the recipient is expected to abide by the privacy rules, which often means keeping the information secret. Yet people may, at times, break the rules and breach privacy boundaries. Revealing information to another person entails a degree of risk as that person may disclose the information to others. In deciding to share private information, people may regulate their privacy more rigidly for one person than another. Thus, privacy rules control who receives the personal information, the amount of information disclosed, the type of information disclosed, and the reasons for revealing the information (Caughlin et al., 2000).

CPM and Communication Among Parents, Children, and Grandparents. Privacy rules in families can be complex. Decisions to reveal or conceal information are predicated on the relationship of the communicators, the family role

(child/parent/grandparent), and a host of situational factors. In families, people form privacy boundaries around themselves, themselves and others in the family (e.g., sibling groups, parent-child), and around the family system as a whole. Establishing privacy boundaries is a rite of passage in adolescence. Adolescents often avoid certain topics with their parents in their quest for developing an independent, autonomous identity. In fact, research suggests that keeping some information from their parents can be a useful way for adolescents to establish their own autonomy. Yet topic avoidance becomes complicated in stepfamily systems. Afifi and colleagues (Afifi, 2003; Golish & Caughlin, 2002) reported that older adolescents were often frustrated with the tensions between revealing and concealing information among custodial parents, non-custodial parents, and stepparents. Moreover, developments such as changes in family structure and transitions from adolescence to adulthood require the renegotiation of privacy management rules. Research in this area often addresses issues of privacy rules, privacy boundaries, and boundary turbulence.

As with many of the other theories discussed here, grandparents are largely absent from the research on privacy. An exception is work conducted by Barker (2007) focusing on painful and personal self-disclosures by grandparents to their young-adult grandchildren. He discovered that maternal grandmothers made more disclosures compared with maternal grandfathers. Moreover, this study found that some grandparents shared private information to enhance their connection with a grandchild, but they also shared private information for control purposes. Likewise, family members may share or withhold information from elderly grandparents to protect or control. For example, in one ethnographic study of grandmothers, their adult children, and their grandchildren, certain truths were often kept from elderly grandmothers “for their own good” (Miller-Day, 2004). In this study, one of the grandmothers became ill and was diagnosed with intestinal cancer. Her daughter and grandchildren conspired and “decided not to tell her she had cancer.” Despite these studies, we know very little about privacy management across generations in families.

Family Communication Patterns

Family communication patterns (FCP) describe a “family’s tendency to develop fairly stable and thus predictable ways of communicating with one another” (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2004, p. 180). These patterns include a conversation orientation and a conformity orientation, which help scholars define four different family types and predict family processes, such as how members coordinate meanings in communicative interaction. A *conversation orientation* refers to the degree of openness in family interactions and emphasizes individuality and individual contribution, whereas a *conformity orientation* refers to the degree of conformity required by the family and emphasizes compliance with common family ideals and values.

Using high and low discriminations on the two orientations, four family environment types have been identified: (1) *laissez-faire*, (2) *consensual*, (3) *pluralistic*, and (4) *protective* families (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994). Because both dimensions of conversational and conformity orientations interact continually with one another, both dimensions need to be investigated together. *Laissez-faire* families are low on conversation and conformity orientations, not really encouraging individuality nor requiring compliance. These families are characterized by low engagement with each other, and offspring are predicted to be more influenced by external influences (e.g., peers) than by family members. In direct contrast are *consensual* families, which are high in both conversation and conformity orientations. Consensual families are open to discussing ideas and expressing opinions but are expected to ultimately agree with the opinion of those in positions of power, such as parents. *Pluralistic* families are high on conversation orientation but low on conformity orientation. In these families, open discussion of ideas is encouraged with little pressure to conform to other members’ perspectives. Finally, *protective* families are low on conversation orientation but high on conformity orientation. These families emphasize obedience and compliance with expectations, providing little opportunity for dissent or autonomous thinking.

FCP and Communication Among Parents, Children, and Grandparents. FCP research has almost exclusively addressed communication in individual households among intact families of parents and children with almost no inclusion of grandparents or multigenerational families. Research discoveries include descriptions of families at the high end of the conformity orientation dimension who tend to emphasize obedience. Findings suggest that children in these families may be more susceptible to peer pressure, be less willing to test new ideas, be less able to take the perspective of others or empathize, tend to engage in conflict avoidance, and be less likely to develop psychological and social competence. Conversely, findings suggest that families at the low end of the conformity orientation dimension tend to emphasize individual autonomy and are more apt to be tolerant of divergent opinions and ideas and more experienced in decision making. Families at the high end of the conversational orientation dimension highlight open discussion, and research has suggested that children from these environments value cooperative conflict resolution and are competent in expressing their ideas and feelings. Conversely, children from families at the low end of the conversational orientation dimension tend to be less comfortable sharing personal feelings or thoughts, and this seems to predict some future distress in personal relationships.

Necessary Convergence Communication

Necessary convergence communication (NCC) theory is a relatively new theory that enhances and extends work

in the area of family communication patterns. NCC is one of the few theories grounded in multigenerational research including three generations of family members. Originating from research with grandmothers, mothers, and adult daughters (Miller, 1995; Miller-Day, 2004), this theory explains how co-orientation between two individuals toward the sharing of a common reality (to attain agreement, accuracy, and congruence of both partner's cognitions) can become coercive in family relationships.

NCC is a type of communication "script"—an interaction routine—that is played out when conformity is required. In family environments that are high in conformity, children feel compelled to interpret the world around them in ways consistent with the parent (or grandparent), often altering their own opinions, beliefs, or attitudes to conform to their parent's perspective, and this may, in time, inhibit the children's thinking for themselves. In NCC, conformity to the parent's perception is perceived as required, as *necessary* to maintain the relationship. NCC argues that most of us defer to others to a certain degree, but chronically high levels of submission—across time and different domains—can predict negative outcomes for children.

NCC and Communication Among Parents, Children, and Grandparents. Studies of grandparents, parents, and grandchildren suggest that convergence communication patterns may be perpetuated across the life span, with elderly parents enacting the script across time with their adult children. Moreover, this research suggests that convergence communication patterns might be transmitted intergenerationally, that is, learned and habituated in one generation, then passed down to the next. Other research reports that convergence communication, when sustained into adult parent-child relationships, may be linked to relational dissatisfaction and may place adult children at risk for depression and eating and identity disorders. This theory holds promise for understanding the actual communication interactions that are performed under conditions of high conformity orientation, but little is known about how these patterns are perpetuated across time and transmitted across generations.

Communication Accommodation Theory

Communication accommodation theory (CAT) posits that when people interact they often attempt to meet the other person's needs and abilities by altering their communication (Coupland & Giles, 1988). The communication predicament model extends CAT with the assumption that people's perceptions of the other's needs and abilities may be based on stereotypes and attitudes toward that person, particularly when the communicators are from different groups (e.g., grandparents, parents, or children). People may accommodate by adapting their behaviors to meet their conversational partner's needs. Yet being aware of what another person needs may be a difficult endeavor, resulting in overaccommodation or underaccommodation.

People overaccommodate when they excessively change their communication, surpassing the other's needs. Several examples include increasing volume or slowing down speech when their conversational partner does not require such adjustments. Underaccommodation occurs when people do not alter their behaviors to meet their conversational partner's abilities. Examples include not slowing down speech or increasing volume when the partner requires these modifications. CAT, then, elucidates the process wherein people alter their communication, either successfully or unsuccessfully, based on their perceptions, stereotypes, and attitudes regarding the other person as being a member of another group.

CAT and Communication Among Parents, Children, and Grandparents. CAT and the communication predicament model have most extensively been examined focusing on communication between grandparents and young-adult grandchildren. For instance, CAT research would suggest that when young-adult grandchildren interact with one of their grandparents, they may do the following: (1) encounter their grandparent, (2) identify the grandparent's old age by his/her physical features, (3) draw on their stereotypes and expectations of older adults, and (4) alter their communication toward their grandparent by either over-, under-, or appropriate accommodating (Williams & Nussbaum, 2001).

As CAT research tends to consider young-adult grandchildren stereotyping their grandparents and other older adults, it is important to acknowledge that grandparents and older adults in general may also stereotype, overaccommodate, and underaccommodate when interacting with their grandchildren and other younger cohorts. Research by Harwood and colleagues (e.g., Soliz & Harwood, 2003, 2006) along with Hummert and colleagues (e.g., Hummert, Garstka, Ryan, & Bonnesen, 2004) has focused on the ways that older and younger adults overaccommodate or underaccommodate to one another in interaction. For instance, painful self-disclosures (e.g., health problems, loneliness) by older adults are perceived as underaccommodating by younger adults. Likewise, patronizing communication (e.g., talking down to the younger person) is perceived as an overaccommodative behavior. Similarly, communicating in a "baby talk" style to older adults may be perceived by older adults as overaccommodation. Thus, CAT has been shown to be applicable to numerous types of interactions, ages, and relationships.

Assumption: Families Are Constantly Managing Dialectical Tensions and Transitions Across the Life Span

Dialectical Theory

The theory of relationship dialectics provides a dualistic perspective of communication and relational processes by explaining how people manage contradictions that

stimulate certain types of communication in their relationships (Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006b). Contradictions are defined as unified oppositions, consisting of two concepts that are connected but are on opposite ends of a continuum. Although a vast number of contradictions or dialectical tensions exist, communication researchers tend to reference the following three: (1) autonomy-closeness, (2) openness-closedness, and (3) predictability-novelty. People attempt to balance their desire for independence from parents or grandparents while also maintaining some degree of intimacy. During their relational history, the involved parties also exhibit openness by divulging personal information and allowing for affective vulnerability, yet they also attempt to protect themselves by intentionally withholding other types of personal information. Finally, predictability reflects people's feelings of certainty and consistency; however, at times, people desire novelty, excitement, and change (Graham, 2003). As the contradicting concepts form a dialectical tension, both concepts are essential to the relationship (LePoire, 2006). When people experience dialectical tensions, such contradictions stimulate change in the relationship as people balance between the opposite ends of the continuum.

Dialectical Theory and Communication Among Parents, Children, and Grandparents. Dialectical theory helps us to understand how family relationships evolve over time and how they experience transitions. Similar tensions are negotiated in parent-child and grandparent-grandchild relationships; however, some research suggests that the management and negotiation of these tensions are more of a challenge with parents and children due to identity entrenchment. In fact, the personal-positional tension is one that is managed across the life span in these relationships. There are competing views of the other person as a unique person and the view of her as the daughter, mother, or grandmother. Developmentally, young-adult children begin to look beyond the family role a person plays to the unique characteristics of the person, such as his or her ambitions, desires, and faults. Research on mother-adult daughter relationships suggests that viewing mothers as sexual beings and "seeing the person behind the role" is one of the more difficult tensions for daughters to manage as they enter adulthood (Fisher & Miller-Day, 2006).

The following dialectics, however, have also emerged specifically in parent-child communication research: real and ideal (the ideal image of a mother in contradiction to the mother I have) and powerful and powerless (among stepfamily systems, the tension between new and old). Parents, children, and grandparents negotiate and communicatively manage these dialectics across the life span. Yet studying family relationships in different family structures at different developmental stages and experiencing different life transitions (e.g., adopting a caregiver role to an aging grandmother) can provide us with possible strategies for management of these tensions across a variety of contexts.

Turning Points

As dialectical theory introduces contradictions as stimuli for relational change, turning points further capture the ebb and flow in relationships. Turning points refer to events, incidents, or experiences that are associated with change in the relationship (Baxter & Bullis, 1986). In the past, communication researchers conceptualized relationship development as occurring in a linear manner such that people establish greater intimacy as they exchange information over time. Yet turning points capture a more dynamic pattern of communication and relationship management across people's life spans. Because turning points are defined as events that alter a relationship, researchers have a number of ways to consider how a relationship changes over time. For instance, a child may go away to college, thereby decreasing or increasing the communication, emotional closeness, or relational satisfaction with his/her parent(s) and grandparent(s). Thus, as turning points are associated with changes in a relationship, the challenge is to identify patterns of changes unique to different relationships.

Turning Points and Communication Among Parents, Children, and Grandparents. Although there is little research on turning points in children's relationships with their fathers, research reveals several common turning points in mother-daughter relationships. With the exception of any childhood illness, the first significant transitional experience in the mother-daughter relationship is when the daughter enters adolescence with the accompanying distance and struggle for autonomy. Throughout the life span, other common turning points include changes in proximity (when one person moves out of the household, e.g., to college or to establish a separate household), a daughter's own pregnancy and childbirth, the transition from a positional orientation to a personal orientation (seeing your mother as a woman, a person, and not just in her role of mother), and the transition to caregiving of the other due to age or infirmity. Mothers often admit that daughters define them, at least partly, as women and that turning points in the mother-daughter relationship are difficult to navigate because of the reflection of those changes on a mother's own identity.

To date, a limited number of studies exist that have explored the possible turning points that grandparents and grandchildren experience across their relational history. Investigating the turning points for this dyad is necessary, given that some researchers suggest the emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren decreases over time. Holladay and colleagues (1998) conducted a study with young-adult granddaughters who reported changes in their emotional closeness with their maternal grandmother when they experienced a particular life event. Among the types of turning points that Holladay and colleagues found, were engaging in shared activities, decreases in geographic distance, transition to college, and maturity. Thus, the study revealed that emotional closeness

within the dyad is better represented as a mountainous terrain than a single slope. Granddaughters experienced increased and decreased closeness at multiple times throughout their relational life span, thereby indicating that the relationship does not continuously decrease over time.

The next step in turning-point research may be for communication scholars to determine the messages exchanged during and after turning points to determine how grandparents and grandchildren communicatively react to these life events. Additionally, fathers seem to be absent from the turning-points literature; there is much to be learned about how fathers and grandfathers negotiate transitions in their relationships with their children and grandchildren.

This chapter has discussed several theories that have guided research in the area of communication among parents, children, and grandchildren. Yet to fully understand this information, it is important to recognize the methods that researchers tend to use to collect and analyze the information they gather about this communication.

Methods

Entering the 21st century, there are two dominant discourses in communication research on parents, children, and grandparents: logical-empirical and interpretive. *Logical-empirical* research seeks to discover universal covering laws. A researcher poses predictions based on a theory and then determines if the predictions were supported by the observations of the study and can be generalized to a select population. The tools used to achieve this are often the administration of questionnaires, experiments, and measuring or rating observations of interactions. Conversely, *interpretive* research does not seek to discover universal truths but seeks to make transparent how social worlds are experienced subjectively and how understandings are mutually coordinated, understood, and maintained in relationships. In family research, this often means revealing how family members negotiate daily routines communicatively or uncovering patterns of experience within and across families. The tools used to conduct interpretive work are often in-depth interviews, direct observations of daily behaviors, focus groups, and participant journaling of experiences.

Although the logical-empirical discourse represents the majority of research in family communication (Braithwaite & Baxter, 2006a), there is currently a resurgent interest in interpretive work. A 2007 professional discussion about methodological approaches to studying families conducted as a panel at the National Communication Association's annual convention resulted in four overarching recommendations for scholars: (1) conduct more case studies with families, examining the daily communication routines of families and exploring family communication dynamics within the household environment; (2) conduct longitudinal research to track families during

times of transition and development; (3) conduct more research in the laboratory, collecting physiological data; and, finally, (4) become proficient in new techniques for statistically managing the complexity of family data. Moving into this century, there are a variety of new statistical techniques available that will allow the next generation of researchers to examine the entire family as a system and not just dyadic pairings or subsystems within the family. Furthermore, mixed-methods research is increasingly important in communication research—mixing tools, such as observation and questionnaires, as well as mixing quantitative approaches (e.g., questionnaires) and qualitative approaches (e.g., in-depth interviews). These mixed approaches allow researchers to survey the terrain of communication experience in families (quantitative) while mining the depths of that experience (qualitative). Given the professional discussion and the range of new techniques now available to social scientists, we suspect that the 21st-century approach to research on families will honor the integrity and strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis.

Promising Areas of Research

In reviewing the communication theories that are employed to guide research in the area of parents, children, and grandparents, it is apparent that there is a lack of coherent multigenerational research, that is, intergenerational research focusing on relationships within and across multiple generations of a family. The majority of the research focuses on parent-child communication, with some focusing on grandparent-grandchild communication; however, substantially less research attention is paid to family communication across three generations. This is important because, due to the increase in the older population and increasing longevity, the grandparent-grandchild relationship can last for decades: more younger children and adults have living grandparents today than at any time in history (Mares, 1995).

In a recent review of the presence of children in communication research, Miller-Day, Pezalla, and Voigt (2008) discovered a marked absence of children in communication research. Among the 16 leading communication journals, from 2000 to 2007 only 5% of the published studies addressed communication with youth under the age of 18, and only 11% of those occurred in the *Journal of Family Communication*. Due to a variety of factors, including constraints imposed by university review boards, the inclusion of youth under the age of 18 is severely restricted; thus the representations and voices of youth are inhibited. This also impedes efforts to examine communication across multiple generations. This review revealed that when parent-child communication was represented in the research literature, the focus was most often on college students as children, thus privileging knowledge of parent-emerging adult child

relationships and almost completely denying families with young children.

Since 2000, there has been an impressive increase in the research attention to communication between grandparents and grandchildren, with most studies undertaken by Drs. Jake Harwood, Jordan Soliz, and colleagues. This work has addressed the effects of grandparent-grandchild communication on ageist attitudes and the age identity of older adults and has examined the role of communication satisfaction in grandparent-grandchild relational closeness. The results of these studies indicate that relational closeness between grandparents and grandchildren is influenced by having a parent to support the grandparent-grandchild relationship as well as to provide opportunities for the grandchild to interact with the grandparent in ways in which they can reciprocate self-disclosure and support. In turn, grandparents—particularly grandmothers—may provide a buffer for grandchildren during times of parent-child stress and conflict (Miller-Day, 2004).

Yet, as Williams and Nussbaum (2001) pointed out, “to understand intergenerational communication, a much greater effort on the part of scholars needs to be directed towards the communication behavior found within the grandparent-grandchild relationship” (p. 183). As can be seen in this chapter review, there is an incomplete picture of grandparent-grandchild communication in the field of family communication. To address this gap, additional research is necessary. While certainly not exhaustive, the following discussion offers some promising areas of research for family communication scholars who wish to address these research gaps and learn more about communication among parents, children, and grandparents. These promising directions for research efforts include examining multigenerational households, intergenerational transmission of communication behaviors, conversations between grandparents and grandchildren, children as language brokers, young children as caregivers, adult children and adult grandchildren as caregivers, genetic communication, and communication and technology.

Multigenerational Households

Custodial Grandparents. In the United States, the number of grandparents who become primary caregivers or substitute parents of a grandchild continues to increase. When parents cannot care for their child, grandparents often adopt the role of caregiver by raising their grandchild. The term *custodial grandparents* identifies those grandparents who are the head of the household and the primary caregiver of a grandchild. Being a surrogate parent adds great responsibilities. Many custodial grandparents report increased stress, financial struggles, family conflict, and health problems (see, e.g., Hayslip & Kaminski, 2005). Familial conflict and managing grandchildren’s behavioral problems appear particularly prominent. To address these problems, communication researchers should investigate

how custodial grandparents and the involved parties can manage these conflicts and behavioral problems. Determining more effective and appropriate forms of communication may help custodial grandparents and their grandchildren resolve conflicts and problem behaviors, which is likely to alleviate some of the psychological burden that custodial grandparents experience.

Three-Generation Households. Although three-generation households are increasing in the United States for various reasons (see, e.g., Jayson, 2005), few social scientific studies address multigenerational households. Moreover, even fewer studies exist on three-generation households in the communication field, thereby ignoring the communication processes that transpire between grandparents, parents, and children who co-reside. Although some three-generation households may provide support for a child, co-resident grandparents and parents may experience role conflicts. Moreover, for those three-generation households consisting of a parent(s), who cares for his or her own children along with an aging parent, the experience can also be stressful in a number of ways, affecting communication processes, family satisfaction, and mental health (see, e.g., Halpern, 1994). Communication researchers have the opportunity to investigate the communication processes and adjustments that occur when grandparents co-reside with parents and children in the same household.

Intergenerational Transmission of Communication Behaviors

Even when grandparents do not reside in the same household as adult children and grandchildren, it is clear from early work in psychology that patterns of interaction in one generation may recur across generations. In disciplines other than communication, ample support exists for the intergenerational transmission hypothesis, which posits that parents’ family-of-origin interactions with their own parents will influence how they interact with their own children and that families carry their problems with them from one generation to the next (Bowen, 1978). The communication researcher Miller-Day (2004) discovered unique family communication patterns and a “tradition” of suicide attempts across four generations of women in several families, and Diane Doumas and Steve Wilson both do research on the intergenerational effects of interpersonal violence and verbal aggressiveness on offspring (see, e.g., Doumas, Margolin, & John, 1994; Wilson, Hayes, & Bylund, 2006). All these scholars argue that communication patterns and processes are pivotal to understanding the dynamics of intergenerational transmission. The argument of many contemporary scholars is that our past experiences interacting and communicating with others (family members) shape how we interpret, understand, and guide our present communicative interactions.

Children as Language Brokers

For some families who immigrate to the United States, adjusting to a new environment with a different language and cultural practices may lead parents and other family members to rely on their children to help them adjust. Because children experience adaptation and language acquisition at a faster rate than do adults, children in immigrant families often act as language brokers. In particular, *language brokers* refer to people who act as cultural and linguistic mediators between two or more parties (Tse, 1995). These language-brokering children often interpret for their parents and grandparents at medical visits, stores, banks, and school. As language-brokering children take on adult responsibilities, some researchers suggest that parentification occurs. *Parentification* is defined as a person, typically of authoritative status, relying on a child for functional or emotional assistance, often at the risk of hindering the child's natural and appropriate developmental process (Castro, Jones, & Mirsalimi, 2004). Several studies indicate that language-brokering children experience parentification and, in turn, experience stress and resentment. Other studies suggest that these children develop confidence, self-esteem, and pride. Thus, research on language brokering is mixed, which makes investigating this process essential for communication researchers to establish more concrete results. Conducting further research to determine how language brokering affects children is essential, given that it may have substantial consequences for their well-being.

Young Children as Caregivers

In the United States, at least 1.4 million children who are between the ages of 8 and 18 are caregivers, where 72% are primary caregivers to a parent or a grandparent (Hunt, Levine, & Naiditch, 2005). Children may take on the role of caregiver for a number of reasons, some of which have been a parent's or a grandparent's medical condition. When children are responsible for preparing meals, bathing, dressing, transporting, or shopping for a parent or grandparent, such tasks may interfere with the children's social life, education, and well-being. Thus, it is not surprising that research on young caregivers shows a positive relationship between caregiving and stress, anxiety, depression, and school dropout (Amend, 2006). Because caregiving can have a negative effect on children's well-being, communication researchers must determine what makes certain young caregivers more resilient than others and how certain coping strategies may be more effective than others. Some young caregivers are able to successfully handle the responsibilities and pressures. Some report positive experiences from caregiving. Yet other children have difficulty carrying out activities that are usually expected of adults, thereby warranting greater attention to this unique and significant phenomenon.

Adult Children and Adult Grandchildren as Caregivers

One context of caregiving that appears to gain the most attention is that which occurs among adult children or adult grandchildren who assist a parent or a grandparent. These familial caregivers constitute the largest percentage of informal caregivers. Similar to young children who are caregivers, becoming a caregiver for a parent or grandparent later in life may also be difficult. Although most of these caregivers want the best for their parent or grandparent, studies reveal that caregivers may actually become too controlling over their parents' or grandparents' life. Too much control, however, can negatively affect the relationship and the care recipient's well-being. In response, the parent or grandparent who is receiving care may withhold information regarding a health problem, for example, to regain some control. Such findings have implications for privacy management, as was discussed earlier in the chapter with Petronio's communication privacy management theory. Consequently, communication researchers must consider more effective ways for families to communicate in the caregiving context, allowing parents and grandparents to maintain some sense of control over their lives while encouraging them to discuss their health problems and other needs with their family members.

Genetic Communication

While some research suggests that media exposure to information about human genetics is related to increased family discussions of genetics research (Weiner, Silk, & Parrott, 2005), there is little evidence that individuals are talking with friends or family members about genetic health. Weiner and colleagues reported that 84.7% of their sample reported that they had *never* talked about genetic health with family members, and among those who had exchanged some information, prenatal testing was the most discussed topic. This situation offers unique challenges to the medical community because existing research suggests that more patients with genetic disorders learn about their disorder from family members than from genetic counselors (Mellon, 2002). Indeed, family members are perceived to have a moral imperative to communicate genetic information to other family members. But do they? Genetic communication may be an area in which communication researchers can learn more about intergenerational sharing of health and medical information. While research literature in the area of family communication about genetics and health suggests that parents are responsible for disseminating information to their children, there is little evidence to suggest that they actually perform such a function and even less that uncovers the process of the information dissemination (see, e.g., Gaff et al., 2007).

Technology

As technological advancements provide new and faster ways of communicating, which transcend physical distance, communication researchers should take advantage of these new forms of media to determine how they change grandparents, parents, and children's communication and relationships. Life events, such as attending college and obtaining a job, may spread families further apart geographically, leading them to rely on e-mail, text messaging, telephones, and video phones to maintain their communication and relationship. Soliz, Lin, Anderson, and Harwood (2006) suspect that with the baby boomer generation—a computer-literate cohort—reaching older adulthood (65+ years), that cohort will be increasingly dependent on the Internet to maintain relationships with their children and grandchildren. Consequently, several issues to consider are how different forms of media influence the communication between grandparents, parents, and children and whether certain types of media encourage greater disclosure and intimacy.

Conclusion

As researchers commence the 21st century in the study of communication among grandparents, parents, and children, it is important to remember the relative youth of this area of study within the discipline of communication. It really wasn't until the turn of the 21st century that family communication became its own area of communication study. Subsequently, the study of communication within family systems has been hampered by a lack of indigenous theories, an overemphasis on dyadic relationships, statistical methods unable to capture the complexity of family interaction, and a neglect of both young children and older adults. Yet as the first decade of the 21st century comes to a close, there is considerable promise for the future. The field is witnessing a growth in homegrown theories, an increased understanding of how multimethod approaches can enhance understanding, and an increase in research focused on grandparenting.

In this time of rapid family change—when more younger children and adults have living grandparents today than at any time in history and more adult children are living at home with a parent—it has become increasingly important to understand the processes of intergenerational communication and how that communication affects family members across the life span. Undeniably, communication is both the whole cloth from which our family relationships are carved and the velvet thread that binds us together.

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FRIENDS

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Without friends, no one would want to live, even if he had all other goods.

—Aristotle

The modern study of friendships has roots in social psychology, sociology, and communication, with influence from rhetorical studies and interpersonal communication. This chapter can only briefly overview this vast literature. We begin by tracing ideas of friendship through history and then discuss its nature and functions. This is followed by an overview of theories of friendship development, maintenance, and dissolution. Also included is a brief discussion of methods used to research friendships.

Friendship in Time

Early Ideas About Friendship

Friendship is something we all know a little about, via “common sense,” and may not seem deserving of the philosophical contemplation or rigorous research it has received in the past 2000 years. However, Aristotle recognized the complexities of friendship, and even Homer (900 BCE) commented on a similar notion that translates to *comrade*. Aristotle still gets credit for first analyzing friendship in a systematic manner, devoting chapters in his *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Eudemian Ethics* to the nature of friendship, types of friendships, and the place of friendship in the Greek *polis* (city state).

Aristotle’s ideas on friendship are still relevant and ring true compared with lay perceptions. First, he believed that friendship should reflect the relationship one should have with oneself (self-love), and he described a friend as *another self*. Though this notion of loving oneself may seem egotistic, Aristotle’s concept of self-love is based on ethics and goodwill rather than narcissism. He believed that a person will typically strive to do what is in his or her own best interest, and so friends should behave toward each other in the ways that are in each other’s best interests: in other words, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Aristotle discussed three types of friendship. Friendship grounded in virtue, or *character friendship*, is the purest type of friendship, where individuals are friends simply because they recognize each other’s good character. The truest friends are those who do not seek personal gain from the relationship, other than keeping the company of another whose virtuous nature they appreciate. A friend such as this wishes good for the Other simply for the Other’s sake. Aristotle believed that for this or any type of friendship to exist, the sentiments must be reciprocated. One person can have feelings of respect, appreciation, and liking for another, but unless those feelings are reciprocated no friendship exists. In this definition, friendship is something that exists between two people and is not something that one person can possess alone.

Aristotle is more skeptical about the other types of friendships. Friendships grounded in *pleasure* or *utility* exist because of some advantage gained. If friendship is a means to personal reward then it is not what Aristotle would deem a *perfect* friendship. However, friendships of utility were as common in Aristotle's time as the many relationships today where "politics" and economics are the basis of interaction (e.g., relationships with the boss or with classmates in school). In Aristotle's city, it was necessary to base relationships on some sort of social or economic reciprocity. Aristotle nevertheless saw these types as imperfect forms of friendship.

The Roman orator and philosopher Cicero continued the philosophical discussion of friendship in his treatise *Laelius: de Amicitia* ("On Friendship"). Like Aristotle, Cicero allows for different types of friendship but reveres friendship based on love and good feeling as the purest form. He maintained that such friendship does not fade with absence or death. Cicero does, however, disagree with Aristotle's claim of friendship being akin to self-love. He posited that we may sometimes hope less for ourselves than we should hope for a friend. So, in a way, Cicero believed that friends should actually be held in higher esteem than oneself.

Cicero goes further to discuss the nature of communication between friends. He suggests that honesty is better than flattery between friends because criticism is communicated without spite or personal attack. Friends also should accept honest communication/critique without feelings of bitterness. In addition to being honest and direct, friends should put their friends' well-being before their own reputations and even lives, if necessary. Clearly, Cicero expected much of his friends!

Aristotle and Cicero based their views of friendship in their own historical times and beliefs, but so do we. Any notion of friendship—even our own—is historically situated.

Temporal Aspects of Friendship

Alberta Contarello and Chiara Volpato (1991) conducted an analysis of literary texts looking for accounts of friendship as it has been depicted through the ages. They examined five French texts (spanning eight centuries) for descriptions of friendship. They noted that the kinds of relationships counted as friendships changed over history. In classical times, friendship was seen as distinct from kinship, but in medieval times, it was *based* on kin, describing solidarity between family members as well as lovers. With the progression of feudal systems, friendship blended with patronage relationships or those based on the inequality of relational partners, where one benefited the other, much like Aristotle's friendship of utility. Later still, the term reflected a concept closer to that of our modern idea of friendship.

Other interesting observations concerned a change in the nature of the relational dynamics with friends in later

times more directly expressing emotion, tolerating relational conflict, and seeking to resolve it rather than merely ending the friendship. Furthermore, throughout the texts, there was almost no mention of female-female friendships. It is likely that female friendships did exist but were just not represented, perhaps because of women's social status at the time.

Therefore, we can reasonably conclude that the concept of friendship is dynamic and has experienced changes through time and historical context. So, then, what is the nature of friendship in our own historical context?

The Nature of Friendship

We use the term *friend* to refer to many different kinds of people: best friend, close friends, and good friends; someone may be *just* a friend or *more than* a friend; siblings or parents may be not just family members but also friends; our significant others may also be our best friends. We may even differentiate our friends based on context by labeling different groups, such as friends from high school, friends from college, or friends from work, or differentiate friends based on sex by labeling guy friends as separate from girlfriends. For the many ways we think and talk about friends, though, there is at least one common element, namely, free choice: A true friend is someone you freely choose and who chooses you back.

The voluntary nature of friendship is stressed in research. Robert Hays (1988) offered this definition of friendship: "Voluntary interdependence between two persons over time, that is intended to facilitate social-emotional goals of the participants and may involve varying types and degrees of companionship, intimacy, affection, and mutual assistance" (p. 395). This voluntary element of friendship requires that the relationship exists by the free choice of both parties, not by the felt obligation to maintain a relationship, for example, at work or in class. This is the feature of friendship that separates it as a relational type from others, such as familial or work-related relationships, which are not typically voluntary or not usually perceived as such.

Keith Davis and Michael Todd (1982) developed a paradigm case of friendship—characteristics that are typical of friendship and differentiate friendship from other relationships. They found that in friendship, two people participate in a mutually reciprocal relationship as equals; enjoy each other's company; have mutual trust that each will protect the other's interests, will provide support in times of need, and accept the other person "as is"; respect each other's judgment; feel free to "be themselves"; have an understanding of the other's thought process; and are close through shared experience and intimate disclosure. Friendship comes with very hefty expectations!

Friendship is different from other types of relationships because no formal bond, contract, or ceremony exists to

mark its beginning or permanence (e.g., we do not send friendship anniversary cards as we do for romances or marriages). There are usually no factors that serve as obligatory pressures to keep friendships from ending, as in marriages where children, religious beliefs, or concerns over money might prevent two people ending an unsatisfying relationship. Another way friendships differ from romantic relationships is nonexclusivity. Typically, people are involved in only one romantic relationship at a time (at least, as prescribed by social norms). However, an individual can have several friends at a time. It is acceptable and even encouraged for a person to be on the lookout for new friends at any given point.

So if friendship is a voluntary and somewhat costly relationship in terms of time and effort, why do most people choose to have friends? While some definitions of *friendship* align with Aristotle's idea that one should be a friend simply for the sake of that person, most modern relational scholars emphasize self-referent rewards (benefits for oneself) or good feelings that friends give us about ourselves. If we got nothing from these voluntary relationships, why would we feel the need to have them in the first place? It seems Aristotle's idea of true friendship is missing something. Even if we do selflessly value the good character of another, we also want to profit from good friendship.

Functions of Friendship

Friendships fulfill various emotional, psychological, and physical needs. Individuals who are denied relationships or who choose to separate themselves from others, such as hermits, are not psychologically or even physically as healthy as those involved in close relationships. There's a reason we consider solitary confinement or even exile among the harshest of punishments. To take away an individual's connections to others is to take away a much needed system of support.

Robert Weiss (1974) offered a list of "provisions" of friendship—the good things that friendships provide for us—such as positive emotion, support, and shared communication and activity. Friends provide a sense of *inclusion and belonging*. Though family members may serve a similar function, it is the voluntary choice of a friend that makes such inclusion special. A friend provides a *reliable alliance* or a sense that someone is *there* if needed—emotionally, physically, or otherwise. A friend provides this support not out of obligation but for the sake of the other person and the friendship.

Besides offering inclusion, friends serve as measurement tools to help us gauge the propriety of emotions and the validity of opinions. They are sounding boards, confirming or disconfirming our actions and beliefs. They let us know where we stand, whether in the right or wrong. Because of this, friends are important to our *emotional integration* and *stability*. They help construct and reconstruct

our emotional framework when we are in doubt; for example, you may have asked a friend's opinion as to whether you acted correctly in a given situation.

In addition to emotional support, friends supply us with *physical support and assistance*, helping with everyday tasks, such as picking new clothes, preparing food, or studying. They bring us soup when we are ill, give us rides when our cars malfunction, and give us gifts on special occasions—and we do the same for them.

A simple but vital function of friendship is that it gives us *opportunities for communication*. With friends we have opportunities to communicate about everything and nothing, meaning the range of topics one discusses with friends typically has few limitations. We talk with friends about ourselves, other relationships, the weather, tragic or exciting events, future plans, present situations, and past mistakes. We share secrets, make small talk, and gossip about others. Talk about topics that may seem trivial is just as important as talk about life-changing events. It is both kinds of talk that constitute friendships in the first place. Friendships exist because of and through communication.

Furthermore, friends develop ways of communicating specific to the relationship (personal idioms). Friends share private jokes, understandings, private languages—such as nicknames for other people, activities—such as going to a favorite bar or restaurant, and references to common history. This phenomenon serves to demonstrate the relationship, as well as to exclude those outside the relationship who do not share the joke or the private language.

Friends also build and maintain each other's self-esteem in two main ways: by complimenting us directly and by relaying compliments from others. Friends help us see positive ways others perceive us. Another way friends increase levels of self-esteem is by making us feel valued. By choosing to spend time with us, listening to what we say, asking for our opinions, and soliciting our help in emotional and physical ways, friends give a sense of utility and worth. We feel good about our ability to do things for others, and without friends we would lose many such opportunities. In fact, most people resent it when others will not let them help or repay them for help.

Last, a provision of friendship that seems to incorporate most others is that of identity confirmation or personality support. All the provisions discussed above—inclusion, emotional and physical support, communication, and self-esteem—serve to support one's identity. Personalities consist of thoughts, emotions, behaviors, attitudes, doubts, and beliefs, among other things, none of which mean much unless performed and validated. We desire confirmation of who we are to be successful *being* who we are. Along the way, friends help us construct our personalities and spot holes that need fixing or parts that need rearranging. Those whom we trust to do this are likely to be those who share our ways of thinking. Friends typically have *psychological commonality* because they share similar thought-worlds or

systems of thinking and understanding. For this reason, perception of similarity is important in the development of friendships.

Theories of Attraction and Relationships

Attraction and Information Seeking

Why do we choose the friends we do? The motivation to make friends and keep them differs over the life span, and young people are more motivated to develop new friendships than middle-aged adults. Also, opportunities for meeting people must exist for friendship to develop. Research shows that physical proximity stimulates friendship development. We are more likely to become friends with those we encounter frequently, whether in class, at work, or in our neighborhoods (the Field of Availables), from whom we then make specific selections (the Field of Desirables) (Kerckhoff, 1974). Furthermore, we are more likely to become friends with those with whom we have enjoyable encounters.

Research has shown that similarity is important in some ways and at certain points in friendship development but less important at others. We tend to think that friends have much in common and are already similar in many ways, but in what ways do friends *need* to be similar for relationships to commence and develop successfully? Friends are usually more similar to each other than nonfriends in age, sex, race, interests, intelligence, and economic status. It was originally thought that attitude similarity was a specific condition for friendship, but research has shown that similarity in *behavioral preference* is actually more highly associated with friendship. We are fine having small differences of opinion with friends but are less likely to maintain friendship with those who engage in different sorts of behaviors or tend to make different behavioral choices than we do.

Similarity between friends is not a fixed thing. Steve Duck and Gordon Craig (1975) studied changes in similarity between friends over time: Broad value similarity is associated with early attraction, but by the time 8 months have passed, there has already been some filtering out, and the main feature of those who remain friends is a deeper psychological similarity. So in the beginning of friendships, it seems important for friends to value similar things, but sharing similar ways of thinking and processing experiences assumes greater importance for lasting friendship in daily life. Perhaps these different types of similarity come to light at different times because surface value systems are easier to discover during the first stages of interaction, while deep-thought processes or behavioral styles and patterns may take time to uncover.

In addition, perceptions of physical attractiveness, competence, and immediacy (or liking behavior) will cause us to feel connections to certain people. So, then, what happens after the initial attraction, after we realize the

possibility of friendship exists? There are many theories that explain how two individuals get from Point A (attraction) to Point B (friendship).

Charles Berger and Richard Calabrese (1975) developed the uncertainty reduction theory to explain what happens during the first stage of interaction between two people. The theory posits that when strangers first meet, their primary concern is information gathering in an attempt to reduce uncertainty and increase predictability about the behavior of another person. Individuals experience greater certainty when they can accurately predict another person's behaviors, and these predictions guide their own interaction behaviors. Levels of uncertainty affect perceptions and behaviors. The more certain an individual becomes about another, the more readily he or she perceives similarities and differences between self and the other person. The interaction may cease or progress accordingly.

Steve Duck (1991) proposed a model to explain the development from acquaintanceship to friendship based on factors other than simple personality similarity. Duck's model posits that strangers gather information about each other from different sources, such as physical appearance, communication style, and perceived attitude similarity, to construct an idea of the other person's deeper personality. In the beginning stages of interaction, we do not have much more to go on other than what we see and hear. We gather this type of information until more becomes available, usually through disclosures and shared experiences. Essentially, this model proposes that not all initial attraction leads to a developed friendship, because people get weeded out along the way. Those friendships that develop fully are based on successive passings through finer filters that cut other people out.

New information refines our ideas about the other person. New information helps us "figure them out" in such a way that we feel we can more easily describe, interpret, and predict behavior. One assumption of this model and others like it is that this progression runs smoothly and leads to a close relationship. Experience tells us that such is not always the case. With every potential relationship, the two parties must decide whether or not to engage in the activities that serve to develop relationships. So, then, how do we decide whether or not to move forward or at least to a different place?

Many social psychologists, including Donn Byrne, Gerald Clore, and Bernice and Albert Lott, have applied *reinforcement theories* to the study of attraction. They maintain that we are attracted to people who offer us rewards or are simply present when something positive happens to us. We associate positive outcomes with those people and so want to spend time with them. These rewards can come in many forms, from immediacy behaviors (closeness) to compliments to agreement with opinions. We can be conditioned by rewards to have a positive reaction to reward givers, and furthermore, a high frequency of rewards will usually cause positive feelings to increase.

Irwin Altman and Dalmas Taylor (1973) developed the social penetration theory to explain how relational development is based on changes in communication between people. During the initial stages of interaction, communication is somewhat superficial and is focused on a narrow range of topics, such as TV shows, general interests, and local events. As two people interact more frequently (and in a positive and rewarding manner), the communication becomes more intimate and covers a broader range of topics. Here, individuals begin to feel more comfortable self-disclosing about family members, personal problems, or past relationships. This progression can happen quickly or more slowly depending on the individuals involved or the context of the friendship development. In fact, self-disclosure can be used strategically to speed up or slow down the process of relational development.

Mark Knapp (1984) extended the work of Altman and Taylor to focus on the communicative dimensions of self-disclosure and how difference in these dimensions can delineate relational type. Knapp's results revealed three factors important in distinguishing communication between close relational partners and more distant acquaintances: personalized communication, synchronized communication, and difficult communication. *Personalized communication* is signified by unique and flexible communication, as well as by the depth of self-disclosure (personal information about oneself). *Synchronized communication* refers to the smoothness, coordination, and ease of communication between two people. Last, *difficult communication* is marked by strained and awkward interactions and the perception of communication barriers. Knapp showed that friendships were characterized more often by the first two factors than were acquaintanceships, and acquaintanceships were more often characterized by difficult communications than were friendships.

George Levinger and J. Diederick Snoek (1972) developed a model of the different levels of pair relatedness to explain the progression of interaction between two individuals. Their four levels of pair relatedness are: (1) zero contact, (2) unilateral awareness, (3) surface contact, and (4) mutuality. When two individuals are at *zero contact*, they are not even aware of one another. At *unilateral awareness*, one person is aware of the other, but there is no interaction. If this one-sided awareness leads to attraction of some kind, then the aware individual might make an effort to interact with the other. This might lead to *surface contact*, where the two individuals interact using small talk or superficial communication.

Based on this narrow sample of communication, the individuals assess the possible rewards of continued interaction. If things look positive, then the two may progress to mutuality. *Mutuality* involves intimate interaction where self-disclosure becomes deeper, and the partners clearly intersect in an integrative relationship.

These theories of initial interaction give us different perspectives on how two people might begin to gauge the possibility of a relationship. During the initial stages and

beyond, relationships take awareness and effort to form and transform. Steve Duck (1991) offered four skills needed for *relationshiping*, or the doing of relationships. Essential to the acquisition of friendship is the ability to recognize opportunities for friendship and the ability to make sound judgments of others. Second, one needs to be equipped with a relational tool belt complete with strategies and techniques for enticing likable people into relationships and showing them the potential rewards of such a relationship. Third, one should possess knowledge about the way successful relationships develop and use that knowledge to ensure timely and successful progression. Last, one must have skills for relationship maintenance and repair since relationships require looking after if they are to thrive.

Dynamics of Relationships

Moving past the initial attraction, some theorists have developed ideas about the choices we make once we are involved in relationships and must decide whether or not to stay in them. Among these theories are social exchange theories, based on economic models of not only the rewards in relationships but also the costs and, more important, the balance or imbalance of the two. Relational costs include investments of emotion, time, money, and energy. According to social exchange theories, relationships are satisfying and will continue when the rewards outweigh the costs, taken as a whole and in the long term.

John Thibaut and Harold Kelley (1959) took social exchange theory a step further in writing that relational partners not only weigh the cost-benefit ratio of the relationship to evaluate its worth but also compare relational outcomes to those of other relationships. People compare relationships with those they have experienced, those they anticipate, and those of others around them. In this way, relational partners not only evaluate the present relationship on its own terms but also compare its costs and benefits with those of other relationships. Kelley (1979) later proposed that as relationships develop, the motivations of those involved transform, shifting focus from individual costs-benefits to the *relational* rewards, or the rewards of the partner.

Stage Models of Relationships

Relational scholars have explained the dynamics of relationships with stage models of different phases relationships go through during development and dissolution. For example, Levinger extended his and Snoek's (1972) model of attraction stages to cover deterioration and dissolution of relationships. His ABCDE model stands for Acquaintanceship, *Buildup*, *Continuation*, *Deterioration*, and *Ending*. Mark Knapp and Anita Vangelisti (1992) developed a similar model, called the relational development model, claiming that relationships progress through stages of development: *initiation* (individuals form initial

assumptions and opinions of each other); *experimentation* (individuals collect and disclose information about themselves to get to know each other); *intensifying* (individuals begin to disclose more personal information, begin to develop informal and particular ways of communicating, and use labels such as “close friends”); *integrating* (two people fuse together and are seen as a pair, often merging social networks and creating a joint identity); and *bonding* (two people denote their relationship publicly—with marriage or some other social ritual; bonding doesn’t seem to apply to friendships since there is no formal ritual involved, for example, when two friends become roommates).

Knapp and Vangelisti (1992) also outlined stages for relational breakdown: *differentiating* (partners begin to disengage the joint identity); *circumscribing* (partners no longer communicate frequently or about personal matters); *stagnating* (interaction is at a standstill); *avoiding* (partners avoid face-to-face communication or physical copresence altogether); and *terminating* (the bond between partners is broken and the relationship dissolves).

Stephanie Rollie and Steve Duck (2006) critiqued stage models, claiming that though stage model approaches are appealing in their simple representations of changes in relationships, their utility cannot encompass the complex processes of relational development, maintenance, or dissolution. Stage models serve only as general maps for the often unpredictable dynamics of relationships. They are useful in delineating general principles of relational dynamics but are limited in that they characterize relationships as moving from one point to another with relatively little wavering.

Doing and Maintaining Friendships

Much of the early work on relationships conceptualized relationships as fixed states and so missed the fact that relationships are not simply emotions but manifest dynamics and performance of behaviors. For one thing, the two people involved in a friendship may have different conceptions of the relationship. Even more central to understanding friendships is what brings relationships into being, keeps them alive, and even dissolves them, namely, communication. Most social psychological work on relationships positions communication as a secondary phenomenon used only for transmitting information about emotions rather than doing something active.

Friendships are not only developed by communicating, they are carried out through everyday talk, shared activity, and talk about shared activity—much of it routine and pedestrian. Female-female friendship dyads emphasize personal topics and confiding in one another, whereas male-male friendship dyads emphasize talk about external topics and shared activities. Friends engage in talking not merely as an activity to fill time and transmit information but to accomplish relational tasks such as expressing emotions and opinions, establishing relational rules and boundaries, and actually changing the nature of the relationship. Furthermore, talk can be seen as rhetorical, as

can relationships. That is to say, talk and relationships serve as persuasive tools. For example, how often have you responded positively to a request or done a favor for someone just because the person was a friend? Steve Duck and Walter Carl (2004) offered a conception of talk and relationships as inherent in interpersonal influence, bringing together the rhetorical and interpersonal aspects of relating. They claimed, “Such talk is inherently rhetorical in that it implicitly offers a persuasive account of a view and hence is an effort to attempt to persuade others to support said view of the world or of self” (p. 7). We not only do things with words, but, very significantly if unconsciously, we do things with and for relationships. Relationships are persuasive in that we tend to make exceptions for and perform tasks for a friend rather than a stranger simply because we have a relationship with the friend.

Talk differs with relational type. The research of Sally Planalp and Anne Benson (1992) showed us that third-party observers can distinguish acquaintances from friends simply by listening to their talk. Friends were more relaxed, more intimate, and more informal in their interaction. Friends shared talk time equally but interrupted each other more than acquaintances. Furthermore, friends drew heavily on mutual knowledge when conversing, often leaving out information that was thought to be understood by both parties.

Now we know that talk between friends is vital to the relationship, but there is another kind of talk that has a great effect on friendship, to wit talk from the social network. We learn the rules and expectations of relating from our social networks, namely family members and friends. Moreover, social network members are active in giving advice, gossiping, and commenting about relationships and how they “should” be done. In this way, there are never only two people in any relationship since relationships exist within larger social contexts and their influence is ever present (e.g., “Whatever would the neighbors think?”).

One theory important to understanding these more complex processes of relationship is relational dialectics theory (RDT), developed by Leslie Baxter (1988), Barbara Montgomery, and Dawn Braithwaite. This theory focuses not on the progression from attraction to intimacy but instead on the management of everyday tensions that arise for existing relational partners. RDT assumes that relationships are not linear, that they are characterized by change, that contradiction is a fundamental fact of relationships, and that communication is central to managing contradiction. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) initially discussed three dialectical tensions: (1) *autonomy-connection*, where partners struggle to maintain some individual independence while still sustaining their togetherness; (2) *openness-closedness*, where partners feel pulled between the desires to reveal and to conceal information about the self and the relationship; and (3) *novelty-predictability*, where partners are caught between a desire for predictable stability and a desire for lively spontaneity in the relationship.

RDT also offers several strategies for managing these contradictions. A few of these strategies will be discussed

here. *Cyclic alternation* refers to managing different poles of contradictions over time. For example, lifelong friends may be very connected when they are young, may become more independent as young adults, and may return to closeness as middle-aged adults. *Neutralizing* refers to a compromise of the opposite poles of a dialectical tension. An example would be friends deciding to spend only two weekends together during a month instead of all four or none at all. This way, they could maintain a balance between independence and integration. Another example of a management strategy is *reframing*, which refers to reconstructing the dialectic so that the two poles are no longer positioned in opposition. If two friends see their ability to be spontaneous as part of their relational stability, then they have reframed the novelty-predictability dialectic. Whatever the strategy used, managing dialectical tensions is key in relational satisfaction.

All relationships require effort to ensure functionality and success. Many scholars, including Kathryn Dindia, Leslie Baxter, Dan Canary, and Laura Stafford, have uncovered strategies for maintaining relationships, though most of these strategies are used more by romantic partners and family members than by friends. Again, since the friendship is a voluntary, nonformalized relationship, fewer active maintenance strategies are used. However, relational maintenance strategies that might be used in friendships include *prosocial behaviors*, which are cooperative behaviors prompting discussion of the relationship (e.g., helping, doing favors); *antisocial behaviors*, which are coercive in nature (e.g., threats, tantrums); *positivity*, the use of optimistic or cheerful behaviors to make the other person feel valued and enjoyed; *openness*, direct discussion or disclosure of one's personal confidential thoughts; *assurances*, statements that directly indicate or imply a relational future; *social networks*, the use of mutual associations for relational preservation; and *sharing tasks*, fulfillment of responsibilities.

Sometimes, though, relational maintenance strategies are not enough to save a relationship from breaking down. Friends face difficulties like any relational partners, and there may be difficulties particular to the nature of friendship.

Difficulty and Dissolution

Since relationships are processes and are not fixed, they change and are vulnerable to all the other difficulties of human life. A successful relationship of any kind requires maintenance and repair—and perhaps especially friendships, since, as discussed earlier, there are no formalities or obligations binding friends together. Friendships require effort, or they will dissolve.

Jacqueline Wiseman (1986) conducted research to examine the nature of the *bond* between friends and the difficulties friends face (*binds*). She discussed the *unwritten contract* present in friendships that represents the implicit expectations of support, reciprocity, and responsibility, which can be a bind. Needs for support and rules for giving

and receiving are not always explicit, which can cause problems: for instance, one person gives until his or her source “runs dry,” one person gives support that is not needed, one person stops giving support while it is still needed, or one person might need support but will expect the other friend to give it without explicitly asking for it.

Wiseman (1986) showed that physical support is a common site for contention between friends, whether it is the absence of giving physical support or the excessive eliciting of it. Physical resources seem to have limitations for friends, though they are rarely discussed as such explicitly. Other causes of discontent are reduction of time spent together, failure to heed advice, failure to understand controversial actions, criticism “behind the back,” failure to reciprocate support, and competing loyalties between the friendship and partners' romantic relationship(s).

Such problems can lead to the breakdown of the friendship. Just as relational development tends to go through transformative stages, relational dissolution seems to work in similar ways. Though most relational stage models and theories are based on breakups in romantic relationships, some can be applied to friendships. Rollie and Duck (2006) recently offered six phases as a model for dissolution of relationships: (1) breakdown processes, (2) intrapsychic processes, (3) dyadic processes, (4) social processes, (5) grave dressing processes, and (6) resurrection.

During *breakdown*, one or both partners become dissatisfied with the relationship. If one person reaches the point where the discontent is unbearable, that person enters the *intrapsychic process*. Here, the individual ruminates about the relational partner's behavior, role performance, the relationship itself, the costs of “getting out,” and the potential rewards of alternative relationships. Also, the individual contemplates expressing—but does not actually express—dissatisfaction to the relational partner and more likely represses any such feelings. Eventually, the person may reach another threshold where that individual feels justified in ending the relationship.

If this threshold is breached, the dyad may begin *dyadic processes* and the dilemma of confronting the partner or avoiding the issue. Conflict, or at least negotiation, may occur during talks about the relationship. This is the point where relationship repair can happen if it is possible to “save” the relationship. Still, if the interaction progresses negatively, one or both parties may reach another threshold and decide on dissolution. Then, the dyad moves into *social processes*, where third parties are informed of the relationship problems. Typically, each partner seeks out a confidant who knows both partners so that the confidant can first act as a liaison between the partners and later can be persuaded to take sides. If the dissolution progresses from here, the dyad enters *grave dressing processes*, and the parties engage in adjustment behaviors. Here, both individuals make attributions about relational issues and retell the story of the relationship, giving separate versions of the breakup story. Finally, the *resurrection process* is where the person reemerges as a new being ready for a different kind of relational life.

Baxter (1984) noted that friendships are often just allowed to wither on the vine—calls are not returned, visits are not fixed up, availability for meetings is restricted, and so on until the Other “gets it” that the relationship is over. But there are also more complex processes of relational disengagement, represented by a flow chart of relational trajectories that incorporates what Baxter describes as the critical features of the relational dissolution process: the gradual versus sudden onset of relational problems; the unilateral versus bilateral desire to exit the relationship; the use of direct versus indirect actions to accomplish the dissolution; the rapid versus protracted nature of the disengagement negotiation; the presence versus absence of relationship repair attempts; and the final outcome of relationship termination versus relationship continuation.

Research Methods

Researching friendships has proven to be a challenging endeavor for several reasons. Traditional scientific methods, involving experimental techniques and laboratory conditions or questionnaires, have been only partially informative and are not always useful for finding answers to the most interesting questions about relationships. Even with qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, problems exist. The nature of relationships themselves creates difficulty. There are two individuals involved in every friendship, and getting both parties to agree to participate in a research study is challenging in itself. Even if a researcher succeeds in this task, each relational partner comes with his or her own vision of the relationship and a unique way of describing it.

Early work in attraction and relationships was situated in social psychology. As a result, much research was conducted using traditional scientific approaches, where relationships between variables were assessed with statistical tests. This method presented problems in what to count as the unit of analysis. If only one partner of a relationship was involved in a study, then only a one-sided account of the relationship was elicited. If both relational partners were involved in the study, there was a problem of counting two individuals as units of analysis when the relationship between them was really of interest. Furthermore, much early research occurred in laboratory settings where strangers were assessed on attraction by means of attitude similarity and other related variables. Laboratory research on relationships often revealed limited and mundane findings.

Observational methods have been used in a variety of disciplines where researchers collect data about “naturally occurring” behaviors, usually through the use of videotapes, audiotapes, and ethnographic methods. These methods are subject to validity issues, such as researcher involvement and subjectivity. One very common method used in relational research, and one that has been popular in the discipline of communication, is that of self-report data. Using self-report data, researchers can elicit the thoughts and feelings of an

individual in a relationship as well as his or her perceptions of the other partner’s thoughts and feelings.

Self-report data can be gathered through the use of surveys, interviews, or diaries. Problems with self-report data come from “social desirability”: Participants may answer according to what they think they *should* say or what they think their partners might say. Furthermore, researchers have the task of trying to deduce relational dynamics from two separate accounts of a relationship. One way that researchers have attempted to learn more about the ongoing processes of friendships is by using longitudinal studies. Longitudinal research involves studying the same sample of relational dyads over a period of time and identifying how the relationships develop, transform, and possibly even dissolve.

Applications

The study of friendships is still very much alive across disciplines but for the most part is situated within interpersonal communication. Communication scholars have recently produced work in areas of relational dynamics by focusing on the meaning and development of friendship across the life span, the rituals engaged in by adult friendship dyads, the face maintenance strategies used by friends, and the turning points that friends experience during progression and during termination. Research has also looked at differences in friendship types, such as long-distance friendships and intra- and intercultural friendships.

Additionally, much research has examined possible sites for difficulty in friendships. Specific studies have focused on topic avoidance between friends, the management of disputes among adult friends, the tensions between friends and their romantic partners, and jealousy in close relationships. A very recent and intriguing site for examining the dynamics and complexities of friendship is the study of friends with romantic intent or even the “friends-with-benefits” relationship. There are endless research frontiers for the study of friendship in the discipline of communication.

Conclusions

So Aristotle got it right: Friendship is both a bit obvious and extremely hard to understand. Our familiarity with it in our daily experience blinds us to the difficulties faced by researchers seeking the best methods to understand how it actually works. The fact that we deal with human subjects makes the topic very hard to study. Although friendship is based on the emotions of liking that can explain how people are attracted to one another initially, those same people actually have to make a friendship work and so have to behave together (i.e., talk and perform or enact their behavior of relationships) in ways that both they and society recognizes as “friendship.” Communication researchers have a major role to play in the furtherance of our understanding of friendship because they now have

developed some excellent techniques for finding out what is really going on in the dynamic performance of friendship in daily life—something over and above the emotions that bring friends together in the first place.

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DATING AND ROMANTIC PARTNERS

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Romance is often considered to be an essential part of the human experience. For many, the idea of a “dating” and/or a “romantic relationship” is tied to the hope of a lifelong partnership, or at least the “magic” described in popular movies such as *Sleepless in Seattle* or the fantasy depicted in children’s movies such as *Cinderella*. For others, dating is a “challenge,” or a “game,” as depicted in the fictionalized trials of the characters in *Sex and the City* and *Nip/Tuck* or in “reality” shows such as *The Bachelor* and *The Flavor of Love*. The highs and lows of romance are prominently featured in songs from yesterday and today, and bookstores are overflowing with self-help manuals about how to attract yourself to others or how to find “the love you really want.” In these and other examples, dating and romance are often idealized as the intimate pairing for people who are “more” than just friends.

The dynamics of dating and romantic relationships are complex, diffuse, and multifaceted. While a full review of the nuances of such pairings is beyond the scope of this chapter, our purpose here is to highlight some of the basic processes and communication behaviors relevant to dating and romantic relationships and to sketch how these dynamics play out in the modern age.

Defining Romantic Relationships and Dating: Yesterday and Today

Historical Views on Dating

While few discount the importance of dating as a relational process, the idea of what it means to be dating in the United States has varied throughout time. In the 1800s,

dating was referred to as “courtship” and involved an act—bland by today’s standards—whereby a male paid a female a visit in her home, at a church social, or at a local dance. A woman’s parents supervised their daughter’s visits with a potential suitor and even exerted control over when courtship turned to marriage by determining when land would be turned over to the couple or when the male would be allowed to work for his new family (see Cate & Lloyd, 1992). Courtships were intended to determine whether a man could support his wife and whether the man and woman were of similar social standing. Love was assumed to blossom after marriage. But “love” was not tied to passion or romance; it reflected an openness, sincerity, and connection that would stand the test of time (Rothman, 1984).

The loosening of kinship ties and the migration to new homesteads soon weakened parental influences on courtship. While such changes led to a growing norm of unchaperoned interactions between males and females, as the 19th century evolved, women were encouraged to remain “pure” and to fend off the “wild” desires of men. Courtship served as a time to “tame” a man and to prepare a woman for household management. Into the early 20th century, the forces of romantic love were recognized to act like a magnet that pushed a couple together, making it difficult to pull them apart (Rothman, 1984). Nonetheless, it was expected that “proper” women avoided sexual contact, which could have social or biological consequences.

The rise in urban environments also brought dating out of the home and into unchaperoned spaces. The need to entertain a potential partner outside of the home introduced economic considerations into the process of courtship, with the male expected to provide the necessary

funds (Bailey, 1988). Herein emerged a dynamic to dating that was not defined by “love” or “compatibility” but rather by the degree to which a partner could “provide.” A woman’s conception of romance was now confounded with a male’s ability to pay for fancy dinners, flowers, chocolate, entertainment, and all other luxuries. Furthermore, the rise of the automobile allowed for those men with their own transportation to facilitate private dating behaviors, such as petting and more intimate behaviors.

During the early 1960s, dating was defined by a combined concern of finding a mate who was financially viable, attractive, and would commit to a relationship. To be dating was to be going “steady.” Yet by the 1970s, the counterculture message of defying traditional expectations resulted in a dominant cultural message that men and women were equal (Coontz, 1988). It was recognized that women had an equal voice in the selection of a dating partner and the behaviors by which a dating relationship is defined. Furthermore, a growing awareness of sex as an important part of relationships for both men and women emerged and became part of the process of dating. However, as reflective of a rather oscillatory pattern that we have depicted in our discussion of past years, the later part of the 20th century was marked by a decrease in sexual intimacy. A growing awareness of the implications of unprotected sex, the rise of AIDS, and a higher rate of divorce seemed to dampen the ideal of unbridled sensuality as part of dating. Individuals were more cautious and pessimistic about the idea of—and the risks associated with—dating and romantic relationships.

Dating in the Here and Now

In the 21st century, the definition of dating has broadened again; yet such definitions are arguably confounded with research interests and practical desires. For example, couples have been considered to be dating after they have had a first date (Jobe & Williams White, 2007), when they become short-term partners (Garcia & Markey, 2007), when they have redefined their “buddy” relationship to something more intense (Raley, Crissey, & Muller, 2007), when they are involved in a long-term romantic relationship, or when they designate each other as “boyfriend” or “girlfriend” (Quintero Gonzalez & Koestner, 2006). The changes in the concept of dating reflect a broader trend of changes in the conception of intimacy. For example, cohabitation is no longer confined to marriage. It is now often treated as a stage in a relationship where two people are “dating,” “committed,” or “invested” in one another (Surra, Boettcher-Burke, Cottle, West, & Gray, 2007). Sexual behavior now figures as a part of even casual dating (Mongeau, Seriwicz, & Therrien, 2004). However, sex is sometimes *not* an indicator of dating or romance, as seen in cases where couples have sex as a “hookup” (Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000) or in cases of “friends with benefits” (Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005). While the trend toward casual

sex might indicate a more liberal sexual climate, there is also a small countertrend toward reclaiming premarital abstinence. Sprecher and Regan (1996) discuss how some adults and adolescents are going through a “retroevolution” that rejects a casual conception of sexual intimacy in favor of practicing abstinence until marriage. These decisions are made for a number of reasons, including ideology, fear of pregnancy or disease, and more traditional notions of what it means to be in love.

As definitions of dating have evolved, it is important to note that these changes are focused primarily on norms for heterosexual relationships. The limited amount of research devoted to the romantic relationships of same-sex partners generally finds that there are few differences between the relationships of same-sex and opposite-sex couples. The similarities, noted by Lannutti and Cameron (2002), span a breadth of dating concerns, including closeness, commitment, jealousy, love levels, maintenance, sexuality, and satisfaction. However, gays, lesbians, and transgendered individuals face the additional strain of not always having support from institutional agents, such as governments or religious bodies, and sometimes not even from their own social networks, offering few references for these couples in terms of relational role models and relational normalcy (Kurdek, 2007). Lannutti and Cameron (2002) suggested, however, that this lack of an institutionalized network may enable same-sex partners to become less dependent on outside sources of support and depend more on the interactions that occur within the dyad.

Initiating and Developing Relationships

Dating and romantic relationships typically initiate when one person is attracted to another based on one of three needs: (1) *physical*, as reflective of a desire to be with an attractive other; (2) *social*, as defined by the need to be in a relationship; or (3) *instrumental*, or the degree to which the other will help accomplish a task (McCroskey & McCain, 1974). While attraction may result from each or from a combination of these three needs, physical appearance is a dominant predictor of attraction in the early stages of a potential relationship. For example, features such as height are noticed quickly by a woman meeting a man for the first time and dramatically influence whether a potential romantic relationship is explored. Studies generally find that women find very short men unattractive (Pierce, 1996). Women across cultures are attracted to men with a strong jaw line, broad shoulders, and a narrowing of the waist. These indicators of male attractiveness also hold for judgments made by gay men (Klinkenberg & Rose, 1994). While height is not as much of a defining feature of attractiveness judgments for women, men consider a soft jaw line and an hourglass figure more attractive than the contrary (Buss, 1994). And across gender and sexuality, body symmetry and body proportionality are considered to

be attractive (Langlois et al., 2000). Research has found that people associate physical attractiveness with a host of other positive qualities, including intelligence, success, and competence, such that more attractive individuals are assumed to be generally more positive and capable than their less attractive counterparts.

While initial forces of attraction may be sparked by physical attributes, how a person communicates during an interaction also plays a substantial role in attraction. For example, tests of interaction appearance theory indicate that individuals rate people more physically attractive when they have warm, positive interactions with them, compared with interactions with more distant others (Albada, Knapp, & Theune, 2002). Warmth is typically communicated verbally through expressions of a positive attitude and a concern for others (Folkes & Sears, 1977) and nonverbally through smiling, eye contact, and showing interest (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006). In addition, the perceived ease with which a person engages in conversation is tied to attractiveness ratings: People appearing more composed and less nervous rate as more attractive (Vangelisti, Knapp, & Daly, 1990).

Self-Disclosure

Beyond physical attraction, what is verbally communicated to another about typically “hidden” attitudes and beliefs affects our judgments of attractiveness and contributes to relationship formation. Social penetration theory (Altman & Taylor, 1973) is one of the most well-known explanations for how self-disclosure defines relationships. Altman and Taylor suggested that self-disclosure can be conceptualized along three dimensions: (1) *depth*, which reflects how personal the disclosure is; (2) *breadth*, which refers to the number of topics discussed; and (3) *frequency*, or how often the disclosure occurs. Using the metaphor of an onion, Altman and Taylor (1973) suggested that there are three layers of self-disclosure: (1) a superficial layer that is easy to penetrate; (2) a social or personal layer that is easy for most friends; and (3) a very intimate layer, or core, that is seldom revealed, and then only to people we trust completely. The individuals who reach the “core” are assumed to be few and defined as those who are “intimate.” Research generally finds that the mere process of someone else disclosing to us increases our affection for the discloser (Collins & Miller, 1994). Furthermore, we are even more attracted to those who reveal that they are similar to us. According to Byrne’s reinforcement theory (Byrne, 1971), we are attracted to similar others because they reinforce our own attitudes and beliefs. Burleson (1998) found that we even prefer people who communicate in a similar manner to us. However, it is important to note that in romantic pairings, similarity is not necessarily linked to relational longevity. Amodio and Showers (2005) found that similarity was particularly important for individuals who wanted to keep their romantic relationships together; those who reported being highly committed to their relationship benefited from a similarity in attitudes

over time. Yet for those who reported having low relationship commitment, the longevity of their relationship was actually harmed by that similarity.

Models of Relationship Development

Several theories have sought to provide a nuanced account of how relationships are defined by distinct communication behaviors at various stages of relational development. Some perspectives assume that that we possess socially defined and cognitively embedded schemas and scripts about what “should happen” in a dating or romantic relationship, as well as how we should communicate in such pairings (Planalp, 1985). *Schemas* act as functional guides that we use to navigate relationships, and are defined by our own relationship experiences as well as the relationships we observe among others. The relationships that contribute to our schemas can be face-to-face, mediated, or in written form. Research suggests that schemas can function at a broad level to inform behavior in the absence of our own experiences. For example, Klinkenberg and Rose (1994) argued that although gays and lesbians have had few experiences in their youth that speak to their desires for a same-sex relationship, examples drawn from movies, counterculture publications, and close friends have contributed to their cognitive representations concerning what their relationships should be like and inform them how to act in their own relationships. Other scholars have focused on the universal expectations about what happens at a particular event in a relationship, such as a first date. For example, Rose and Frieze (1989) analyzed the types of behaviors enacted during a first date. Participants listed every activity from preparation for the date to the date’s end, ranging from “worry about or change appearance” to “kissing your date goodnight.” The researchers found that traditional stereotypes for men and women were exhibited in first-date behavior choices, with women listing more behaviors, such as waiting to be asked for a date, being more concerned about physical appearance, and having to resist sexual contact. Men were more likely to exhibit date-planning behaviors as well as initiating physical contact during a date. More recently, Mongeau and colleagues (2004) observed that first-date expectations ranged from having fun and investigating romantic potential to engaging in sexual activity. Despite subtle differences, the expectations for what counts as a date are relatively stable across sexes. In addition, relationship schemas influence what we are inclined to remember about our relationships (Samp & Humphreys, 2007).

Other models of relationship development focus on those communicative behaviors that define particular degrees of relationship commitment and intensity. For example, Knapp (see Knapp & Vangelisti, 2005) proposed a five-stage model: (1) In the *initiating* stage, people attempt to make a positive impression on another. Communication is therefore polite, friendly, and superficial. (2) In the *experimenting* stage, impression management needs are still salient, but

individuals have a growing interest in making an active effort to “feel” out another person by identifying his or her likes or dislikes, beliefs, and attitudes. (3) In the *intensifying* stage, the breadth and depth of disclosure intensifies, as do displays of affection. A tentative use of the term *we* and/or statements of affection, such as “I love you,” follow in this stage. (4) In the *integrating* stage, two individuals have decided that they are a couple or a “unified team.” They are able to anticipate each other’s attitudes and opinions, and they engage in joint activities, such as adopting a pet together. (5) In the final stage of *bonding*, partners formally declare their relationship via a socially accepted public form of “relational commitment.” In the United States, such a statement is usually made by a marriage or commitment ceremony. Whatever the particular event, a formalized effort is made to declare to all that “we are together forever.”

Technological Influences on Relationship Initiation and Development

The process of dating has been redefined in this modern age to be much more efficient yet impersonal. Take, for example, the current trend of “speed-dating,” where individuals looking to meet potential romantic partners attend an event where they go on a series of 3- to 10-minute “dates” with other attendees. After the event, participants have the opportunity to indicate whether they would like to see any of their dates again. If two speed-daters both wish to see one another again, they are given the means to contact each other for a future, presumably more traditional, date (Finkel, Eastwick, & Matthews, 2007). Although speed-dating contains elements of traditional face to face interactions, the process is mediated and presupposes a notion that romance may involve a quick, “gut” judgment, unlike many of the courtship processes of the past.

More substantially, the rise of Internet-based dating and social networking now offers users a highly selective way to find the perfect mate (Merkle & Richardson, 2000). The Internet has become an appealing option because it is an efficient and convenient means by which to meet many people. Furthermore, the Internet allows for more control of the impression management process, allowing individuals to exhibit the positive aspects of themselves that they believe will attract potential mates (Samp, Wittenberg, & Gillette, 2003; Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, & Tong, 2008). Online dating sites, such as Match.com and eHarmony, have been endorsed by socially defined “experts,” such as Dr. Phil, and psychologists. They have become a socially acceptable means by which to find a romantic partner. Users have the opportunity to pragmatically search for their soul mate and to limit their search based on common attraction criteria, such as religious views and sexual preference. Additionally, such sites allow the users to screen partners based on their preferred level of relational commitment—a feature often difficult to discern in traditional face-to-face interactions.

Apart from online dating sites, another popular way to meet people online and to stay in contact with “friends” is through social-networking sites, such as Facebook.com and MySpace.com. These sites allow users to set up personal profiles for which they can upload personal information and then communicate with friends and contacts via different kinds of messaging through the site. Whereas sites such as Facebook.com were originally created for college students to keep in contact with classmates, these sites have now taken on other uses and connotations. There are a wide range of reasons why people use these sites, including rekindling old friendships and relationships, starting new relationships, maintaining existing relationships (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007), or finding people for sexual “hook-ups” (Stern & Taylor, 2007).

Social-networking sites have also become an important step for users in declaring their relationship status. Making a relationship “Facebook official” has become an important public declaration of one’s relationship analogous to some public rituals in Knapp’s bonding stage. Just as these sites serve as the messengers of good relational news, they are also the bearers of relationships gone bad. Just as one becomes “Facebook official” with a partner, taking down this status is an official signal to the public that the relationship is over. Furthermore, these sites can even create conflict within the relationship, serving as a way to break up with a partner and even a way for partners to make their mates jealous (Stern & Taylor, 2007).

While social-networking sites can be useful communication tools, the lack of physicality of the Internet requires individuals to rely purely on written text, pictures, or avatars to interpret messages from potential or existing dating partners. Stern and Taylor (2007) found that students use these sites for information about whether or not their partners are being faithful. Commonly called “Facebook stalking,” curious mates have the opportunity to browse their partner’s walls and pictures, as well as other users’ pictures of their mates. For couples just starting to date, this information seeking aspect is also appealing as a way to monitor a potential partner’s profiles to see the activities and associations in which he or she is involved.

Dating and Romantic Relationship Maintenance: The Good and the Bad

While forces of attraction bring people together, a variety of forces keep a pair in a relationship. These include *commitment*, which reflects how attached and dedicated a person is to remaining in a relationship (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986); *obligation*, which refers to the extent to which a person feels that he or she owes something to a partner (Guerrero, Andersen, & Afifi, 2007); and *investments*, which are resources that have been put into the relationship that would be lost were it to end (Rusbult, Drigotas, & Verette, 1994). Perceptions of

commitment, obligation, and investments often work together to keep people in their relationships and frequently influence the way in which people communicate to keep their relationships together (Samp & Solomon, 2001; Solomon & Samp, 1998).

According to the dialectics theory (Baxter, 1993), relationships are in a constant state of flux. Keeping a relationship together requires managing this instability. A dialectical tension is a push-and-pull between two seemingly contradictory needs. Baxter (1993) proposed three major dialectical tensions: (1) integration-separation, (2) stability-change, and (3) expression-privacy. Each of these dialectical tensions has an internal and external manifestation. Internal manifestations refer to the tensions experienced between relational partners, while external manifestations refer to the tensions between a couple and outsiders, such as other dyads or society. Baxter (1993) identified several means by which to manage dialectical tensions, of which the dominant strategies are (a) *selection*, which involves favoring each side of the dialectic at different times; (b) *neutralization*, whereby couples avoid fully engaging either side of the dialectic; and (c) *reframing*, in which a couple adjusts their perceptions of a given dialectic such that it is viewed as complementary rather than contradictory.

Maintenance Through Communication

In a similar way to how objects such as cars and homes require regular maintenance to keep them in working order, so, too, do relationships. Actions that function to reinforce a certain level of intimacy, closeness, and stability between partners have been labeled examples of relational maintenance behaviors. Maintenance can involve engaging in specific behaviors that show a dating partner and others that the relationship is important. Individuals may do so verbally, through self-disclosure, comforting, or overt expressions about the relationship (Canary & Stafford, 1994), or nonverbally, by acting upbeat and positive, showing affection, and conveying warmth (Dindia, 2000).

The Internet is also a substantial resource for relationship management in the modern age. The popular press is full of articles telling the stories of soldiers who are able to keep in constant contact with their partners through e-mail, a development that has cast the most current military conflicts in a new light compared with previous military conflicts. Ramirez, Shuangyue, McGrew, and Shu-Fang (2007) suggested that instant messaging has the potential to be one of the most frequently used online maintenance tools as it not only allows for synchronous conversation with another user, but the addition of nonverbal affective cues through the use of emoticons can describe a variety of corresponding emotions. Applications such as e-mail, instant messaging, and chat rooms allow couples to spend “time” together even if not in the same room (Rabby, 2007). Even gaming can be used to substitute for a shared activity

(Rabby, 2007). Whereas one couple may spend a Saturday night bowling with others in a face-to-face context, another might spend it online by playing games with a larger group of people.

Managing Relationship Problems

Within the course of a relationship, it is inevitable that there will be “dark times.” Indeed, research on the “dark side” of communication suggests that people commonly experience problems such as jealousy, deception, and infidelity in their close relationships (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). Such behaviors reflect actions that violate our ideas of how “happy” relationships should operate. Researchers have labeled situations where one partner violates the implicit or explicit “rules” for how to behave in their relationships as relational transgressions (Metts, 1994) or problematic events (Samp & Solomon, 1998, 1999).

Some of the most common transgressions reflect infidelity of some sort. Infidelity may be sexual, wherein someone engages in sexual activity with someone other than a dating partner, or it may be emotional, wherein one partner transfers emotional resources such as time, love, and attention to some other person (Shackleford & Buss, 1997). Infidelity has also emerged into the Internet arena in the modern age. The glamour of a culturally diverse space, the potential for less inhibition, and increased self-disclosure-related intimacy all make the Internet an appealing forum for developing extrarelatinal affairs (Young, Griffin-Shelley, Cooper, O’Mara, & Buchanan, 2000). While infidelity was once carried out away from the home, the Internet allows individuals to betray their partners from the comfort of their home. As such, popular press magazines have changed their focus from advice to check a partner’s pockets or to look for lipstick on shirt collars as clues to infidelity to strategies focused on a partner’s computer use. For example, an article in *Ebony* magazine described the telltale signs that a partner is having an online affair, including the following: (a) the partner stops typing or turning off the computer in the presence of a relational partner, (b) the partner avoids checking e-mail in front of the partner, (c) the partner maintains multiple e-mail accounts, and (d) the partner makes credit card charges from unknown Internet merchants (Hughes, 2005).

Yet these transgressions may not be so severe as infidelity. For example, Samp and Solomon (1998) and Vangelisti (2001) have found that saying something hurtful to a partner through criticism or by betraying a partner’s confidence can damage the fabric of a relationship just as infidelity. Thus, any behavior that shows disregard for one’s partner or the romantic relationship as a whole can negatively affect the status quo of a pairing.

No matter what the behavior, relationships will only survive a rule violation when both the perpetrator and the victim communicate about the situation. Of course, a natural response to a relational transgression may be to break off the relationship or to “take a break.” Yet research suggests

that for perpetrators, the most explicit and relationally maintaining option is to seek a partner's *forgiveness* and to ask the victim to reframe the situation as a constructive opportunity for the relationship to be strengthened or redefined (Waldron & Kelley, 2005). Additionally, perpetrators may *apologize* for their wrongdoing (Weiner, Graham, Peter, & Zmuidinas, 1991), *justify* or *excuse* their behavior as due to some external or emotional circumstances, or refuse to acknowledge that the behavior is a problem at all. While it seems natural for a transgressor to work toward maintaining his or her relationship, Samp and Solomon (1998 & 1999) observed that transgressors may be instead concerned with self- and identity-related concerns, which reflect desires to reify their self-sufficiency and personal autonomy instead of focusing on relationship repair.

Considering the recipients of a transgression, it should not be surprising that appeals for forgiveness and apologies are the most effective means by which a victim may be encouraged to consider the transgressing partner to be a good person despite the relational wrongdoing (Kelley, 1998). Yet under some circumstances, the wronged partner may not demand a response to a transgression. For example, among a list of prorelational and highly communicative behaviors directed toward relationship maintenance, Ayres (1983) also found that individuals may decide to avoid talk of activities that might change the relationship. Furthermore, research by Solomon and Samp (see Solomon & Samp, 1998; Samp & Solomon, 2001) suggested that individuals may withhold relational complaints as a form of maintenance, particularly when the complaining partner perceives that he or she has less power than the partner under question.

Relational Dissolution: Yesterday and Today

As a common saying goes, "All good things must come to an end." So why do relationships end? Most breakups result from a decision by one partner (Baxter, 1984). Particular reasons that dating relationships end include the withering away of happiness, or atrophy (Cupach & Metts, 1986), spending less time together, physical separation (Kurdek, 1991), an increase in negative and unsupportive communication, committing a relational transgression (Cupach & Metts 1986), or death. No matter what the particular reason, research suggests that we have schemas for how relationships should break apart (Honeycutt, Cantrill, & Allen, 1992).

Models of Relationship Dissolution

Most models of relational breakups generally assume that dissolution does not occur in the blink of an eye. Rather, relationships are assumed to pass through several phases. Duck's (1988) model specifies four phases of relationship dissolution: (1) the *intrapsychic* phase, where relational dissatisfaction leads a partner to reflect on negative

aspects of the relationship, dwell on partner irritations, and think about what would happen were the relationship to end; (2) the *dyadic* phase, whereby concerns about relationship problems are explicitly addressed through communication and spur arguments, long discussions, or the withdrawal of one partner; (3) the *social* phase, where people turn to their social networks for support and complain about the relationship to friends; and (4) the *grave dressing* phase, where the breakup occurs and former relational partners construct a story about the relationship and why it did not work. Duck considers each of the phases to be interrelated, but it is not assumed that a couple in Phase 1 will necessarily end up at Phase 4; through communication, couples may be able to stop the dissolution process.

Another popular model is Knapp's "reversal hypothesis" approach to relationship disengagement, which represents a complement to his model of relationship initiation (see Knapp & Vangelisti, 2005). Knapp proposes five stages of dissolution: (1) *differentiating*, whereby members of the couple start to behave as individuals, emphasize differences instead of similarities, and engage in activities without one another; (2) *circumscribing*, when communication between the couple returns to a more superficial and impersonal level; (3) *stagnating*, where communication becomes awkward and discussions of the relationship are taboo; (4) *avoiding*, where partners physically separate from one another and try not to encounter each other in public; and (5) *terminating*, whereby the partners end contact and decree that the relationship is over. In contrast with the phase models, researchers have argued that some relationships may end in a "sudden death" due to a critical incident, such as infidelity or violence (Cupach & Metts, 1986). Yet, for the most part, people eventually go through some if not all the stages defined by Duck and Knapp as they decide to leave a dating relationship.

Dissolving Away Online

Just as the Internet has become a source of relationship initiation in the 21st century, relationships may break apart in this medium as well. Breaking up online can include myriad behaviors, ranging from complete relational withdrawal by no longer responding to e-mail or instant messaging to a distancing of oneself from a relational partner via a Web-based "announcement" (Merkle & Richardson, 2000). Recall that a prominent feature of the social-networking sites is a relationship status category. Just as a couple announce themselves as officially together, they also report their official separation to an entire social network. While there appears to be no common norm for the appropriateness of breaking up via the Internet, the notion that online communication facilitates ease of disclosure makes the Net an easier space to start these difficult conversations. Furthermore, the lack of physicality of Internet communication allows for both a thoughtful and a deliberative breakup and the avoidance of a partner's real-time face-to-face reaction (Starks, 2007). Furthermore, the Internet might not just

be a preferred channel for these discussions but also a tool in crafting dissolution rhetoric. *ibreakup.com* allows initiators to craft breakup letters from predetermined rationales and excuses, taking the difficulty of subtlety out of message creation and doing the rhetorical dirty work for site users.

Conclusion and Future Directions

One of the many reasons to study dating and romantic relationships is that such pairings will always exist. Due to the human condition, there will always be differences in how people think about, initiate, maintain, manage, and disengage from their romantic relationships. Therefore, the examination of dating relationships will always be an area ripe for inquiry and theoretical development and will serve as a useful lens for reflecting on social and cultural norms. Based on our review in this chapter, we see three important directions for future research on dating and romantic relationships. For one, research should develop a greater understanding of the dynamics of same-sex dating relationships. Many relationship theories are created based on assumptions about heterosexual couples and do not encompass the relationships of gay and lesbian partners. While there may be more similarities than differences among gay, lesbian, and heterosexual couples, some of the unique contextual constraints should be accounted for in theory and deserve further investigation.

Second, relationship research needs to continue to examine the role of the Internet in the development, maintenance, and negotiation of dating relationships. While there is still some stigma attached to online dating, sometime soon that stigma might be lifted, so that meeting someone on *match.com* might be equivalent to meeting one's future spouse in an anecdotal face-to-face way, such as in a bar, in church, or even on a plane. The proliferation of inexpensive Webcams and microphones, even built into computers as of 2008, has the potential to provide contact for long-distance dyads in a potential channel richer than the telephone. As more people log on each day, the nature of the intersection between face-to-face communication and computer-mediated forms is still unclear. Recent scholarship leaves uncertain whether or how these two channels will harmonize as equally viable vehicles for developing, maintaining, or ending a relationship. More mainstream sources seem to indicate that, right now, couples involved in relationships lived both on- and offline can experience a disconnect. This lapse in contextual overlap may have something to do with the tools (or lack thereof) that people have to negotiate their relationships in both spaces. As many Internet applications, such as social-networking sites, text messaging, and instant messaging, are relatively new, individuals might not possess salient relational schemas for negotiating the overlap of these two channels within their relationships. Cinderella never had to deal with making her relationship "Facebook official"; similarly, "real people" may not have had computer-mediated relational schema

modeled as they developed ideas of how relationships should operate. Without readily available schema, the interplay of relationships between face-to-face and Internet contexts may experience an open season of learn-as-you-go schematic development, with a potentially long learning curve. The uncertain status of schema for relationships entangled within the two contexts may, however, be a temporary impairment as adolescents grow up on the Internet and become accustomed to living life in both the physical and the cyber worlds.

Third, Bradbury (2002) argued that very little research on personal relationships is conducted with the goal of actually helping people change their relationships for the better. Part of this effort requires the collection of data from couples directly experiencing or likely to experience a problem. Theoretical development is certainly important as we seek to better understand the lives of those in voluntary romantic pairings. However, researchers should be encouraged to put their theories to the test in a variety of populations and a variety of contexts so that researchers, practitioners, friends, and family may help individuals build the strongest and most satisfying dating and romantic relationships. It should be evident from this chapter that there is plenty of research to be put to the test, and there will always be a multitude of dating and romantic relationships to study and enjoy in the future. After all, love will find a way.

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SUPERVISORS, SUBORDINATES, AND COWORKERS

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Katherine, a recent college graduate, is in her first year as an accountant with a small firm in St. Louis, Missouri. Katherine excelled in her undergraduate coursework in accounting and graduated with the top grades in her class. She felt well prepared for the challenges that being an accountant would inevitably bring when she began her position. Almost a year has passed since Katherine began working at the firm, and she feels that she has built a very good relationship with her supervisor and coworkers. About a week ago, Katherine submitted her yearly report to her supervisor, which detailed her projects from the past year and the professional development in which she had engaged, which Katherine felt was extensive.

At today's staff meeting, Katherine's supervisor asked Katherine to sit next to her during the meeting. At one point in the meeting, the supervisor began reprimanding many of Katherine's coworkers for their lack of professional development and follow-through on their projects. The supervisor then turned to Katherine and noted to the group that "Katherine's work over the past year had been exceptional. In addition, the amount of professional development in which she has engaged is an example for us all." After the meeting, Katherine began to reflect on her supervisor's comments to the group. Although Katherine knew that her boss had good intentions and was truly pleased with her work, Katherine could not help but worry about how her coworkers would react. Katherine wanted her supervisor to know that her comments put Katherine in a

difficult position with her peers because she felt that her supervisor was treating her as a favorite. Katherine also was upset that her supervisor did not obtain Katherine's permission before relating information from her yearly report at the staff meeting. Katherine had perceived her annual report to be confidential and preparatory to her performance evaluation. As Katherine reflected on these points, she thought to herself, "None of my accounting classes prepared me for this. How should I handle this situation?"

Introduction

As this case about Katherine's first job in an accounting firm displays, understanding communication among supervisors, direct reports (often called subordinates), and coworkers is crucially important for organizational member effectiveness, good relationships, and satisfaction in business, governmental, and not-for-profit contexts. The consequences of workplace communication stretch far beyond the immediate setting; these processes affect people's family, leisure, spiritual, and community lives. In this essay, we describe and explore the nature of three specific organizational roles: supervisors, direct reports, and coworkers. We delve into both how individuals can better manage people who hold these roles and how these relationships are co-constructed by role-set members. Role sets are configurations of linked positions that "often

include the supervisor, subordinates, and certain members of the same or other departments with whom the member must work closely, and other organizational members” (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 189). These role-set members may work in diverse organizational contexts ranging from traditional “bricks and mortar” workplaces to virtual settings.

Each section of this essay includes a discussion of the fundamental communication issues that drive a particular organizational role, including conventional theoretical approaches to these roles as well as how these approaches have been reconsidered in light of current organizational communication research. Overall, our goal is to highlight communication strategies for individuals’ more effective management of workplace relationships: (a) supervisors, (b) direct reports, and (c) coworkers. We conclude by discussing some similarities that cut across these three types of relationships.

Managing Relationships in the Workplace

Supervisors

In this section, we begin by describing the different ways in which supervisors have communicated with their subordinates, or direct reports, in the workplace. We present the case of “Suzanne” to draw out implications for complex intergroup relationships. In these ways, we provide a series of possible communication strategies and their implications for supervisors and organizations.

Supervisory Communication

Organizations in the United States changed drastically during the Industrial Revolution, largely when the role of supervisor became formalized in organizational settings (see Conrad & Poole, 2005). Most formal organizations were structured using the classical approach to organizing, which positioned supervisors at the “top” of an organization overseeing direct reports. Except when their positions occurred at the top officer or entry-level worker positions, supervisors and direct reports communicated in both capacities because they functioned as “linking pins” for positions both above and below theirs (Likert, 1961, p. 113). The main elements of the classical approach to organizing included top-down communication, hierarchy, and centralized power.

Top-down communication is when supervisors speak to their employees without expecting and/or desiring a communicative response. Many contemporary organizations have resisted this practice because the one-way flow of communication can lead to problems such as misinformation, lack of information, dissatisfaction, and apathy. Instead, contemporary supervisors encourage their employees and direct reports to e-mail them with suggestions and

feedback. In addition, supervisors recognize that their employees often want to influence others, use their skills, and identify with work and workplaces that they consider to be meaningful. Rather than using top-down communication, supervisors recognize that employees express themselves about work, workplace relationships, and organizational policies, products, and services in various ways. These employees may blog; write cartoons, such as “Dilbert”; use wikis; construct social-networking sites, such as Facebook and MySpace; engage in dissent on resistance Web sites (e.g., www.radioshacksucks.com); or post a video on YouTube. As a result, supervisors must consider the multiple channels in which they and their subordinates communicate as well as contemporary workers’ desire to participate in decision making.

A second tenet of the classical approach is *hierarchy*, which is when individuals are organized based on position, rank, and authority and the connections among their own and others’ organizational roles can be displayed visually via an organizational chart. In firms where the organizational chart has fewer levels (i.e., where there is less distance between the top and bottom levels of the chart), the hierarchy is flatter. Flatter hierarchies typically are found in entrepreneurial businesses, small not-for-profit organizations, and many contemporary organizations. Flatter hierarchies can enhance the rapidity by which information flows internally and by which crises can be resolved (Cheney, Christensen, Zorn, & Ganesh, 2004). In addition, roles are less specialized, which promotes cross-functional training and skill development. However, there may be fewer opportunities for certain rewards, such as advancement. Implications for supervisory communication include being clear about and expanding the kinds of rewards offered, especially acknowledging and providing incentives for developmental activities such as on-the-job training and mentoring.

A third main tenet of the classical approach is *centralized power*, meaning that most of the power in the organization is centralized with management rather than spread out among the group. Not only is it centralized, but the assumption is that power and control are *simple*, meaning that managers overtly influence the everyday activities of their workers, which leaves the workers with little autonomy. In more contemporary organizations, forms of power and control, such as concertive control (Tompkins & Cheney, 1985), have largely been viewed as more effective than simple power and control because concertive control offers strategies whereby organizations influence the logic or premises underlying individuals’ decisions, attitudes, and feelings so that individuals act in the interests of the organization rather than in their own interests (Tompkins & Cheney, 1985). Whenever employees come to work while sick to complete a project or rearrange their personal schedules to accommodate work, then they probably accept the notion that there is little or no excuse not to get work done. When employees are controlled concertively,

supervisors and direct reports have implicit understandings about appropriate conduct that rarely need to be explicitly expressed.

Complex Intergroup Relationships

Complex intergroup relationships are the variety of relationships that occur in a workplace, including supervisor, direct report, and coworker. These relationships can be described as complex because individuals simultaneously enact two of these roles at one time and/or intersect with multiple role-set members (e.g., supervisors serve as direct reports for other supervisors, or several individuals in different roles might be involved in career developmental networks). Intergroup relationships can become even more complicated when there is defensive communication or an organizational culture typified by incivility, harassment, bullying, dysfunctional mentoring, and other problematic workplace relationships. Defensive communication “involves a self-perceived flaw that an individual refuses to admit to another person, a sensitivity to that flaw, and an attack by another person that focuses on the flaw” (Becker, Halbesleben, & O’Hair, 2005, p. 144). Destructive organizational cultures can have norms in which harmful communication that seeks to undermine others’ confidence, employability, relationships with others, productivity, and quality of work life is enabled or even encouraged (Fritz & Omdahl, 2006; Lutgen-Sandvik & Sypher, 2009; Ragins & Kram, 2007). To better understand defensive and destructive aspects of intergroup communication, consider the following case study of Suzanne.

The *case of Suzanne* involves Suzanne, the manager of a local pharmacy, who oversees four full-time employees, three of whom have worked at the pharmacy for more than 10 years, and one of whom, Nadine, began 6 months ago. Suzanne has a very high-quality relationship with the three long-term employees, which includes a great deal of social support for each other. Nadine felt like an outsider at the organization from her first day of work because she felt that Suzanne really liked the other three employees and Suzanne did not seem to communicate as freely and informally with Nadine. Suzanne, on the other hand, actually felt very shy around Nadine because Nadine was older than Suzanne, and this was the first time that Suzanne had ever managed someone older than herself. Nadine and Suzanne were initially polite but increasingly got to the point where they carefully considered every word they spoke to each other. After a while, they stopped engaging in supportive activities, such as words of appreciation, inquiries about the others’ leisure activities, and congratulations for accomplishments. After the first 6 months, Nadine became tired of feeling like an outsider at the pharmacy, and she began to dread coming to work. In the meantime, Suzanne mistook Nadine’s actions as questioning her authority and testing boundaries. Suzanne avoided Nadine but spoke about her to the long-term employees at

the pharmacy, especially when she perceived Nadine as not doing her work as well as the others. Toward the end of Nadine’s employment, Suzanne and Nadine no longer even exchanged greetings.

In our *case analysis*, Nadine considered the relationships of the other employees and their manager to be very collegial and supportive, in contrast to her perceptions of her own low-quality exchanges with these same people. Nadine’s analyses of her workplace relationships prompted her to feel less participatory and collegial in her organization. Suzanne and Nadine had different definitions and understandings of the situation, which led, in part, to their conflict. While it is simple to say that they should have engaged in dialogue to avert defensive and destructive workplace relationships, there are many different and conflicting intergroup relationship expectations that can create unanticipated and problematic consequences. For instance, some women may feel as though their conflicts about their treatment during workplace pregnancies and maternity leaves are irreconcilable because organizational and personal goals, understandings about fair treatment, and different parties’ use of particular negotiation strategies seem incompatible (Buzanell & Liu, 2005, 2007). To facilitate productive discussion among organizational members, regular meetings in which all workplace members rotate assignments to provide information about policies, practices, common intergroup concerns, generational cohort attitudes toward work, and hierarchical differences in outlooks about company strategies could go a long way to developing a supportive climate and providing a baseline (of automatic rights and knowledge) from which parties could negotiate conflicts.

To better manage this specific case situation, Suzanne, because she is the supervisor, could have anticipated her feelings about having someone older than her work as her direct report. By anticipating these feelings and reflecting on the appropriate response to them, Suzanne could have been more proactive in dealing with this situation. In addition, Suzanne could have talked with the other three employees of the pharmacy before Nadine started and told them that it was important that Nadine felt like a part of the team from the first day, despite the fact that the other three employees had worked together for so long. Intergroup history may affect the manifestation of problems and potential solutions; and supervisors who have been at the organization for a significant period of time, such as Suzanne, could analyze the impact that intergroup history may have on a new employee. Excellent supervisors are proactive in considering the needs of new employees because these supervisors realize that replacing dissatisfied employees who leave is costly and time consuming. Another option of which Suzanne could have taken advantage of is to invite Nadine to have a meeting with her on the first day, after the first week, and after the first month. Suzanne could have expressed that she wanted Nadine to be happy at the pharmacy, and the meetings could have

given Nadine and Suzanne the opportunity to talk through the minor issues they faced in the beginning, thus possibly preventing these issues from becoming major issues later on. Each of these suggestions is an option that Suzanne could have taken to improve Nadine's perception of her job at the pharmacy. In addition, there are several things Nadine could have done to improve the situation, which are discussed in the next section of this essay.

Interestingly, this pharmacy had only five employees, and yet there was a lot of conflict that developed in a short period of time. In addition to the number of employees, there are many other elements of a workplace that can affect the level of conflict and the perception of fairness in an organization, such as employees' generational differences, different education levels, gender, and technological capabilities. Intergroup communication can also become complicated when organizational members belong to different social-identity groupings. One example of this is that, for some African American women, "learning the ropes" and engaging in career developmental networks, such as mentoring relationships, networking groups, and challenging task force assignments can be difficult because of racial and gender stereotypes that prompt less participation on the part of colleagues, supervisors, and others (Allen, 1996, 2000; Ibarra, 1995). Supervisors also may discriminate or harass (consciously or unconsciously) based on sexuality, nationality, age, religion, and able-bodiedness (Allen, 2003; Liu & Buzzanell, 2006). To enhance effective communication, managers and other supervisory personnel can participate in everyday conversational practices that create connections through particular language choices and in workshops that discuss strategies for changing detrimental organizational cultures and intergroup communication processes.

Subordinates/Direct Reports

Learning how to communicate effectively with direct reports can be approached by first addressing a fundamental conflict in superior-subordinate relationships, namely, the paradox of organization. Next, we suggest that individuals have a responsibility to "manage upward," that is, manage the role-set member to whom they report. In some cases, managing upward may align with upward influence research, in which subordinates attempt to shape the opinions, feelings, and behaviors of the person in the position directly above theirs in the company hierarchy. However, theirs might not be a subordinate position in the sense of a traditional hierarchical structure and/or power-over relationship. Therefore, we use the label "direct report" to indicate that managing upward might also involve management of a supervisor to whom individuals report in more project-oriented "matrix" structures that cut across functional lines or in telecommuting, contingent, and other "nonstandard" work arrangements (Ballard & Gossett, 2007). Finally, more recent understandings of power dynamics can enable greater dialogue and collaboration among different role-set members.

The Paradox of Organization

The paradox of organization occurs when organizations need to control the work and production of their employees, but employees need to feel as though they have flexibility and can express creativity (Conrad & Poole, 2005). Both parties can experience frustration when their desires and goals are at odds. To circumvent this paradox when dealing with direct reports, Barker (1993) recommends that supervisors empower self-managing teams and other employees to discipline themselves by negotiating group values, norms, and acceptable behaviors that the group members then choose to follow. They can do this by creating situations in which employees feel greater attachment or higher identification with the work unit or company mission (Fairhurst, Jordan, & Neuwirth, 1997). They can also empower teams and groups to set their own rules for behavior and to monitor each other as well as themselves according to these rules (Barker, 1993). Through these processes, the needs of managers and workers increasingly coincide, so that all are working as if they are being monitored and in the best interests of the organization (Foucault, 1979). In the same way, organizational employees might feel that they are being monitored through computer technologies. The threat of potentially being watched often ensures that employees will comply with company rules, including self-monitoring of the Web sites they visit, e-mails they send out, or personal tasks they conduct on the Internet (i.e., paying bills, shopping).

The paradox of organization can be exacerbated when one or both parties experience communication apprehension and do not experience person-centered communication. Communication apprehension is the amount of anxiety that an individual feels prior to and/or during a communication interaction with another person, such as acute nervousness before an upcoming presentation before higher management or a televised interview (McCroskey & Richmond, 1979). With regard to communication by direct reports, those who reported high apprehension felt overwhelmed by the information they received (Bartoo & Sias, 2004). They are less likely to communicate about their needs and try to work with their managers to locate common needs that can be mutually satisfied for the individual and the organization. Person-centered communication largely "addresses relationships between individuals of unequal status" (Fix & Sias, 2006, p. 36) and therefore can be applied to the supervisor-subordinate relationship. Person-centered communication "generally refers to the extent to which one's communicative messages consider the perspectives of others" (Fix & Sias, 2006, p. 37) and is an important predictor of job satisfaction.

Managing Upward

Although people typically think of supervisors as the managers of their direct reports, Gabarro and Kotter (2005) argued that employees should engage in "the process of

consciously working with your superior to obtain the best possible results for you, your boss, and the company” (p. 92). They maintained that many individuals do not understand how important they are to their boss’s and organization’s success: “Some people behave as if their bosses were not very dependent on them. They fail to see how much the boss needs their help and cooperation to do his or her job effectively” (p. 93). When direct reports keep these issues in mind, their communication strategies might include initiating regular contact, providing information in advance so that the boss is not surprised at an important meeting, learning supervisors’ highest priorities, and understanding the boss’s communication preferences (e.g., e-mails over face-to-face meetings).

A second strategy for managing a relationship with a supervisor is using leader-member exchange (LMX) theory to develop high-quality information- and opinion-sharing relationships, which can increase both parties’ communication and job satisfaction. LMX is based on the idea that

leaders operate within multiple organizational constraints (e.g., time, role, and power) and, thus, share their personal and positional resources selectively with their members. As a result, leaders tend to develop and maintain LMXs with their members that vary in quality or maturity, spanning from high (in-group, “leadership,” “partnership”) to low (out-group, “supervision,” “managership”). (Lee, 1999, p. 417)

High-LMX relationships are characterized by increased levels of trust and communication between the relational members. Low-LMX relationships generally include less trust and more formal supervision on the part of the manager (Lee, 1999). Research has indicated that higher-LMX relationships offer greater career developmental challenges and opportunities, enhance direct reports’ influence in decision making, construct a basis for mutual and accurate feedback, and promote other positive outcomes for organizational members (Fairhurst, 2001). But these relationships require maintenance or they may deteriorate into low-LMX exchanges. For instance, Manzoni and Barsoux (1998) detail the way in which a superior-subordinate relationship can spiral downward quickly when a superior has low expectations for an employee based on a past track record or secondhand knowledge of the employee. Both superiors and direct reports need to maintain vigilance for subtle conversational changes that indicate that something is amiss. Through much dialogue as well as mutual commitment toward creating a better relationship, both parties can reverse the relational damage.

Power Dynamics

In the past few decades, scholars have been reframing traditional theories of supervising and power to meet the needs of a more educated labor force and the rapidly changing organizational and global environments. Rather

than depicting superior-subordinate relationships simply as *power over*; that is, “a traditional dominance model where decision making is characterized by control, instrumentalism, and self-interest” (Berger, 2005, p. 6), a relational approach to organizing, in which supervisors and direct reports collaborate (i.e., individuals work *with* rather than *for* managers), seems to better depict workers’ power sharing and cooperative exchanges.

This shift from *power over* to *power with* is reflected in research on the tensions and paradoxes involved in teamwork, developmental networks, and participatory organizations. In her multiyear investigation of oncology teams, Ellingson (2005) described how members of different health care specialties worked together for cancer patients and their families. While there was informal sharing of information and medical case impressions among different health care providers, these power-with exchanges were often among individuals of similar status, meaning that oncologists could and did expect that their own demands, expertise, and contributions would be privileged over those of others. Similarly, traditional mentor-protégé relationships, in which more experienced organizational and/or occupational members guide neophytes’ career progress, still persist. However, developmental networks, in which multiple parties of varying organizational and occupational statuses mutually develop each other, have created numerous forms of enrichment that include e-mentoring, strategic collaborative arrangements, reverse and spiritual mentoring, and guidance for particular life and career phases (e.g., mentoring for work-life balance or overseas assignments; see Ragins & Kram, 2007). Finally, research indicates that individuals often experience positive outcomes associated with greater workplace participation, identification, and personal assessments that their work is meaningful. However, organizations that desire to foster such connections may do so in contradictory ways (e.g., when they mandate particular forms of workplace democracy and all members’ involvement or when they fail to see the value of dissent [Stohl & Cheney, 2001]), unproductive ways (e.g., when they expect personal-organizational attachments despite the temporary nature of work arrangements [Ballard & Gossett, 2007]), and ironic ways (e.g., what individuals consider meaningful and desirable may not be what workplaces consider rewarding).

In this section, we have delved into the needs of individuals and organizations as both parties attempt to achieve their goals and interests. Rather than viewing direct reports as subject to the influence of supervisors only, we depict this role as embedded in a variety of workplace interactions that demand insight into complex communication processes, including collaboration and handling of contradictory relationships and situations.

In our case study of Suzanne and Nadine’s superior-subordinate communication, we now can see how their exchanges are not simply the result of misunderstandings and unmet expectations, they also demonstrate direct reports’

needs to manage upward, maintain proactive stances toward workplace interactional changes, and develop collaborative relationships. Returning to Suzanne and Nadine, we see that Nadine had a few options that she could have used while dealing with the situation at the pharmacy. Most likely, Nadine knew that Suzanne was younger than Nadine. On taking the position, Nadine could have considered that Suzanne may feel unsure about managing someone older than herself. In her first few days of work, Nadine could have requested a meeting with Suzanne and asked questions about Suzanne's communication preferences so that Suzanne knew that Nadine understood that Suzanne was the supervisor and that Nadine respected her position. In addition, Nadine could have worked harder to form strong alliances with one or two of her other coworkers so that she would not have immediately felt like such an outsider.

While recommendations for supervisors, such as Suzanne's, training in conversational language skills and organizational cultural change are still necessary, we now expand desirable communication training to include strategies for handling collaborative workplace arrangements, forms of interaction that enable mutually influential workplace conversations, and dissent or conflict.

Coworkers

In this section, we explain the nature of the coworker relationship as well as recent communication research that is helpful in understanding how one can effectively manage this most common relationship in organizations. We also present the case of Nancy and Sheila to illustrate some of the major components of the coworker relationship. Finally, we present recent trends in coworker research to supply insight and interventions to prevent and repair problematic communication situations.

Nature of Coworker Relationships

It is difficult to capture all the different elements of coworker relationships because there are many types of coworkers and organizations. Regardless, there are some guiding notions that help individuals better understand and manage these relationships, such as the nonhierarchical nature of coworker relationships, particular relational transitions, expectations for support, and nondifferential treatment.

First, unlike supervisory and subordinate/direct report communication, which, by definition, involves some element of hierarchy, coworker relationships are considered to be equal in status, remuneration, and influence. While research on LMX indicates that equality among coworkers is not necessarily so, the fact that coworkers are structurally on an equivalent footing means that these relationships serve different functions, such as socialization and coalition building. In these cases, coworkers may be formally designated to do on-the-job orientation sessions for newcomers and/or may informally share information and

survival tips even though neither socialization process is part of coworkers' job descriptions. Where coworkers participate in nonstandard work arrangements, such as telework, and in salary situations where hours are billable, there may be tensions between implicit work practices and those behaviors necessary for pay, promotion, or recognition (see Hylmö & Buzzanell, 2002). With regard to coalition building, coworkers may come together to advocate for particular workplace changes or support each others' best interests by covertly resisting what they perceive as unreasonable and unproductive organizational rules. For example, flight attendants at one airline agreed to work around appearance codes and eventually banded together to affect changes in workplace procedures (Murphy, 1998).

Second, relational transitions typically are different for coworkers than for supervisors and direct reports. Sias and Cahill (1998) addressed the multiple transitions that coworker relationships experience over time, such as "coworker/acquaintance-to-friend, friend-to-close-friend, and close friend-to-almost-best friend" (p. 273). This research shows that communication can help take coworker relationships from the basic level of working together to very close, intimate relationships, which are considered important in the lives of human beings.

Third, coworker relationships are ideally characterized by support, such as task-oriented and emotional support. Expectations for task-oriented support include the belief that one's peers or colleagues will instruct newcomers on correct procedures, teach shortcuts around cumbersome rules, and introduce them to key individuals. In situations where there is political infighting, bullying, and other dysfunctional workplace relationships, and (conscious or unconscious) adherence to stereotypes about abilities aligned with coworkers' social identity membership groups (e.g., race), then expectations about task-oriented and other forms of support are violated. Such violations may affect individuals' feelings of well-being and job satisfaction but may also lead to employment termination, less productive work groups, and litigation, such as when coworkers sexually harass each other. In cases of emotional support, Cahill and Sias (1997) found that male and female coworkers experienced this kind of support in different ways. They concluded that although women felt that emotional support was important more than men did, and women often had larger emotional support networks than men, there was no difference in the responses of men and women to their coworkers seeking emotional support. Emotional support is so important that when this support is absent, either through coworker job loss or telecommuting, the individuals who remain in the office may experience profound sadness and engage in grief phases akin to romantic disengagement, death, and other forms of loss (see Hylmö & Buzzanell, 2002).

Finally, as ideas such as leader-member exchange and concertive control have gained popularity, research has developed that addresses how individuals feel when they see their manager treating their coworkers in different

ways. Sias (1996) studied coworker discourse to determine how coworkers talked about this differing treatment. She found that individuals often engage in “bookkeeping” by noting how their manager treats their coworkers versus them and adjusting their behavior accordingly.

In short, coworker relationships and communication differ from those of supervisors and direct reports in a number of ways. In reviewing these differences, the case of Suzanne and Nadine is instructive because it privileged the supervisor-subordinate dyad to the neglect of any discussion about Nadine’s peers. Indeed, had Nadine and her coworkers developed a deepening connection from the initial on-the-job training that Nadine undoubtedly received, they might have been able to engage in sense making to determine what was going wrong with Nadine’s relationship with Suzanne and how best to deal with the situation. Instead, the inevitable loss of Nadine’s self-confidence, contributions to the pharmacy, and the resources associated with the hiring and training of a new employee cannot be recouped.

Next, we would like to present another case study that centers on a coworker relationship in a complex organization. The case of Nancy and Sheila is situated in the event-planning department of a large corporation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Nancy had worked at the company for approximately 30 years. Nancy was over 60 years old and was very proud of her efficiency and hard work in her position. Sheila, a young woman straight out of college, began employment at the corporation in the office next to Nancy. They held the same position and often worked together as administrative assistants on large events. For one particular event, a reception celebrating the new CEO of the company, Nancy was assigned the task of making name tags for every attendee. Sheila was assigned the task of taking reservations for the reception, and thus these coworkers had to work very closely on this event. At one point, Sheila noticed that Nancy was retyping every attendee’s name from a printed spreadsheet to another document that formatted the name tags. Sheila immediately realized that Nancy could save a lot of time by simply merging the spreadsheet into the document, as she had done many times before in her work-study position during college. Sheila went to Nancy and explained that she could save time by using this quick trick. Nancy’s response was a dirty look as she said, “I’ve been doing this for 30 years. You’ve been doing this for 30 days. I think I know the best way to do this. I don’t need your help.”

Despite the fact that this coworker relationship had been amicable, though distant, until this occurrence, Sheila immediately felt very upset. Had she overstepped her boundaries by offering to help? Was Nancy just overreacting? Why did Nancy turn on her so quickly? The lack of emotional support that she felt when Nancy snapped at her made her feel very unsure of herself and unsure of her role in the office. What Sheila neglected to take into account in the situation was that although she and Nancy were

coworkers, Nancy may have felt threatened by Sheila’s college education and technological abilities. Once Sheila reflected on it, she realized that she was often called on to help other coworkers with their computer problems; she was seen as the computer guru of the office. Nancy simply felt threatened by this, particularly because she did not have a college education and because she lacked technological skills and increasingly felt that her lack of those skills made her a target for being laid off. Once Sheila thought through the reasons for her coworker’s reactions, she began to observe why Nancy did her work as she did and asked Nancy questions. She showed Nancy how—step by step—to learn other techniques when the two of them were alone and praised Nancy’s abilities to coworkers and bosses. She also provided short technology sessions to update everyone on techniques and not single out anyone. As we can see in this case study, coworker relationships are often just as complex as supervisor/direct report relationships. Issues such as differences in generational and technological ability, among many other things, can weigh heavily on a coworker relationship.

Recent Research on Coworker Communication

Traditional theories of coworker relationships stress the importance of coworker relationships not affecting productivity, such as the importance of workplace friendships and romantic relationships not adversely affecting work output. Indeed, Fritz’s (2002) analyses of behaviors that contribute to dislike of coworkers indicate that peers’ unwanted intrusion into coworkers’ personal and work lives, self-promotion, and controlling behaviors are some of the behaviors that are associated with negative workplace interactions. Fritz suggests that training in workplace civility and effective communication skills for impression management can enhance coworker relationships.

Moreover, in recent years, the nature, benefits and consequences of coworker relationships have been expanded. As the amount of paid work has increased and the scheduling of work leaves relatively little time for family and friends, research indicates that workers may locate their most meaningful relationships in the workplace rather than in the home or in previous nonwork friendship networks (Hochschild, 1997). The role of multiple network relationships within and outside one’s workplace suggests development of contacts for career pursuits, such as skills enrichment, advancement, and employability security, and for lifelong friendships and mentoring (see Ragins & Kram, 2007). However, issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, and other differences can affect coworkers’ satisfaction with and management of such relationships (Allen, 2003; Buzzanell, 2000; Cahill & Sias, 1997).

In the case study of Nancy and Sheila, we now see that Sheila could have used a more face-saving approach to helping Nancy. The approach she first tried made Nancy feel like the way she was doing her work was wrong,

which made her feel that Sheila was encroaching on her responsibilities. In the same way that individuals sometimes feel defensive when a coworker meddles in their personal life, it is important to be vigilant as coworkers try to help each other improve at specific work functions. Also, both Nancy and Sheila could have tried to understand the situation from the other's perspective and see that Sheila really did mean well and that Nancy really did just feel threatened by Sheila's insistence that her way was better. Sheila should try to approach the coworker relationships as collaborations. This is important for her current employment situation and also for developing a network of contacts that can assist her throughout her career. While some might say that Sheila should conduct a cost-benefit analysis and stop trying to help Nancy if her efforts don't seem to change the situation, a longer-term view might prompt Sheila to maintain a pleasant and constructive approach to Nancy.

As in this case study, greater awareness of, dialogue about, and commitment to creating workplaces in which participation of all coworkers, particularly those who view themselves or others as different on salient dimensions (e.g., professional or educational background, nationality, ethnic origins), can encourage greater quality of life, workplace contributions, and mutual growth (Buzzanell, Meisenbach, & Remke, in press). For instance, peers' unwillingness to continue meetings if a coworker needs to leave for personal or family reasons indicates recognition of others' value and contributions to projects. Similarly, attention to, analysis of, and replication of behaviors that build the kind of workplace in which individuals want to work and in which everyone experiences fair treatment can be encouraged through coworker communication processes.

Conclusion

Although we have separated the different workplace roles to highlight communication processes and strategies, communicating as supervisor, direct report, and coworker involves many more commonalities than differences. All are required to work toward the organizational goal as well as their own individual goals. All rely on effective communication to do their jobs, sustain their employability, build satisfying relationships, enhance their chances of promotion within their current and future organizations, and create developmental networks within and beyond their current workplace. Communication research provides insight not only into workplace relationships considered unsatisfactory and even destructive but also into specific organizational procedures and relational practices that can repair and enhance supervisory, reporting, and peer relationships. (For more extended treatment of these communication issues, see Sias, 2008.) Construction of positive relationships is increasingly

essential for workplace productivity as well as the quality of work and home life, the meaningfulness of work, and collaboration transnationally.

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SOCIAL GROUPS, WORKGROUPS, AND TEAMS

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The kinds of issues and problems we face as a society have become increasingly complex. Issues and problems such as health care, global warming, terrorism, energy, education, and economic innovation cannot be addressed by the actions of a single individual; rather, they require the coordinated action of people working together to craft plans and take action when working through these complex concerns. There is a growing recognition that collaborative effort is required to manage these kinds of issues as the depth and breadth of knowledge required to handle them far exceeds the capacity of a single individual.

The past 25 years has witnessed a dramatic growth in the use of groups, teams, and collaboration to address pressing personal, organizational, and social problems. *Collaboration* may be defined as “people with different views and perspectives coming together, putting aside their narrow self-interests, and discussing issues openly and supportively in an attempt to solve a larger problem or achieve a broader goal” (LaFasto & Larson, 2001, p. xvii). Persons participate in a variety of support groups for personal and professional development, such as groups that help manage addictions (e.g., eating disorders, substance abuse, and gambling); groups that manage issues associated with grief and bereavement due to the death or suicide of a child, parent, or friend; or groups that develop a person’s skills and abilities (e.g., theatrical groups, professional networks, and educational groups). Organizations such as Apple and Facebook routinely use teams to develop new products and services, including the iPhone

and social-networking sites. Nonprofit and governmental agencies employ teams to work with issues regarding poverty, drug abuse, affordable housing, and the location of landfills and hazardous waste facilities. Collaboration within groups and teams has become critical as groups typically make better decisions than do individuals; the wealth of knowledge and insight is greater within groups as many individuals bring their unique backgrounds and knowledge to the task at hand.

How can group members create and sustain effective collaboration? The short answer to this question is “Communication,” but this answer is deceptively simple as it leaves open what kinds of communication are needed and what counts as high-quality communication. This chapter focuses on the kinds of communication that are required to foster high-quality collaboration within groups. I begin by exploring what counts as a group and how its unique qualities may drive the kinds of communication that are required.

The Embeddedness of Groups

A *small group* has typically been defined as three or more people who interact with one another toward the accomplishment of a shared goal and who perceive themselves as members of a particular group. This definition carries with it three important assumptions. First, the lower bound for a small group is set at three people, but no upper bound is set. Most definitions of small groups use three as a lower

bound because three individuals allow for the possibility of coalitions to emerge where two people can form an alliance against one person. The upper bound for a small group is typically determined by the degree to which people perceive themselves as part of a group or the degree to which people carry with them an impression of other group members. Second, small groups emphasize interaction. This is what a communication approach to the study of small groups brings to the table—a focus on the pattern of signs, symbols, and messages that group members use to accomplish their task. Third, small-group members have behavioral and goal interdependence. *Behavioral interdependence* refers to the way a group member's messages affect and are affected by other group members' messages. *Goal interdependence* refers to the primary goal that group members share. For example, the members of local community boards of directors for organizations such as the Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or the American Cancer Association all share an interest in promoting their respective organization.

A recent approach to the study of small groups has emphasized the importance of recognizing that groups exist in a flow of preexisting understandings and structures that influences how the group and its members coordinate activities. This is so even for zero-history groups—groups of individuals who did not know each other previously; for example, trial jury members are influenced by their preconceptions of what it means to serve on a jury (Sunwolf & Seibold, 1998). The importance of recognizing that groups are embedded in context has been called the *bona fide group perspective* (Stohl & Putnam, 2003). There are at least three important ways in which we can say that groups are embedded within context.

1. *Group and team members bring their own distinct personal, professional, and cultural backgrounds to their present group experience.* Individuals do not enter groups *tabula rasa*, as blank slates. They do not check their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes at the door and start their group experience from scratch. Rather, they base their interactions, in part, on their identity and their previous experiences with groups. For example, individuals from collectivist cultures that emphasize consensus and egalitarian relationships tend to perceive consensus decision making and shared leadership as important to high-quality group experiences. Similarly, if individuals have a high degree of group hate—an intense dislike for participating in groups, they will be less likely to actively participate in groups and take leadership positions.

The way the personal experiences of individuals enter into group life has recently been talked about in terms of diversity. Diversity within small groups has been conceptualized in terms of a variety of general social characteristics (e.g., national identity, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and values) as well as organizational characteristics (e.g., membership within a particular department

or division, length of tenure within an organization, and technical expertise). Sometimes *fault lines* or coalitions or subgroups may emerge within groups and teams due to these demographic characteristics and may frustrate collaboration. These fault lines may hurt the ability of the group members to collaborate with one another and lead to conflict. Group members may hold radically different assumptions about the best way to approach the task given their unique set of background experiences.

Yet diversity may be more profitably viewed as a resource, not a constraint. Groups that are more diverse tend to make better decisions and are more creative. The challenge for groups and teams, then, is how to effectively manage fault lines within groups. Effective leadership includes anticipating the emergence of fault lines, using task-oriented behavior when initially conducting the group, and knowing when to make the shift toward relationship-oriented leadership (Gratton, Voigt, & Erickson, 2007).

2. *Groups exist in time.* Time is an important marker for a group's activities (Arrow, Henry, Poole, Wheelan, & Moreland, 2005). Group life does not exist in a vacuum; it exists within a particular time period, and this time period is associated with particular cultural ideas that people bring to the group experience that influences how they act toward each other. It also includes the agreements they negotiate throughout their group experience that influence how they respond to the task.

As I have already highlighted, the cultural ideas people hold about groups and teams influence how they make sense of and act in groups. For example, organizations have always used groups to perform tasks. Manufacturing organizations in the early 1900s used groups of individuals to manufacture various goods and products. In fact, Ford Motor Company pioneered the use of the assembly line to manufacture cars. Workers on the assembly line met the definition of a group as interdependent people organized to accomplish a shared goal. However, the group was organized according to values associated with scientific and classical management (see Chapter 37, this volume). The group was organized hierarchically with a single manager guiding the employees making up the group. Decision making was centralized with the manager, not the group as a whole, and communication, in the form of directives, flowed from the manager downward to the employees. The employees had little voice in the way their work was to be organized.

Compare the early-19th-century notion of groups with the 21st-century notion of teams. Groups have become teams within contemporary organizational life, which emphasizes all team members working together collaboratively and sharing decision making. James Barker (1999) conducted an important study in the creation and maintenance of self-directed or self-managed work teams within a high-tech computer-manufacturing organization. Self-managed work teams are groups of individuals who engage

in collective decision making about the best way to organize their work. The structure based on groups in the workplace has been complemented, and sometimes supplanted, with a structure that shifts the decision making from the hierarchically superior manager to the collective team. The historical and cultural time period of the group informs people's understandings and expectations of group life, and an appreciation of a group's experience must take the cultural notions associated with group life at a particular moment in history into consideration.

Groups and teams exist over time and, as part of their history, create understandings and agreements about the way they will engage with the group task and manage their relationships with each other. Most models of group and team development assume that groups start with an orientation phase where members orient themselves to the parameters of the work they are to accomplish and to each other. For example, Tuckman and Jensen (1977) offer a classic model of group development. In their model, groups start with a phase called *joining*, where group members get to know each other and determine the scope of their work. This is usually followed by a phase called *storming*, where group members may disagree over the nature of the task, which member is to act in what role, and what procedures should be used to perform the task. Ultimately, groups move from storming to *norming* and then onto *performing*. During the norming phase, group members come to agreement on the rules they will follow as they perform their task and what tasks and values are important. This agreement then allows them to perform or to accomplish their task.

The challenge for groups is to change or alter the habitual patterns they have created during the norming and performing stages. Once norms have been set, they are very difficult to change unless the group has some type of pressure or crisis that moves it to change. For example, a common pattern that has emerged across groups is that groups will maintain their normative structure until about halfway through the life of the group. Whether the group is working on a project that only lasts a few months or will last years, around the midpoint of the life of the group, group members experience pressure to re-examine their ways of working and the assumptions they make (Gersick, 1989). They then reset their strategies and operating norms and work differently as they continue to engage their task.

The notion of time also suggests that group members need to pay attention to the location of the group in time. This means paying attention to the societal, organizational, and group stories that might influence how group members should act in groups as well as the informal norms that the group has created among its members.

3. *Groups and teams are embedded in networks of other groups and teams.* To extend John Donne, no group or team is an island. Groups are embedded within networks of other groups and teams. At an individual level, the connectedness

may include overlapping group and team memberships and relationships among group and team members in other contexts. For example, consider an individual who simultaneously is a member of Lambda Pi Eta, a communication honor society, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa, a national undergraduate honor society. We could say that there is a connection between these two groups as one individual has membership in both. Similarly, we could say that when individuals who belong to separate groups interact with members of other groups, these groups are connected as well. When a member of Lambda Pi Eta interacts with members of other honor societies on campus, each becomes aware of the other groups and the possible connections they may have with one another.

At a group level, groups and teams are also connected to each other given their unique function or purpose. For example, in university settings, the information technology group is always connected to the registrar's office—the office that records grades. For the registrar to do his or her job well, the technology must be configured in a way that permits instructors and teachers to record their final grades in a secure environment, and this requires coordinating with the information technology department. Many tasks in organizations require coordination among groups. Consider the process of digital filmmaking. Digital filmmakers, such as Pixar, the company that has produced movies including *Toy Story* and *Finding Nemo*, have groups of animators, software engineers, marketers, and writers who must coordinate their activities to produce and market a film.

The notion of embeddedness highlights the importance of groups and group members learning to manage boundaries. At an individual level, group members need to learn how to manage potentially conflicting loyalties among the multiple groups in which they participate. Consider what happens when a person of color participates on a task force designed to create a diverse working environment. The task force does something objectionable to the racial community of which the individual is a member. Should such individuals resign from the task force to affirm their identity with their racial group, do they affirm the work of the task force, or do they find a way to manage the competing obligations to the two groups?

In terms of groups' connections with other groups, the key issue is how loosely or tightly connected the group is to other groups. The looser the connection, the level of influence that one group has on another is relatively weaker. For example, one of the chief frustrations of attempting to dismantle terrorist organizations, such as al-Qaeda, are that the individual terrorist cells are loosely coupled. While the activities of each cell share a common goal, the elimination of one cell has minimal impact on the activity of another cell. On the other hand, if groups are tightly connected, the actions taken by one group can directly influence the other. For example, action taken by the United Way regarding funding can directly influence local arts groups, if the United Way is their primary source

of income. This suggests that groups need to learn how to manage their boundaries by probing the environment to see how other groups could affect their behavior, forging key agreements with those other groups, placing members of their group with other groups to act as liaisons or boundary spanners, and developing the strength of the existing tie (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992).

Group Communication Activities

The idea of embeddedness suggests that we act from context and into context. The actions we take as we engage with the group are informed by the context of our previous experiences, the group's history, and the larger cultural stories about what it means to participate in groups. However, our actions are not totally constrained by the context; we can make wise choices about how we want to change our group and team and create a different context, which we will have to respond to in the future. For example, the leading group at Duke Energy, a South-Midwest utility company, wants to change the context in which the company exists (Pierce, 2008). Historically, utility and energy companies have been based on treating energy as a commodity with the idea that the more electricity you sell, the more money you make. Duke Energy is considering ways to "de-carbonize" their supply, to use more solar and wind power, and to shift to a "save-a-watt" plan. They would still make money from selling energy, but their new plan would also allow them to make money by selling and installing energy-saving features, such as computer monitors to cycle air conditioners on and off. Rather than be constrained by the context of the "commodity model," the leading group is trying to take actions that will reconceptualize how the organization will be in the future, and this re-visioning of the organization will serve as a context for groups to respond to in the future.

What this suggests is that we need to foster communication activities that help us make sense of context and make wise choices about how we want our group to work in the future. These four important communication activities are (1) information management, (2) decision making, (3) learning, and (4) relating.

Information Management

Information is the lifeblood of small groups. Useful and timely information is critical for small groups and teams to make smart choices about how to organize their activities and execute their tasks. First, groups need to have access to and be able to disseminate information quickly. Integrated information databases and file-sharing systems as well as communication technologies such as telephony or e-mail are important not only to capture needed information about the group and its environment but also to make it widely available to other group members.

Second, groups need to develop systems for monitoring their environments. While it is important to have the needed systems and procedures in place for collecting and disseminating information, the burning issue is *what kinds* of information need to be collected in the first place. Richard Hackman (2002) has argued that there are five important conditions that lead to group or team effectiveness:

1. Clear engaging direction
2. Facilitative group structure
3. Supportive organizational context
4. Available expert coaching
5. Adequate material resources

Developing successful teams, therefore, means that team members need to construct patterns of communication that help them monitor these key functions both in their diagnosis of the group's current state of affairs and in their forecast of what the group's future needs may be.

These key functions focus attention on both the internal mechanics of group members as well as their larger environment. Take, as an example, the board of directors for a community theater company. The managing director would need to ask questions that focus on the internal dynamics of the board of directors, such as "Do we have a clear direction?" (Function #1) and "Does our group structure align with the work we need to accomplish?" (Function #2). If the board's passion for their work is not high and the group structures slow down or inhibit work on their task, then the board will have difficulty directing its energy to do the work. The managing director would also need to pay attention to the board's larger group environment by asking questions such as "How supportive are our external stakeholders to the theatre?" (Function #3), "Do we have or need expert coaching to help us work through our challenges?" (Function #4), and "Are the needed material resources available to do our work?" The managing director could also offer opinions on the current state of the group or make proposals for what the group may need in the future, such as offering a reflection on the group's current level of material resources or forecasting what the group might need in the future.

Decision Making

One primary activity for any group is making decisions. Groups make a variety of practical decisions regarding their experience, such as when to meet and how often, as well as instrumental decisions, such as determining what their task is and how they would know if they had completed their task and deciding on evaluation criteria for determining how well they have performed on their task.

Making good decisions depends on performing certain communication functions during discussion:

1. *Developing an understanding of the problem*, including talking about the nature of the problem, its scope, its symptoms, and its possible causes
2. *Identifying criteria for solving the problem*, including discussing what standards must be met that would qualify a proposed solution or decision as “good” or “high quality”
3. *Generating a range of realistic alternatives* by brainstorming a variety of possible solutions to a problem that cover the range of acceptable choices
4. *Evaluating the negative and positive consequences associated with particular alternatives*: People are particularly good at identifying the positive consequences or benefits of particular alternative solutions. However, group members typically underestimate the risks or downsides associated with decisions. Good decision making evolves a balanced, accurate, and thorough examination of the benefits and risks associated with various decision alternatives (Hollingshead et al., 2004)

The above has been called a *functional approach* to group decision making. It involves group members either asking questions or offering comments and reflections regarding the problem, evaluative criteria, possible solutions, and solution evaluation.

To illustrate the importance of these communication functions, assume that you are a member of a city task force that has been assigned to address the “traffic congestion problem” the city faces. The first task for the group is to define the problem. At first glance, you might say that the problem is “traffic congestion,” which you interpret as too many cars for the existing roadways. On the other hand, what changes if you define the problem as “the need for environmentally sustainable public transportation”? Framing the problem as “traffic congestion” foregrounds the importance of building new roads to address the bottlenecks created by too many cars. However, framing the problem in terms of “environmentally sustainable public transportation” foregrounds two different pieces to the puzzle: the importance of environmental sustainability and the role of public transportation, such as light rail systems, subways, buses, and carpooling. Framing the problem or issue is not simple, and it becomes important to play with different ways to frame the situation and the problem because different problem frames move you to see situations in different ways.

The way you initially frame problems will inform how you determine what counts as appropriate criteria for making decisions. For example, there are several criteria that you could use to evaluate possible traffic plans, including cost, efficiency, environmental impact, public satisfaction, and political support. Framing the problem as

“traffic congestion” highlights that a good solution should decrease the average trip time and number of traffic slow-downs. The frame of “environmentally sustainable public transportation” highlights solution criteria that include minimizing the environmental impact and creating a plan that provides public transportation alternatives to citizens. Both frames may use political criteria to assess the viability of plans. What will the local politicians be willing to pay for? Would citizens be willing to pay for toll roads to ease traffic congestion? Would politicians and citizens be willing to invest in different public transportation alternatives, particularly in the United States, which is dominated by a car culture? Effective decision making requires groups and teams to articulate the criteria they will use to assess various decision proposals.

Finally, the group will need to generate different alternatives and assess their possible consequences. Groups may need to brainstorm and assess different ideas according to time (What solutions would be possible and viable in the short term? The long term?), stakeholder (What solutions would be possible and viable from the perspective of car owners? Politicians? Environment activists?), and costs and benefits (What are the solution’s relative costs and benefits?).

Learning

Many groups and teams are specifically designed to enhance the learning of their members. Sometimes, *skills training groups* are created by nonprofit community organizations to enhance a person’s basic life skills, such as assertiveness, conflict management, financial management, parenting, and job competencies. *Learning groups* are frequently used by schools and universities to enhance the comprehension and mastery of content by having students work in small groups. Work teams frequently engage in *team development and training* to ensure that they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet their performance goals. Such activities are designed to help team members develop shared mental models, mutual trust, and a team orientation and learn to monitor their performance (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Whether group members are learning life skills, mastering conceptual material from their classes, or sorting out what they need to know to perform well on their team, the kind of communication that is needed to foster learning depends on whether people simply need to learn and follow particular rules and operating procedures that inform the group’s activities or whether they need to make wise and informed choices about how the group is to operate and what needs to happen for it to move forward.

Sometimes people simply need to learn and master the rules that guide and inform the group’s activity. For example, what does an individual need to know to participate in a support group such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)? To fit in and participate in AA, an individual needs to know the

rules that guide the way AA meetings are structured, such as how to introduce oneself to the group, vocalize a concern, and give support to others. As is the case with AA, the goals are very clear and the steps that are involved to achieve them explicit. Senior participants who have a longer affiliation with the organization, such as AA sponsors, understand the rules that govern the group and are able to tell newcomers what those rules are and help them follow them. Learning that emphasizes mastering the rules and following them has been called first-order learning (Bateson, 1972). First-order learning occurs not only in groups such as AA but in a variety of other kinds of groups as well.

If the nature of the group's task is fixed and highly structured and all that is required is first-order learning, the type of group communication that is needed is typically informative and persuasive. Some member or members in the group simply need to inform others what the goal is and what steps need to be taken to accomplish the goal, and persuade them to comply with the rules. For example, if a patient goes to a doctor with a broken bone, the goal and the way to achieve the goal are very clear—the bone must be set using a hard or soft cast or a splint. Given that the doctor is presumed to have more expertise than does the patient, communication tends to be more one way, with the doctor informing the patient as to what needs to be accomplished. In groups, there may be certain protocols and procedures that are set and not open to discussion, and group members need to be informed of their existence and persuaded to follow them. In such instances, appropriate and effective communication that fosters learning needs to be clear and persuasive.

On the other hand, many times the group's goals and purposes are unclear, and the ways the group can accomplish them are ill-defined. For example, say a patient is diagnosed with terminal cancer by a doctor. What is the goal or task that the doctor and patient need to pursue? How do they accomplish it? There are numerous things a doctor and a patient could discuss to help the patient move forward, such as how to die with dignity, how to manage one's relationships with family and friends, the role of hospice in medical care, and managing one's finances. What makes this kind of learning conversation unique is that each party brings a different expertise to the conversation and the focus of the conversation needs to be jointly determined. The communication that is required in such an instance must include finding a way to pool the mutual expertise that each brings to the conversation and jointly determining the direction and focus of the conversation. Such a conversation may be termed dialogue.

Dialogue can be viewed as a form of communication that allows people to think collectively and examine each other's assumptions about situations. Dialogue involves the following kinds of activities:

- Seeing the whole among the parts
- Seeing the connections between the parts

- Inquiring into assumptions
- Learning through inquiry and disclosure
- Creating shared meaning among many people (Barge, 2002, p. 168)

Dialogue is about “seeing the big picture,” how things connect with each other, and taking into account the assumptions, values, and beliefs that lead people to make sense of situations in particular ways and then act.

Dialogue involves keeping advocacy and inquiry in a constructive tension with each other. In dialogue, we learn about each other's positions through the processes of inquiry and disclosure. We try to remain open to each other's positions and beliefs and try to learn as much as we can about them. This does not mean that we give up our own positions and interests. Rather, we also have a responsibility to explain our views in ways that help others make sense of our positions and to advocate our position. By balancing inquiry with advocacy, being open to the views of others while advocating our own positions, and by respecting the perspectives of others while not taking them (or ourselves) too seriously, we hope to build the group's resources for understanding the situation and creating new possible actions.

This form of communication called dialogue can be created and sustained in groups through a variety of methods. Perhaps one of the most important ways for fostering dialogue is the creation of discussion rules. Group and team meetings frequently use discussion rules to make sure that all opinions and perspectives are heard in a safe and respectful manner. Discussion rules that foster dialogue focus on creating a safe space for all group members to vocalize their opinions and to inquire into them deeply. Examples of discussion rules that may foster dialogue include the following:

- Asking questions is as important as making statements.
- Ask curious questions.
- Respect others' opinions even if they are different from your own.
- Share talk time.

Such ground rules help balance people's levels of advocacy and inquiry and help them inquire into the positions of others with a respect for one another. A second way that we can foster dialogue is to invite patterns of communication that emphasize affirmation. It is through the process of affirmation and the role that it plays in fostering high-quality relationships that learning can occur.

Relating

Effective relationships are built on the power of affirmative communication. When we affirm something about another person, we recognize the value of that person's ideas, values, actions, or beliefs. We convey to the other

person that who they are, what they have said, or what they have done has value for us and is appreciated. Affirmative forms of communication simultaneously affirm our own sense of self and self-esteem as well as the other person's. When we feel that we are affirmed, we feel closer to the other members of the group and have a stronger sense of identity with the group.

There are several different communication practices that emphasize the power of communication and its ability to construct high-quality relationships. A classic essay by Jack Gibb (1961) argued that communication that emphasizes empathy, spontaneity, provisionalism, equality, description, and problem orientation can create a supportive group environment. Supportive communication invites people to participate in the group and to feel more a part of the group. This early finding regarding the power of affirmation can also be seen in more recent work on group conflict management. Integrative styles of conflict management emphasize the importance of creating win-win outcomes where both parties are satisfied. These styles involve an affirmative approach that facilitates the flow of communication among parties, by acknowledging that they have heard the other person and reflecting statements that recognize the emotions of the other person; attempts to understand the needs and desires of the other; inquiries into the commonalities that bring the two parties together, as opposed to the differences that separate them; and invents options from which both can benefit. Integrative styles of conflict management in groups have been demonstrated to foster higher-quality decision making.

When we use communication that is affirmative (i.e., that tries to find ways to integrate the needs and desires of the other person with our own) and supportive, we are likely to not only develop better working relationships with one another but also make better decisions. In some ways, this is intuitively true, as affirmative styles of communication create a supportive group environment where individuals are willing to share information and challenge one another's ideas. When we are able to pool our knowledge of the area and subject our ideas to a rigorous test, it is not surprising that we will be more likely to accomplish the important decision-making prerequisites.

What goes unnoticed many times, however, is the close connection between affirmation and challenge. One of the reasons why affirmation facilitates decision making and learning is that it creates the space for people to challenge each other regarding their thinking. If people are already defensive, challenging their thinking can be viewed as a personal attack or as a negative evaluation, which moves them to respond in kind. As a result, people are not able to share information and reason together. However, if they feel that they are being affirmed, they feel supported, and they have the space to be challenged and to grow and develop. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) refers to this as "flow," where there is a balance between support and challenge. People feel that they have the needed support to do their

job and work and at the same time are stimulated through challenge to grow and develop. For example, members of championship sports teams typically talk about the tight bonds they have with their teammates and also how their teammates challenged them to become better. They feel simultaneously supported and challenged in their relationships with their team.

Creating positive relationships that foster learning within groups requires keeping a balance between affirmation and challenge. Too much affirmation and not enough challenge don't generate learning, because people feel that their current way of relating to one another and the group is fine. Too much challenge and too little affirmation, and people feel defensive and are not open to learning. Keeping the tension between affirmation and challenge is key to developing healthy relationships and fostering learning.

Discussion

Groups and teams play an important role in our personal, social, and professional lives. The challenge that group and team members face is to create groups that allow them to fulfill their individual as well as the group's or team's needs, goals, and desires. This means that group members must recognize that their group experience is complex because it is embedded in a set of ongoing identities and relationships. Group members bring their life experience, which informs their participation in the group. Groups also exist in specific cultural times that carry with them expectations for what it means to belong to and participate in a group. Groups are connected to other groups and teams, which means that they must address and respond to the expectations that these groups and teams have for the group.

Kurt Lewin once said that there is nothing as practical as a good theory, which meant that the theories and ideas about how communication works in groups and teams should have practical implications. Theories and ideas should help us make judgments about how well the group is doing and what kinds of messages we may need to perform to make the experience better. So how can the ideas associated with embeddedness and the communication activities of information management, decision making, learning, and relating help us recognize how well a group is working and what needs to be done when the group is not working well?

First, the idea of embeddedness suggests that groups are performing well when they manage their relationships with group members, as well as individuals and other groups external to the group, in ways that allow them to accomplish their task. Simply put, effective groups and teams create productive working relationships. For example, when people feel that they are being supported by other group members, they are more motivated to share

information openly and to participate in the activities of information management, which, in turn, allow them to make better decisions. They are more relaxed and open to learning. Similarly, effective groups are able to identify key external stakeholders outside the group—important individuals and groups—who can influence their ability to perform the task. When groups have cultivated strong working relationships with key stakeholders, they are more likely to acquire the needed information and resources that allow them to do their job.

Judging your group's level of performance involves asking two kinds of questions. As you participate in a group or team, it is certainly important to ask *task-oriented questions*: What is our task? What are the standards we can use to assess our performance? How well are we performing our task? Such questions generate important information about your group's level of performance and standards for its assessment. But if we take seriously the idea that the quality of relationships directly influences our ability to perform our task, we also need to be asking a set of *questions about our relationships*: Do we have supportive working relationships within our group? Who are the important stakeholders—either individuals or groups—outside our group that can influence our ability to perform our task? What is the quality of relationship we have with these external stakeholders? The challenge is to develop a set of internal and external working relationships that allow the group to coordinate its activity and to perform its task.

Second, the idea of embeddedness and the communication activities of information management, decision making, learning, and relating provides us with a set of tools for making choices about how to intervene when our group is not performing at a high level. Is the group having difficulty performing its task because it does not have access to relevant information in a timely fashion? If so, group members need to engage in communication that helps them acquire the needed information and build useful information systems. Is the group having difficulty because it does not know how to transform the information into well-thought-out decisions or has framed the problem in a poor way? If so, group members can use ideas from the functional approach to determine what decision-making function needs to be improved and perform more communication that addresses that function. Is the group having difficulty clarifying the task and identifying appropriate means for accomplishing the task? If so, the group may need to engage in dialogue—listening and asking questions—in order to foster learning. Is the group having difficulty because it does not use supportive and affirmative types of communication? If so, group members may need to learn how to be spontaneous, empathetic, and provisional in their communication.

Groups are interconnected sets of people and communication activities. Therefore, as you think about your group experience, it is important to make sure that the communication activities of information management, decision

making, learning, and relating align in a synergistic way so that they reinforce each other. It makes little sense to say that a group is effective if it has good decision-making processes but is poor at information management. Bad or limited information will lead inevitably to poor decisions. It is difficult to engage in dialogue if people do not trust each other or dislike one another because they will not be able to openly express their ideas and be genuinely curious about another group member's thinking. What this means is that you need to assess not only the quality of individual communication activities, such as information management, but also how these individual communication activities reinforce and support each other.

Communication plays an important role in managing the challenges and opportunities arising from embeddedness. When group members pay attention to the way they manage information, make decisions, learn, and construct relationships, they will be better able to manage the tasks their group must perform. While one can never identify the exact set of causal factors that will perfectly predict a group's experience, it is more likely that your group experience will be positive when the individual activities of information management, decision making, learning, and relating are performed competently and in such a way that they mutually reinforce each other.

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STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

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One of the most prominent relationships you have with others is the relationship you develop with those who teach you new concepts and skills. From your earliest teachers—your parents—to your professors in college, the relationship between teachers and students is one of the most pervasive in our lives. This chapter is about the role and function of communication between teachers and students. We'll discuss not only how teachers affect students and their learning through communication but also how students affect teachers and their teaching.

Instructional communication is the label researchers have given to the formal study of communication between teachers and students. Specifically, instructional communication is the process by which teachers and students stimulate meanings in the minds of each other using verbal and nonverbal messages. This definition is applicable not only in traditional primary, secondary, and higher education contexts (McCroskey, 1968), but also in nontraditional education contexts, such as corporate training and community education programs (Beebe, Mottet, & Roach, 2004). In emphasizing the role of communication in the teaching and learning process, the instructional communication researchers Hurt, Scott, and McCroskey (1978) noted, "Communication is the crucial link between a knowledgeable teacher and a learning student" (p. 3). Teaching and learning cannot occur without communication.

Rhetorical and Relational Approaches to Instructional Communication

The communication discipline has two rich traditions that influence how communication specialists study communication between teachers and students. We'll first discuss the *rhetorical* tradition and then the *relational* tradition. Both of these traditions have influenced the study of instructional communication (Mottet, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2006).

The Rhetorical Approach to Instructional Communication

From a *rhetorical* perspective, teachers use verbal and nonverbal messages with the intent to influence or persuade students. To persuade is to develop messages that change or reinforce attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors. As noted by McCroskey and Richmond (1996), "The function of rhetorical communication is to get others to do what you want or need them to do and/or think the way you want or need them to think—to persuade them" (p. 234).

The rhetorical function of communication, which draws on classical rhetoric with roots in the 4th century BCE, is source centered, or teacher centered. The focus is on how the source of the message intentionally attempts to achieve

a specific outcome. In the case of teachers communicating with students, the desired outcome is learning.

Aristotle's (1991) *The Art of Rhetoric*, written in 333 BCE, continues to be one of communication studies' most influential works and is considered by many communication educators to be the first "textbook" in public speaking. To Aristotle, there are three factors that enhance a person's ability to persuade: (1) *ethos* (the personal character of the speaker), (2) *pathos* (the use of emotion), and (3) *logos* (the logical, rational nature of the message). If teachers are to be successful in their attempts to communicate source-centered meaning to their students, students must first perceive them to be credible or believable (*ethos*). Teachers must also help students learn by using verbal and nonverbal messages that stimulate students' affective or emotional responses (*pathos*). Various instructional message variables that focus primarily on nonverbal messages have been found to influence students' emotions. Finally, teachers must present logical, rational messages using appropriate evidence and reasoning (*logos*).

The rhetorical approach to instructional communication assumes a "process-product" view of teacher and student communication. Researchers using the process-product paradigm study the teaching and learning *process* (including the messages teachers and students use to influence each other) and then measure the *product* of learning. The learning product includes how much students learned, as reflected in test scores, students' own perceptions of how much they learned, as well as students' affective response to the learning process.

The Relational Approach to Instructional Communication

In addition to the rhetorical perspective, a second communication perspective examines instructional communication as a *relational* process in which both teachers and students mutually create and use verbal and nonverbal messages to establish a relationship with one other. A relationship is an ongoing connection made with another person through communication (Beebe, Beebe, & Redmond, 2008). From a relational perspective, rather than focusing exclusively on message content and behavioral outcomes, teachers and students are concerned with the emotions and feelings that are a part of the teaching and learning process. The relational perspective of communication, with its emphasis on affective or emotional responses, draws on contemporary models of communication in which meaning is mutually created and shared between individuals. An additional emphasis of the relational approach to instructional communication is a focus on both teacher and student perceptions of well-being. In essence, the relational approach focuses on how teachers and students perceive and affectively respond to each other, which influences teachers' motivation to teach

(Mottet, Beebe, Raffeld, & Medlock, 2004) and students' motivation to learn (Ellis, 2000, 2004).

A major emphasis of relational communication research is on teachers' and students' use and interpretation of nonverbal messages. Nonverbal messages are those in which behavior, other than written or spoken language, creates meaning for someone (Beebe, Beebe, & Redmond, 2008). Nonverbal cues such as eye contact, posture, facial expressions, and gestures stimulate the majority of the emotional or social meaning in messages (Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1996; Mehrabian, 1972). Teachers who are nonverbally expressive or immediate (by establishing eye contact, smiling, using gestures, and moving closer to students) in the classroom positively influence students' liking for teachers (Frymier, 1994), motivation to learn (Richmond, 1990), and perceived learning (McCroskey & Richmond, 1992).

Although we have compared and contrasted the rhetorical and relational approaches to communication, we don't suggest that these two traditions are polar opposites. Both of these perspectives simply reflect different emphases of the communication process that are evident in teacher and student communication *at the same time*. To quote Aristotle's (1991) opening sentence in *The Art of Rhetoric*, "Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic." Rhetorical communication is the counterpart of relational communication. They are the two sides of a coin. Both perspectives have the same goal—to improve the quality and effectiveness of communication. In the instructional context, the goal is to facilitate learning. The rhetorical communication approach is more teacher directed in that the teacher traditionally determines classroom communication channels (by determining who talks and who listens) and outcomes (what the assignments are and what is tested). The relational approach to teacher-student communication is more collaborative: Both teachers and students are involved in creating meaning and making sense out of the communication messages that occur during learning.

Theories About Teacher and Student Communication

According to Kerlinger (1986), a theory is a set of interrelated concepts, definitions, and propositions that presents a systematic view of the world. Theories help us explain the world we experience and also assist us in making predictions about what will happen in the future. Theories help us have greater control of our lives because we have a better sense of why things may happen as they do. In addition, a theory helps us organize our experiences into categories (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970). Rather than relying exclusively on theories from other disciplines such as education, psychology, or sociology, instructional communication researchers draw on rhetorical and relational communication theories to explain and predict what makes teaching and learning effective.

As an area of academic study, instructional communication was first developed in the early 1970s, although the origins of investigating how teachers and students communicate extend back as long as there have been teachers and students. Each decade since 1972, when the International Communication Association formed the Instructional Development Division, an article has been published that reviews and summarizes the status of instructional communication theory and research. In 1977, Scott and Wheelless's *Communication Yearbook* article, titled "Instructional Communication Theory and Research: An Overview," suggested that instructional communication theory and research were not yet clearly defined. Despite the challenge of identifying specific instructional communication theories, Scott and Wheelless reviewed various programs of research that they classified as falling into one of the following six research domains: (1) teachers as sources and receivers, (2) students as sources and receivers, (3) message variables, (4) learning strategies, (5) media, and (6) feedback and reinforcement.

Seven years later, Staton-Spicer and Wulff's (1984) *Communication Education* article, titled "Research in Communication and Instruction: Categorization and Synthesis," developed a slightly different structure to help instructional communication scholars organize instructional communication theory and research. Reviewing research from 1974 to 1982, Staton-Spicer and Wulff's analysis of theory and research in instructional communication resulted in the following six categories, which are slightly different from those identified in the earlier Scott and Wheelless (1977) review: (1) teacher characteristics, (2) student characteristics, (3) teaching strategies, (4) speech criticism and student evaluation, (5) speech content, and (6) speech communication programs. To develop more useful instructional communication theories, Staton-Spicer and Wulff (1984) suggested that research efforts be more integrated, rather than focusing on unrelated, individual research variables. They further suggested that the various research studies that investigated instructional communication lacked a coherent theory, which would help researchers make more general explanations and predictions about teacher and student communication.

In 2001, Waldeck, Kearney, and Plax's *Communication Yearbook* article, titled "Instructional and Developmental Communication Theory and Research in the 1990s: Extending the Agenda for the 21st Century," commended instructional communication researchers for demonstrating the central role of communication in effective instruction. Yet, although acknowledging the progress, Waldeck and colleagues (2001) suggested that there were "few examples of theoretically grounded or programmatic research" that appear in the literature (p. 208).

Waldeck and colleagues' (2001) systematic review of the research literature identified 11 categories of theories that had been tested in the instructional context or used to explain the effects and relationships identified in instructional communication research: (1) arousal theory, (2) Keller's

ARCS (attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction) model of instructional design, (3) French and Raven's bases of power, (4) attribution theory, (5) expectancy learning/learned helplessness, (6) arousal valence theory, (7) approach/avoidance, (8) information processing theory, (9) social learning/cognitive theory, (10) cultivation theory, and (11) developmental theories. In the same article, Waldeck and colleagues categorized instructional communication variables and programs of research by identifying the following six categories: (1) student communication, (2) teacher communication, (3) mass media effects on children, (4) pedagogical methods/technology use, (5) classroom management, and (6) teacher-student interaction.

Although each of these three important articles has aided researchers in thinking about instructional communication theory, there is more work to be done to help researchers *develop* instructional communication theories. One limitation that runs across the three summary articles is that each summary of instructional communication theory and research was descriptive rather than prescriptive. By descriptive, we mean that the researchers simply identified key research and theory themes, rather than suggesting or prescribing new theories.

Rather than generating unique instructional communication theories, instructional communication researchers have had a tendency to either test theories from other communication contexts (such as interpersonal communication) or draw on theories from other disciplines (such as psychology) to explain their findings (Waldeck et al., 2001). Instructional communication theory has been especially influenced by interpersonal communication theory and research (McCroskey, 1998).

Instructional Communication Research Methods

For the most part, instructional communication researchers have used quantitative research methods to investigate teacher and student communication and to test instructional communication theory. Quantitative research methods involve testing hypotheses and answering research questions using controlled research experiments, gathering research data through the use of surveys, or interviewing subjects. In an experimental study, one or more research variables are manipulated (such as comparing a teacher using a high level of nonverbal immediacy cues with a teacher who uses few or no nonverbal immediacy cues) and then the effect of use or nonuse of specific behaviors on learning (such as affective or cognitive learning) is measured. Quantitative research methods also include the research technique of asking research subjects questions by using a survey or personal interviews. Subjects could be asked to describe the type of communication their teacher uses and then to answer questions about how much the student perceives that he or she has learned in the class. The

researchers then look for patterns, relationships, or trends between the type of teacher communication behaviors used and perceptions of student learning.

Communication researchers have used a variety of models to examine how teacher and student communication works (or doesn't work) in the classroom. Two of the most common research models are *experimental* and *naturalistic*.

The Experimental Model

The experimental model is often thought of as the most "scientific" and is usually considered the most valid approach to instructional communication research. A well-designed experiment controls and manipulates certain factors in the learning environment that are believed to influence certain instructional outcomes. All other factors in the instructional environment are held constant. For example, if more learning occurred as a result of a teacher using certain communication behaviors that were present in one condition and absent in another condition, then researchers can conclude that these communication behaviors affect student learning. Although this method may seem simple, it's actually quite complex, and researchers are required to follow certain experimental designs and protocols.

One common experimental design used by instructional communication researchers is referred to as the *pretest/posttest* with a control group design. This design includes two groups and is illustrated in the following manner:

G1	01	X	02
G2	01		02

G = Group 0 = Test X = Manipulated
 Communication Behavior

Assume that a researcher is interested in examining the impact that a teacher's use of humor has on students' understanding of a particular concept. Students in G1 are in the treatment group. These students take a pretest (01) so that the researcher can measure how much they know about the concept. Then, they listen to the teacher who uses a number of humorous stories (X) in her lecture. Following the lecture, the students take a posttest (02) so that the researcher can measure how much they learned.

Another group of students (who are similar to the students in G1) are in the control group (G2). These students take the same pretest as those in G1, but instead of the same teacher using humorous stories in her lecture, she presents a lecture without humorous stories. Following the lecture, the students take the posttest (02) so that the researcher can measure learning. The researcher hopes that the G1-02 scores (treatment group posttest scores) are significantly higher than the G2-02 scores (control group posttest scores).

Experimental research designs allow instructional communication researchers to show causation, that is, to conclude that students' learning a particular concept was caused by the teacher's use of, for example, humorous stories in her lecturing. Although experimental designs allow researchers to show causation, they're artificial and unnatural. They lack authenticity. For example, most teachers use a variety of communication behaviors when teaching and don't limit their teaching to only using humorous stories while lecturing. To combat this particular weakness, researchers also examine teacher and student communication using naturalistic models.

The Naturalistic Model

The naturalistic model of instructional communication research includes researchers examining and studying teacher and student communication in its natural environment—the classroom. Much of the research on instructional communication reported in recent years has focused on the study of instructional communication in regular classes at various levels of instruction. Most of the research in this area of study has used survey methods. A survey or questionnaire is a document that contains a number of questions or scales. Students read the questions or scale items and then provide the appropriate response that reflects their feelings, attitudes, or beliefs. Usually, this includes circling a number on a scale or providing a brief response. For example, if a researcher was interested in students' perceptions of their teacher's use of humor, the researcher would include a number of items on the survey assessing student perceptions. A researcher might ask, "How often did you see the teacher telling jokes?" and then ask the student to circle the appropriate number, where 0 = *never*, 1 = *rarely*, 2 = *occasionally*, 3 = *often*, and 4 = *very often*. Surveys usually include several pages with several different instruments. Once the data are collected, researchers enter the data into a computer and then use statistical software to examine the data.

Survey research allows researchers to demonstrate how two variables are related to each other. Rather than concluding that teacher humor *causes* student learning, survey research allows researchers to conclude that teacher humor is *related* to student learning. What remains uncertain is the direction of the relationship. It could be that student learning influences students' perceptions of teacher humor behaviors. Put another way, students who learn more may also be more perceptive of teacher humor behaviors.

It's important to understand that experimental and naturalistic models of instructional communication research have strengths and weaknesses. Neither model is perfect. The experimental model allows researchers to show causation (i.e., teacher humor causes increased learning); however, experimental designs are artificial and "not real." The naturalistic model is more authentic; however, this model doesn't allow researchers the control that the experimental model allows. What's important is to interpret research

findings while also considering the limitations of the research design whether experimental or naturalistic.

Applications and Conclusions of Instructional Communication Research

Instructional communication researchers, using both experimental and naturalistic research designs, have identified relationships between several teacher and student communication variables and learning outcomes. These research conclusions have clear applications to both teachers and students. The conclusions support specific advice for helping teachers increase learning and also help students be more aware of how their communication behavior may influence teachers and how teachers evaluate students. Instructional communication research has investigated communication variables that have implications for both rhetorical and relational instructional processes. Rhetorical instructional research variables include teacher credibility, clarity, and humor, to name a few. Research variables that have relational communication applications include immediacy, affinity-seeking, and relational power. Although there are many other instructional communication research variables that have been studied, we review these six research areas to present a general overview of instructional communication research conclusions and applications.

Credibility

One of the key sources of rhetorical influence a teacher or student has is *credibility*. Anchored in Aristotle's concept of ethos, credibility is the perception of character, intelligence, and goodwill that a speaker is perceived to possess. Speakers who are perceived as highly credible are viewed as more persuasive, organized, skilled in responding to questions and are overall perceived as more competent than are speakers who are not perceived to be credible. In the context of the classroom, credibility is the overall perception that someone has toward a speaker in terms of the person being believable, knowledgeable, trustworthy, and dynamic (McCroskey, 1998). As in other speaking situations, teachers who are perceived as credible have more influence over students than teachers who are not perceived as credible. Although the first research studies investigating credibility were focused on public figures, such as politicians or religious leaders, McCroskey, Holdridge, and Toomb (1974) examined the role and function of credibility in the classroom.

Here are eight research conclusions about and applications of teacher credibility as summarized by Myers and Martin (2006):

1. Teachers who have higher perceived credibility are also perceived as more effective teachers.
2. Students who perceive their teachers as having high credibility are more motivated to learn than students who perceive their teachers as having low credibility.
3. Students who perceive their teachers as having high credibility report higher cognitive learning than students who perceive their teachers as having low credibility.
4. Students who perceive their teachers as having high credibility report higher affective learning than students who perceive their teachers as having low credibility.
5. Students who perceive their teachers as having high credibility are more likely to recommend the course and instructor to their friends than students who perceive their teachers as having low credibility.
6. Students who perceive their teachers as having high credibility are more likely to participate in class discussions than students who perceive their teachers as having low credibility.
7. Students who perceive their teachers as having high credibility are more likely to talk to their teacher outside of class than students who perceive their teachers as having low credibility.
8. Students who perceive their teachers as having high credibility are more likely to take another class with the teachers than students who perceive their teachers as having low credibility.

Clarity

A teacher's *clarity* or lack of clarity has been demonstrated to affect how well students learn. To be perceived as clear, research suggests that instructors should speak articulately and audibly, stay on task without wandering to other topics, and use commonly understood vocabulary (Chesebro & McCroskey, 2001; Land & Smith, 1979). When a teacher is clear, students comprehend the instructor's intended meaning better than when a teacher is not clear (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1998, 2001). Research on teacher clarity has focused both on the structure of lecture presentations and on several verbal characteristics of instruction (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1998). These two research streams have demonstrated that to be clear, teachers need to explicitly organize their presentations using verbal transitions, signposts, and checkpoints to ensure that their students understand the course content (Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1986). As summarized by Chesebro and Wanzer (2006), here are four research conclusions and applications of research about teacher clarity:

1. Teachers who are perceived as clear are perceived as more effective teachers.
2. Students who perceive their teachers as clear learn more than from teachers who are perceived as not clear.
3. Teachers who are clear reduce students' fear or apprehension of communicating in the classroom.
4. Teachers who are perceived as clear are liked more by their students, and students liked their course content more than that of teachers who are not perceived as clear.

Humor

Aristotle noted that pathos or emotion has a rhetorical effect on the communication process. Instructor *humor* has an effect on the emotional climate of a classroom. Like instructor credibility, humor is another variable that has an effect on an instructor's rhetorical influence on students and the learning environment. There is evidence that teachers at all levels use humor when teaching (Chesebro & Wanzer, 2006). Research by Gorham and Christophel (1990) found that the majority of humor behaviors that teachers use in the classroom were purposeful humor attempts that were directed at students, the class, the university, department, national and world events, the subject matter, and the teacher. Researchers have identified categories of both appropriate and inappropriate humor (Frymier, Wanzer, and Wojtaszczyk, 2008; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999). Appropriate humor includes humorous statements that are related (or sometimes unrelated) to course material, nonverbal behaviors, self-deprecating humor, humorous props, sarcasm, and unintentional humor. However, the researchers also found that students perceived some of the same kinds of humorous categories as inappropriate humor. It's apparently not the category of humor that makes an attempt at humor appropriate or inappropriate. There are some kinds of humor that were generally perceived as inappropriate: humor at the expense of a student, sexual humor, swearing, humor based on sexual or racial stereotypes, or making light of very serious issues. "Making fun of students" was cited as the most inappropriate type of humor.

Research conclusions about humor in the classroom include the following (Chesebro & Wanzer, 2006):

- Teachers who win awards for their teaching use moderate amounts of humor.
- Students do not prefer teachers who use an excessive amount of humor but do like teachers who use some humor when teaching.
- Students have individual differences and preferences for the amount and type of humor used by instructors.
- High school teachers use the same kinds and types of humor in the classroom as college teachers but not as extensively.

Immediacy

Teacher *immediacy* is one of the most researched instructional communication variables. Immediacy is a perception of physical and psychological closeness. Such closeness, either literal or psychological, has a major effect on the perceived quality of a communication relationship. According to the psychologist Albert Mehrabian (1969), the originator of the immediacy concept, immediacy consists of communication behaviors that "enhance closeness to and nonverbal interaction with another" (p. 213). Perceptions of immediacy expressed through behaviors

such as forward body leans, head nods, and eye contact, which enhance relational development (Mehrabian, 1969) in interpersonal communication situations, are also applicable to relationships between teachers and students. Standing closer to someone, moving from behind barriers, (e.g., a desk or a lectern), as well as leaning toward someone are all immediacy behaviors.

Building on Mehrabian's definition, Andersen (1979) defined teacher immediacy as "the nonverbal behavior manifestations of high affect" (p. 543). Gorham (1988) further expanded the construct to include verbal immediacy messages as well. The use of specific words and phrases (e.g., saying "we" or "our" rather than "me" or "mine") increases perceived closeness with others. Using students' names is also a verbal immediacy strategy. The immediacy principle can be summarized this way: The more a communicator uses immediacy cues, the more others will like and evaluate highly the communicator. The opposite is also true according to the immediacy principle: The less a communicator uses immediacy cues, the less others will like and evaluate highly the communicator.

Andersen and her colleagues found that teacher immediacy accounted for a major portion of the variance in affect toward the instructor, affect toward the course content, affect toward the behaviors recommended, and the likelihood of enrolling in another course of the same nature (Andersen, 1978, 1979; Andersen & Andersen, 1982). Teachers who use immediacy behaviors resulted in students who have overall a more positive attitude toward the instructor and the course.

Some of the most important findings for teacher immediacy are noted below (Richmond, Lane, & McCroskey, 2006; Witt, Wheelless, & Allen, 2004):

- Verbal teacher immediacy increases student cognitive learning. Teachers should use immediacy behaviors to help their students learn.
- Verbal teacher immediacy increases student affective learning. Teachers who use verbally immediate language, such as "we," "us," and "our," and call students by name help their students have more positive feelings about both the teacher and the course.
- Nonverbal teacher immediacy increases student cognitive learning and information recall.
- Nonverbal teacher immediacy increases affective learning. Students appear to like the instructor and the course more if teachers use nonverbal immediacy behaviors.
- Nonverbal teacher immediacy increases students' perceptions of teacher effectiveness.
- Nonverbal teacher immediacy plays a mediating role in the reception and effectiveness of teacher control strategies. If, for example, a teacher is trying to encourage students to read their assigned reading (a rhetorical communication strategy), a teacher's use of immediacy behaviors (a relational communication strategy) will increase the likelihood that students will both comply with the request and have more positive feelings toward the teacher.

- Verbal and nonverbal teacher immediacy is significantly and positively related to perceptions of teacher clarity. Teachers who are immediate are perceived as providing more clear instruction than teachers who are not immediate.
- Teacher immediacy produces a reciprocal liking among teachers and students.

Additional evidence supports such findings across many different grade levels (Plax, Kearney, McCroskey, & Richmond, 1986) and ethnicities (Powell & Harville, 1990; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990), different course types (Kearney, Plax, & Wendt-Wasco, 1985), and modified or nontraditional classroom structures (Andersen, 1979; Kearney et al., 1985).

The key application of immediacy is this: *Teachers who are perceived to be immediate help their students learn.* There is also evidence that students who are nonverbally responsive toward their teachers are perceived more favorably than students who are not nonverbally responsive (Mottet, Beebe, Raffeld, & Medlock, 2004; Mottet, Beebe, Raffeld, & Paulsel, 2005).

Affinity Seeking

Affinity means liking. Whether you like someone or not is a key element in determining the nature of the relationship between you and the other person. If you have high affinity toward someone, it means that you like that person. *Affinity-seeking* behaviors are those verbal and nonverbal behaviors that are used to get others to like you. Evidence suggests that teachers who are liked by their students enhance the learning climate (Frymier & Wanzer, 2006; Gorham and Burroughs, 1989). Gorham and Burroughs (1989) found that teachers' use of affinity-seeking strategies, that is, specific behaviors that cause them to be liked, result in increased student affinity with both the teacher and the subject matter.

Some affinity-seeking behaviors seem to be especially important in helping teachers be liked by their students. Here's a list of teaching strategies that are associated with positive relationships with increased learning, motivation, and an overall positive climate:

- *Facilitating enjoyment:* The teacher purposefully works to increase student enjoyment of classroom activities, lectures, and assignments.
- *Optimism:* The teacher expresses a positive, hopeful, upbeat outlook.
- *Assuming equality:* The teacher minimizes status differences between teacher and students.
- *Conversational rule keeping:* Teachers are polite, don't interrupt students, and treat students with respect.
- *Comfortable self:* The teacher is confident, relaxed, and overall appears comfortable in the classroom.
- *Dynamism:* Teachers are enthusiastic and energetic.
- *Eliciting others' disclosures:* Teachers provide individual attention to students, invite students to talk about themselves, and then use the information they learn from students to compliment the student.

- *Altruism:* Teachers are helpful to students and go beyond expectations to assist students.
- *Listening:* Teachers listen without interrupting a student.
- *Sensitivity:* Teachers express caring, empathy, and warmth toward students.

Several research studies summarized by Frymier and Wanzer (2006) identify applications to teaching and learning:

- Teachers who use affinity-seeking strategies are perceived to be more credible—that is more knowledgeable, trustworthy, and dynamic—than teachers who do not use affinity-seeking strategies.
- Teacher use of affinity-seeking strategies is moderately correlated with student motivation to learn.
- Teachers who evoke more positive feelings from students enhance the learning climate.
- Teachers who consciously use affinity-seeking strategies engender increased affinity with both the teacher and the subject matter.
- Teachers who use selected affinity-seeking strategies (e.g., assuming equality, conversational rule keeping, eliciting others' disclosure, facilitating enjoyment, and optimism) enhance student liking toward the teacher.
- Teachers of lower grade levels use different affinity-seeking strategies than teachers of higher grade levels.

Relational Power

To have power is to have the ability to influence someone. The level and nature of influence with another person is central to determining the quality of the relationship that you have with that person. The source or basis of power depends on the specific nature of the relationship. Sometimes power is granted to someone because of his or her role or position, and, at other times, power develops organically as we begin to trust and like someone. People whom we like and respect have greater power to influence us than people whom we don't like and respect.

A series of research studies conducted by Plax and Kearney (1992) and Plax, Kearney, McCroskey and Richmond (1986) explored the influence of what the researchers called behavioral alteration techniques (BATs) and behavioral alteration messages (BAMs) used by teachers to influence students. The researchers documented the types of power messages and techniques that had an effect on student learning. Researchers discovered that certain types of power messages had a more positive impact on learning than did others. The more positive messages teachers use to influence students were called prosocial BATs and BAMs. Some of the more positive or prosocial BATs and BAMs include (a) offering rewards, (b) appealing to enhanced self-esteem if students would perform certain behaviors (e.g., read the assignment), (c) expressing liking toward the student, (d) being responsive toward the student, and (e) noting that others have performed the same behavior and that the teacher has modeled the behavior.

Here are several research conclusions that stem from investigations of power and influence messages in the classroom (Roach, Richmond, & Mottet, 2006):

- Teacher communication strategies or BATs and BAMs are used by teachers in the classroom to exert power over students.
- Use of positive or prosocial BATs and BAMs leads to higher student affect toward the instructor.
- Prosocial BATs and BAMs are related to increases in perceived student cognitive and affective learning.
- Teacher power usage is mediated by teacher nonverbal immediacy. Teachers who use antisocial BATs and BAMs are perceived by students as using prosocial BATs and BAMs if teachers use nonverbal immediacy behaviors.
- Teacher use of BATs and BAMs affects student motivation toward learning.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the theory and research that explains and predicts how teachers and students communicate with each other. Two traditions influence the study of instructional communication—rhetorical and relational. From a rhetorical perspective, teachers use verbal and nonverbal messages with the intent to influence or persuade students. Student learning is achieved through a teacher's influence. From a relational perspective, teachers and students mutually create and use verbal and nonverbal messages to establish a relationship with each other. Student learning is achieved through the relationship.

The health of any academic field of study is reflected in its theory generation and in research applications that allow theories to be tested. A number of researchers have reviewed the development of instructional communication theory throughout the past three decades. Although these authors note theoretical progress, they also acknowledge that a unified theory of instructional communication has yet to emerge from the research. Some senior scholars would probably argue that the lack of a unified theory of instructional communication is not all that unexpected in a field of study that is only four decades old.

Two models of research currently dominate instructional communication research—experimental and naturalistic. The experimental model, which is artificial and lacks “realness,” allows researchers to control the variables to demonstrate causation. The naturalistic model—which doesn't allow control, and therefore claims of causation cannot be made—allows researchers to illustrate how teacher and student communication variables and learning are related to each other. Both models of research have strengths and weaknesses, and readers are encouraged to interpret research findings in the context of the limitations.

Finally, a number of teacher and student rhetorical and relational communication variables have been studied: credibility, clarity, humor, immediacy, affinity-seeking, and relational

power. Each of these variables has produced a number of important applications for teachers and students. When these research conclusions are applied and used, teachers become better teachers and students become better students.

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PATIENTS, DOCTORS, AND OTHER HELPING RELATIONSHIPS

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Relationships between patients and providers are an inevitable part of everyday life. Throughout the life cycle, humans have fundamental needs requiring care by diverse medical experts, including (but not limited to) physicians, physicians' assistants, nurses, counselors, and therapists. Medical professionals are trained to address, resolve, and seek healing for a wide variety of health-related biological, social, and psychological problems. Physical and bodily symptoms may be associated with pains, discomforts, and disabilities, restricting full and active participation in daily activities. Variations in lifestyle (e.g., nutrition, exercise, weight, addictions, sleep, and stress) influence both the quality and length of life, as well as behaviors creating and reducing health risks. For example, the American Cancer Society (2008) estimates that more than one-third of cancer deaths could be prevented by changes in patients' health and lifestyle behaviors. Experiences with and the emotional impact of sickness, as well as mental illness, troubled relationships, and the spiritual dimensions of wellness, also contribute in significant ways to overall health. And across family, social, and working relationships, the ongoing presence/absence of comfort, support, alienation, and unresolved conflict affect the delicate (im)balance of mind, body, and spirit. All these dimensions are interrelated, each shaping and shaped by additional factors, such as family medical and genetic history, predispositions toward specific types of disease (e.g., diabetes, breast cancer, depression), and chronic health conditions.

The investigation of communication between patients and providers has focused on diverse types of encounters. For example, a wide array of social activities and distinct patterns of interaction have been examined during medical

interviews involving primary, outpatient care (see Beach, in press; Byrne & Long, 1976; Heath, 1986; Heritage & Maynard, 2006; Roter & Hall, 2006; West, 1984), therapy sessions (see Morris & Cheneil, 1995; Peräkylä, Antaki, Vehviläinen, & Leuder, 2008), AIDS counseling (Peräkylä, 1998), patient-centered cancer care (Epstein & Street, 2007), treatment recommendations for breast cancer therapy (Roberts, 1999), and the ways parents and doctors negotiate antibiotic prescriptions for children (Stivers, 2007).

This chapter focuses primarily on communication between patients and physicians during medical interviews. The following issues are addressed: (a) the *ideal* features of patient-provider relationships; (b) a brief history of "biomedical" versus "patient-centered" approaches to medical care; (c) studying the organization of medical consultations; (d) examples of power and authority as practical achievements (selected transcribed excerpts from actual interviews are included, providing readers with the opportunity to ground their understandings by inspecting interactions and becoming engaged in analysis of key moments); and (e) a glimpse of communication and medical care in the 21st century.

Ideal Patient-Provider Relationships

Patients' maladies require understanding, compassion, diagnosis, and treatment. During medical encounters, ordinary "lay" persons (i.e., nonmedical experts) must somehow report their problems to medical professionals, the authorities whose care is being sought to assist with managing

health issues. *Ideally*, patients are able to clearly describe their physical/bodily symptoms, medical history, and related concerns about everyday life circumstances (e.g., job, family, relationships, finances, exercise, and diet). Patients' experiences and emotions will also be disclosed and thus made available for providers' consideration. And when asked questions, patients are able to provide sufficient and informative answers. To ensure their understanding and care, patients will become informed about their medical problems (e.g., through literature, Internet sites, and/or speaking with others who have had similar experiences), seek clarifications, and ask their own questions in assertive yet respectful ways. Patients will also be open and receptive to having their own "lay diagnoses" (Beach, in press) revised, altered, and perhaps even rejected altogether by informed medical experts. So, too, will patients' family members or significant others work closely with the patients to enhance their comprehension and acceptance of the illness and of strategies for treatment. And patients will follow medical advice, complying with regimens such as exercise, diet, and taking of prescriptions.

In turn (and again, *ideally*), providers balance two equally important and related capabilities: (1) they are skilled in diagnosing medical problems (alone and with care teams) and technically competent in using appropriate medical technology and prescriptions to treat medical problems and (2) they will not impose their biomedical agendas (described below) at the expense of patients' concerns but are compassionate in their caring, that is, adept at hearing and being responsive to patients' reportings, both willing and able (a notable distinction) to work together on problems each perceive as important.

Providers who are particularly gifted continually form active partnerships with patients and their families/significant others. Rather than enacting behaviors contributing to foreign, impersonal, and dehumanizing medical encounters, provider-patient relationships are bound together by mutual respect exhibited through encouragement, reassurance, and the development of trusting communicative environments. Each party is understood and valued as bringing important life-world experiences and knowledge to the encounter. Each possesses unique skills and insights, and each displays recognition that they must work together, effectively and efficiently, to minimize suffering and promote healing outcomes.

To optimize quality patient care and satisfaction, skilled providers also recognize and work creatively when managing the inherent constraints of time and resources. Essential medical jargon is clarified when needed. Bad and good news are not withheld but delivered honestly and with sensitivity (see Maynard, 2003), yet the power of hope is not discounted (Beach, 2009). Patients are not blamed and shamed for lack of medical knowledge or unhealthy lifestyles (e.g., smoking, being overweight, poor diet, or failing to comply with medical advice), but they are heard and understood as engaging in specific types of behaviors in the midst of what are often complex yet (for

them) normal daily circumstances. For example, a patient may be wounded from adverse experiences as a child or adult (see Adverse Childhood Experiences Study [ACE], 2008, www.acestudy.org, accessed March 8, 2008) and, relatedly, stressed from multitasking across families, relationships, finances, and jobs. These chronic conditions—"root problems" underlying a significant percentage of adult health problems—can promote unhealthy lifestyles and thus reduce length and quality of life. And when patients attempt to diagnose their illnesses through "lay" knowledge (e.g., personal experiences, speaking with others, media, and/or the Internet), their explanations should not be prematurely discounted. Even if patients' "lay" diagnoses are inaccurate, they should be rewarded for being involved and active partners in care. If necessary, patients will be educated (not lectured) on how alternative diagnoses are more compelling and suited to the medical problems at hand. When providers do not know what or why something is occurring—medical experts are no more or less infallible than patients—they make timely but appropriate referrals. And, critically, from the inception of care, providers work in close and respectful collaboration with nurses and staff, who work as a team to ensure patients' health and well-being.

Of course, we do not live in *ideal* social worlds or relationships, and medical encounters are certainly no exception. How do the social actions listed above, for both patients and providers, get enacted during clinical interactions? Research findings make clear that as patients and providers work together, they produce distinct patterns of human communication that are often less than ideal. Several of these patterns are summarized below, including particular kinds of recurring problems between providers and patients as "biomedical" and "lay" agendas get negotiated interactionally. Selected transcribed excerpts, drawn from naturally occurring interviews, will be used to exemplify these communication patterns by providing readers with opportunities to inspect, firsthand, the kinds of moments that routinely determine patient-provider encounters.

A Brief History: "Biomedical" Versus "Patient-Centered" Orientations to Care

Physicians are traditionally understood as exhibiting "biomedical" orientations to patient care. More than 30 years ago, Engel (1977) described how, in primary care, "the biomedical model . . . encourages bypassing the patient's verbal account by placing greater reliance on technical procedures and laboratory measurements" (p. 132). Engel's position is clear: What patients report about their life-world experiences should not be reduced to medical symptoms and their treatments but analyzed "in psychological, social, and cultural as well as in anatomical, physiological, or biochemical terms" (p. 132). Patients should not be reduced to bodies with assorted symptoms but

treated as unique persons engaged in daily life circumstances that are, for them, somehow related to the illness experience. An emphasis on bodies and symptoms, stripped of persons' everyday life-worlds, contributes to derogatory stereotypes that doctors are just "body mechanics," while patients are only "medical record numbers" trapped in an assembly line of depersonalized medical care (Starr, 1982).

Distinctions between *illness* and *disease* are critical for understanding often competing orientations to medical diagnosis and treatment (e.g., see Cassell, 1985; Mishler, 1984). *Illness* emphasizes the inherently emotional, affective, and experience-based dimensions, while *disease* focuses on how particular kinds of symptoms give rise to specific diagnoses (e.g., diabetes, cancer, or cardiovascular problems contributing to strokes and heart attacks). In everyday life, these dimensions are tightly interwoven and should not be falsely dichotomized through reductionist and thus dehumanizing medical care. It was for this primary reason that Engel (1977) offered a "biopsychosocial" approach to understanding and treating the rich complexities of the human condition. The key is to promote doctoring centered on patients' concerns and problems, an integrative focus that has triggered ongoing developments in "biopsychosocial" research, clinical application, and medical training (Frankel, Quill, & McDaniel, 2003). A host of other factors have also been put forward as contributing to reductions in the offering of personalized medical care: (a) because doctors must increasingly adhere to financial restrictions associated with managed care, they struggle with constraints on time, which prohibit patients from fully disclosing their concerns; (b) doctors avoid addressing patients' emotions not only because they feel inadequately trained as therapists but also because doing so takes time that is not considered to be available during normal interview slots; (c) concerns about malpractice influence the lack of full descriptions about health problems (e.g., see Levinson, Roter, Mullooly, Dull, & Frankel, 1997); (d) increased reliance on sophisticated technology actually distances doctors from patients; and (e) inadequate communication training promotes indifference to what patients treat as important.

But it is clear that patients whose voices are heard and attended to are much more likely to become more actively involved with ongoing care. Increased participation, evident through communicative involvement, promotes enhanced satisfaction, accuracy of diagnosis, reduction of suffering, and improved healing outcomes (see McGee & Cegala, 1998; Street, Krupat, Bell, Kravitz, & Haidet, 2003).

Advances in "patient-centered care" provide viable options to disease-centered or biomedical approaches to diagnosing and treating patients. Priority is given to the therapeutic possibilities of medical consultations (Balint, 1957; see Excerpt 2, p. 362 of this chapter), values and actions that are all too frequently undermined: such as attending closely to patients' affective experiences of their

illnesses and their life-world circumstances (i.e., the psychosocial context in which their illnesses occur), building trusting relationships and partnerships, and increasing patients' involvements in their care through shared decision making (Frankel, Quill, & McDaniel, 2003; Roter & Hall, 2006; Street, Gordon, Ward, Krupat, & Kravitz, 2005). One classic quote is attributed to Hippocrates (470–360 BCE), reputed to be the Father of Medicine: "I would rather know the person who has the disease than know the disease the person has." Thus, it is clear that the basic idea of treating patients as persons and not diseases reaches back to antiquity and should not be mistaken as solely a result of modern theorizing.

Yet numerous approaches to patient-centered care have emerged in the past several decades, echoed again in the introduction to Cassell's two-volume set *Talking With Patients* (1985), where he states, "Doctors treat patients, not diseases" (p. 1). Common priorities given to promoting "humanistic" medical care extend across diverse approaches to ensuring quality of care. Prominent resources such as the *Journal of the American Medical Association* have for years drawn attention to the importance of not overlooking how providers respond empathically (or not) to "windows of opportunity," particularly during moments when patients make available their feelings and experiences, often indirectly through hints or cues (e.g., Suchman, Markakis, Beckman, & Frankel, 1997). The long-standing need to enhance skills for communicating effectively has received considerable attention, including areas such as cancer care, where displayed sensitivity to patients' fears and uncertainties promotes improved outcomes (see Baile et al., 1997; Maguire, 1999). Questions have also been raised about the ways physicians' gender influences care (e.g., Roter & Hall, 2004), and research that begins to address whether female physicians, for example, exhibit more empathic communication styles. These and related concerns have triggered new accreditation standards for medical education, including a reorganization of the educational programs of residencies in the United States (Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education [ACGME], www.acgme.org/acWebsite/home/home.asp, accessed January 11, 2008). These humanistic and relationship-centered medical concerns are also promoted by the Institute of Medicine (IOM, www.iom.edu, accessed July 1, 2008).

To summarize, while technical knowledge about disease and treatment options are critical, "biomedical" orientations to care have repeatedly been found to restrict and minimize attention given to patients' experiences and emotions. In contrast, as a primary resource for building trusting and collaborative partnerships, "patient-centered care" attends closely to patients' needs, offering technically competent diagnosis and treatment options. Questions can then be raised: If and when patients' life-world experiences

are disregarded in the midst of diagnosing and treating “bodies,” what factors contribute to how communication shapes medical interviews?

Models Describing the Organization of Medical Interviews

Numerous researchers and clinicians have attempted to generate models of medical consultations. Attention has been given to the opening to closing phases of interviews, as well as to how to have the best impact on patients’ lives—for example, by offering understanding and support, challenging, motivating, and educating patients about healthy behaviors—all during relatively short amounts of clinical time (see Byrne & Long, 1976; Waitzkin, 1991). Among these efforts, the most frequently cited is an extensive study by Byrne and Long (1976), whose analysis of 2,500 primary care encounters yielded a description of six possible phases as well as a range of verbal behaviors and styles routinely used by doctors (e.g., closed attempts to gather information and more facilitative efforts to encourage and counsel patients). The six phases are as follows: (1) openings, during which doctors seek to develop a relationship with patients; (2) patients provide and/or doctors solicit reasons for the clinical visitation; (3) taking a verbal history and/or conducting a physical examination; (4) doctor works alone, and at times in unison with patients, to consider (i.e., diagnose) the patient’s condition; (5) detailing further treatments and/or investigations that may be needed; (6) doctor terminates and thus closes the consultation. These activities are frequently associated with eliciting and elaborating on patients’ chief complaints, taking a medical history, performing a physical examination, evaluating other investigations, and offering a diagnosis and treatment plan (Waitzkin, 1991).

While these and other phasic models are conceptually and theoretically intriguing, they are only suggestive and not anchored in specific details about the interactional conduct of both patients and physicians. As a viable alternative, Robinson (2003) describes a “project” including how possible phases—(a) establishing how “new problems” are the “reason for the visit,” (b) interactionally conducting history taking and physical exams, (c) actually delivering/receiving a diagnosis, and (d) offering and accepting/rejecting recommendations for treatment—are replete with a range of detailed, social activities produced by patients and physicians as they work together to coordinate medical encounters. Because “no one has yet demonstrated the internal validity of the proposed project or its consequences for physicians’ and patients’ communication behavior” (p. 32), Robinson (2003) has begun to develop a structural schema involving how new patients raise problems as “first topics” to be dealt with during medical interviews. By closely examining the interactional organization of recorded and transcribed moments from actual interviews, key insights can be advanced that explain (among other primary problems)

why and how patients are so passive during medical encounters. A similar orientation is evident in the volume edited by Heritage and Maynard (2006), a collection of studies unpacking the kinds of interactional details that constitute the overall structure of acute primary care visits—encounters most generally described as organized across the following phases: (a) opening, (b) presenting complaint, (c) examination, (d) diagnosis, (e) treatment, and (f) closing (p. 14).

Offering Candidate Explanations About Medical Problems

It has been suggested that patients’ low involvement is a function of passivity in the face of medical expertise, in part because patients lack technical knowledge and experience uncertainty, factors reducing their ability to seek relevant information and even ask appropriate questions (Street et al., 2005). Ongoing research is attempting to clarify how or if these kinds of possibilities get enacted in the midst of patient-physician interactions.

Consider, for example, a patient-physician excerpt from Robinson (2003). The doctor employs an open-ended question to solicit the patient’s description of “thuh problem”:

Excerpt 1. Eye Trouble (Robinson, 2003, p. 36)

- 11 DOC: What seems to be thuh problem?
 12 PAT: .hh I’ve been having a problem: (0.2) mostly with
 13 this eye but I’m- with both.
 14 DOC: Okay.
 15 → PAT: .tch I don’t know if it’s:=uh:- when do I- when I
 16 → was=uh: cutting lumber an’ .hh a:nd=uh: thuh
 17 → sawdust hit my (eyes),

Patient not only states a reason for his visit but, following the doctor’s acknowledgment with “Okay” (line 14), moves to offer his own diagnosis (lines 15–17). Patients routinely offer contributions about how they make sense of the symptoms they are experiencing and what they consider their problems to be (Gill, 1998; Gill & Maynard, 2006). By so doing, the patient also makes clear that the purpose of the medical encounter is to determine what is wrong, a prerequisite for doctors treating and resolving problems “in the service of diagnosis” (Robinson, 2003, p. 37). But it is also apparent that the patient, by speculating that his eye problems may be a result of “cutting lumber,” displays a need to further establish a valid reason for scheduling an appointment with the doctor. Prefaced with “I don’t know,” however, the patient’s candidate explanation is produced as doubtful, hesitant, and dysfluent. (Notice, for example, that and how the patient searches what to say with three “uh’s” and twice abruptly cuts off (-) and restarts the utterance.)

Gill (1998) has observed that, “when patients exhibit tentativeness and uncertainty about the knowledge they are displaying in their explanations, they also tentatively invite doctors’ assessments” (p. 356). Being tentative displays an orientation to proceeding with caution, downplaying their experiences and knowledge, even though patients’ explanations may (at least for them) seem not only reasonable but also even likely possibilities. And even when patients present *unlikely* candidate explanations, they have been shown to manage multiple and even conflicting constraints—for example, evidencing their ability to make sense of their condition, yet not advancing worst-case scenarios since it is doctors who are in a better position to make such assessments (Gill & Maynard, 2006; Pomerantz, Gill, & Denvir, 2007). So, too, are doctors in a position not only to grant or reject patients’ requests but also to respond in kind to patients who raise their concerns indirectly and delicately (Beach, in press). These actions further reveal how patients are tentative and cautious when attempting to draw attention to their expectations, needs, desires, hopes, and fears (see Beach, Easter, Good, & Pigeron, 2004; Excerpt 2, below).

To summarize, considerable evidence suggests that when offering explanations amounting to “lay diagnoses,” patients routinely defer and thereby subordinate their knowledge and authority to physicians. Patients display recognition of medical expertise: It is physicians who have not only received technical training but also accumulated experience across years of clinical practice, proficiency amounting to greater knowledge and ability to assess, diagnose, and treat what count as real or imagined problems (at least biomedically). And, as addressed below, there are additional reasons for a basic imbalance or asymmetry of power and authority during medical encounters. So, too, are moments evident when patients initiate assertive actions, at times contesting and resisting the doctor’s authority.

Power, Authority, and Asymmetry During Medical Encounters

Even prior to the outset and through the completion of the medical encounter, “the physician-patient relationship is marbled through with the exercise of authority” (Heritage, 2005, p. 83). Before the interviews begin, patients routinely wait for providers, and on their arrival, it is doctors who initiate greetings, arrange the physical space, and coordinate tasks, such as locating and reviewing medical records (Heath, 1986). When doctors do solicit patients’ opening complaints (e.g., “What can I do for you today?”), Beckman and Frankel (1984) discovered that doctors interrupt patients after they state a single problem, on the average within 18 seconds, moving—frequently with closed questions—to gather additional information about that single issue. And when interrupted, only 1 of 52 patients actually completed their full listing of concerns. By not asking patients if they

have additional concerns, which is not uncommon, physicians’ attempt to take control of the interview, which constrains and even halts important information patients could provide about their condition.

In a related study, Marvel and colleagues (1999) examined whether improvements had been made in appropriately soliciting patients’ agendas before redirecting to what physicians treat as important. In only 74 of 199 interviews did patients complete their initial statement of concerns, and in the majority of cases, patients were redirected by their physician after only 23.1 seconds. As with Beckman and Frankel’s (1984) original study—where interruptions occurred after 18 seconds, even though most completed statements occurred in less than 60 seconds and no more than 150 seconds—Marvel and colleagues (1999) concluded that completed statements of concern required only 6 additional seconds. Thus, by investing minimal additional time, physicians could improve their care (and patients’ satisfaction, compliance, and reduction of unnecessary return visits) by attending more closely to information anchored in patients’ concerns. And in both studies, patients who were interrupted at the outset of the interview more frequently raised concerns in the closing phase of the interview, moments when doctors have been shown to be even less receptive to adequately addressing patients’ problems.

The phasic progression of medical interviews is designed to facilitate doctors’ agendas by actions such as asking more frequent questions, delaying or failing to respond to patients’ initiatives, and shifting and closing down topics. Restrictions are also imposed on what reasonably counts as reliable information, knowledge, procedures to be taken, and appropriate utilization of time, prescriptions, referrals, and additional resources (see Beach, in press; Stivers, 2007).

Raising and Responding to Psychosocial Concerns

During particular moments, patients appear to prematurely solicit diagnostic information from physicians before the history-taking or physical examination has been completed (Jones & Beach, 2005). So doing essentially deviates from the typical ordering, where physicians (understandably) offer diagnoses only *after* relevant information has been gleaned. In Excerpt 2 (below), following an opening introduction and greetings, the doctor’s typical initiation of the patient’s complaint (e.g., “What can I do for you today?”) is preempted by the patient’s “Well I hope you can find out what’s wrong with me” (1→).

Excerpt 2. S14:1 (Jones & Beach, 2005, pp. 107–108)

Dr: H’lo Mister Steen.=
P: =Good morning.
(2.0)

- Dr: I'm Physician Krone.
(0.2)
- P: Pleased to meet sir.
- Dr: Nice to meet you.=
- P: 1→ =Well I hope you can find out what's wrong with me.
- Dr: 2→ We(h)ll I hadn't even seen you yet.
- P: 3→ (At's whuh) I say I still say I hope you can find out what's wrong [with me.
- Dr: 4→ [O:h, okay.
(0.4) Well we will.
- P: 5→ Whatever you think whatever
yo:- (0.5) u:h (0.3) whatever it is tell me:
so I can- (0.7) eh- (0.7) (keepn gih-)
get somethin done about it. Cause (.)
ma:n (0.4) it's worrying me.

Rather than respond to the patient's query as an anxious and hopeful bid for reassurance, in 2→, the doctor responds with surprise by stating the obvious: "We(h)ll I hadn't even seen you yet."

But this reply does not ease the patient's concern. In 3→, the patient restates his need and further pursues what is noticeably absent, namely, an offering of consolation from the doctor. It is only in response to the patient's second attempt that, and with hesitation, the doctor's next "Well we will" (4→) is provided. The doctor does not personally assure the patient that whatever is wrong with him will receive the doctor's full attention and/or that the doctor will work together with the patient to ensure healing. Rather, the doctor invokes "we" to mark institutional affiliation (Drew & Heritage, 1992), in a manner that minimally addresses the patient's concern yet does not clearly align with the twice-stated "hope" the patient is expressing. Matters of "hope," then, are not just located in the heart or mind but managed as ordinary interactional achievements (see Beach, 2008).

In 5→ with "you," however, and with considerable hesitation and dysfluency (i.e., multiple pauses and restarts), the patient squarely focuses attention back onto the doctor. Three times, "whatever" is employed to state, "Whatever you think" and "Whatever it is tell me," a request that the doctor not be withholding about "it"—an apparent and indirect reference to an illness or disease—and that the reason for his visit is that he wants to "get somethin done about it." And what is the urgency driving the patient to raise these concerns at the outset of the medical interview? The answer is straightforward: "Cause (.) ma:n (0.4) it's worrying me."

By initiating these actions at the outset of the encounter, it is "worry" that the patient is not only experiencing but also seeking solace from the doctor for. No symptoms have yet been mentioned, and no attempt has

been made by the patient to offer his own "lay diagnosis" of what "it" might be.

In contrast, a "psychosocial" need is addressed by the patient—albeit prior to the doctor having the opportunity to examine the patient—that seeks not the physician's impersonal acknowledgment but individual attention to the patient's anxiety (uncertainty, fear). These moments make clear that and how patients bring their "psychosocial" concerns to the clinic—numerous researchers suggest that a majority of patients' presenting concerns are "psychosocial"—and that doctors are faced with managing therapeutic (not just biomedical) aspects of care. To adequately address a patient's "worrying," at the outset or during any phase of a medical interview, requires that physicians transcend being medically trained bureaucratic representatives and be willing (and able) to offer personalized, therapeutic care that integrates comfort and support with sound diagnostic and treatment skills.

Excerpts such as 1 and 2 (above) are only a small sampling of moments when it is evident that communication between patients and providers occurs at the intersection of professional and lay, authority and subordination, biomedical and psychosocial orientations to providing and receiving medical care. There are inherent and dialectical tensions between these seemingly opposite ways of organizing medical interviews. But, ultimately, they get interconnected, and not only through conceptualizations or theories of medical encounters that stipulate that patients are not sufficiently involved, that when they do initiate actions they are not adequately addressed, or other notions about an imbalance or asymmetry of power in the clinic. Instead, "rather than visits embodying asymmetry, it is actions, activities, and projects of activities, and their constitutive relevancies, that account for asymmetry" (Robinson, 2003, p. 51). The task thus remains to continue explicating the details of actual, naturally occurring contingencies comprising medical encounters and, through close analysis, to advance understandings of routine ways that both patients and providers coordinate often delicate moments of interactional conduct.

Gaining Access to the "Diagnostic Moment"

Considerable attention has been given to what patients want, need, and expect from medical care. Repeatedly, patient surveys have revealed that patients seek to be informed and to receive understandable explanations for their medical condition (Roter & Hall, 2006). Yet patients also report not being well informed and being unable to understand their physicians (e.g., due to complex medical jargon). And by asking few questions, patients subordinate themselves to physicians—who, at times, display a strong dispreference for patient-initiated actions (Beach, in press; Heritage & Maynard, 2006)—even avoiding

physicians' offerings of prescriptive judgments (Stivers, 2007). In stark contrast, however, physicians report investing considerable time informing and explaining to patients their diagnosis and treatment options (Street et al., 2003). So how can these conflicting orientations be accounted for?

Citing what Paul Starr refers to as patients' "surrender of private judgment" in *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* (1982, p. 10), a response to dependence on medical expertise and the power of science, Heritage (2005) argues that

when patients get a recommendation from their doctor, they end up abandoning whatever private beliefs, uncertainties, fears, and misgivings they may have about their medical condition, and accept the physician's diagnosis and treatment recommendation . . . With respect to these moderate, primary care illnesses, preliminary evidence from studies of recordings of medical encounters suggests that patients do indeed abrogate their own judgments and more or less surrender with a blindfold on. (pp. 84–85)

Here again, the management of "authority" is a central issue for understanding how patients and physicians navigate their way through medical encounters. This is especially true during moments when diagnoses are delivered by physicians and responded to by the patient. When reviewing important studies focusing on the relationships between diagnosis and medical authority—from Byrne & Long's (1976) classic finding that across 2,000 medical visits, physicians were highly authoritarian and did not adequately discuss diagnoses with patients; to Heath's (1992) primary finding that patients respond passively to diagnoses; to Peräkylä's (1998) discovery that as physicians assert, provide evidence, and persuade patients about diagnoses, they hold themselves somewhat accountable for their judgments; and finally to both Heritage & Stivers (1999) and Stivers (2007) revealing how patients may contest physicians' recommendations and, in turn, how physicians can themselves resist patients' efforts to pressure physicians to prescribe antibiotics—Heritage (2005) makes clear that physicians' abilities to "name the world," and thereby exercise medical authority, are fundamental to communication during medical encounters.

And in just the ways physicians claim and assert authority, so too is it inherently problematic for patients to get their needs addressed. This is especially the case when patients raise psychosocial concerns that do not receive adequate attention. Beach and Mandelbaum (2005), for example, examine how a patient discloses "My mom had a stroke" three times over the course of an interview with a physician's assistant. The additional burdens placed on the patient to care for his ill mother, and also his ailing father, were repeatedly nominated by the patient as reasons for poor health habits, excessive drinking, inadequate exercise

and diet, and sleeplessness. In response, and despite the patient's persistence, however, the interviewer offered only minimal acknowledgment of the patient's life-world experiences—and shifted attention toward a series of bodily symptoms, namely, blood in the patient's stools, pancreas and liver damaged by alcohol (and the need for a referral to do other tests), high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and overweight. Excerpts from each of these three moments appear below. Even a brief inspection makes clear how the patient's focus on his mother's stroke is disattended by the interviewer rather than pursued as an opportunity to acknowledge, support, understand, and treat the stressful effects related to caregiving.

In Excerpt 3, the interviewer shifts to "**blo:od** in your stools or **bla:ck** stools?" rather than address the implications of the patient's mom having had a stroke:

Excerpt 3. "Do you drink?" (Beach and Mandelbaum, 2005, p. 347; INT = Interviewer)

((The Patient had just reported that he has about three drinks each night before going to bed, and the interviewer is seeking clarification about the amount of alcohol in each drink.))

PAT: 1→ My mom had a **stroke** (.) five years ago and u:h I have to go every night after work and help (.) my dad out with her. So: = .hh when I come home just ta unwind \$I have a few drinks\$ and then >go to bed<.

INT: 2→ Have you ever noticed any **blo:od** in your stools or **bla:ck** stools?

In Excerpt 4, the interviewer makes a referral as an alternative to responding directly to the patient's attempt to explain that daily drinking has only occurred since his mother's stroke:

Excerpt 4. "mom's had her stroke" (p. 354)

((The Interviewer has been summarizing the effects of excessive drinking on the pancreas and liver and thus the need to do additional tests to assess the possible damage.))

PAT: 1→ Oh but the daily you know the °drinking° everyday at night has been just since my mom's had her stroke the last four- four or five years. (.) >The diarrhea's been< since I really think nineteen years at least [(probably)].

INT: [Okay]
sometimes these things-.

PAT: 1→ >But I'll check it.< I don't know I \$hmp\$.

INT: 2→ NOW (.) we're also going uh to send a referral to Doctor Dorsey who is your designated primary care physician.

And in the final example, the interviewer's encouragement to cut back on drinking and to exercise more is, once again, countered by the patient: "°Not since my *mom* got sick°" (1→) has he been able to exercise. The patient next insists that he therefore *doesn't have time* (3→) to exercise (i.e., owing to his caregiving responsibilities):

Excerpt 5. "Not since my mom got sick" (p. 357)

((The Interviewer is discussing concerns and future treatment options with the patient.))

INT: Okay. pt .hh Now in terms of um (.) your drinking, .hh need I say (.) you certainly need to cut down. (.) Ideally no more than (.) two ounces a day. pt .hh Um: if that might become a problem area for ya .hh we do have a chemical dependency program.= I've circled the name and the phone number and you may call them at your leisure.

PAT: °Okay.°

INT: And I'd like to um (.) talk about some other things which are certainly important. One of tho:se is u::h (.) the need to exercise and I didn't ask ya are you exercising at all?

PAT: 1→ °Not since my *mom* got sick.° >I used to bike ride< three miles but I- I hadn't had time.

INT: 2→ Well exercises (.) even if it's no more than just walking for thirty minutes non stop three to five days a week .hh is a valuable tool. pt And uh it's certainly-

PAT: 3→ I- I don't have thirty minutes <either. \$heh\$ But what I do is like> when I came here (.) is I took the stairs instead of the elevator.
((INT continues))

Though not included here, the interviewer continues not attending to the patient's concerns about lacking time in favor of emphasizing the positive health benefits of exercise—raising good cholesterol, managing anxiety and stress, and reducing blood pressure and weight.

The analysis offered by Beach and Mandelbaum (2005) makes clear that the more this patient *invited* attention to his personal and family dilemma, the more the interviewer *avoided* aligning with these patient-centered concerns. Yet, and importantly, it was the patient's own indirectness—hinting and offering clues about his mother's stroke, rather than directly asking the interviewer to talk about the impact of her stroke directly—that provided the interviewer with interactional grounds for not addressing the patient's caregiving stressors. At least in this instance, the

patient's indirectness thus facilitated the interviewer's evasiveness.

A Glimpse of Communication and Medical Care in the 21st Century

It is not news to state that the management of disease—or dis-ease, as is often the case—will continue into and beyond the 21st century. History clearly reveals that human evolution and the growth (or decline) of all civilizations are tightly interwoven with the ability to treat and heal bodily, psychological, emotional, and spiritual problems. And, as this chapter clearly indicates, communication is critical throughout all phases of medical encounters, in which quality relationships, not simply technical knowledge or advanced technologies, shape the overall quality of care and healing outcomes. Nor is it surprising to predict that monumental advancements in medicine will continue to emerge with the completion of investigations such as the Human Genome Project (HGP) in 2003, revealing a mapping of the hereditary codes in the 20,000 to 25,000 genes and 3 billion chemical base pairs constituting human DNA. The HGP has opened new horizons for gene testing and identifying genetic components of diseases, including the ability to locate and alter the hereditary errors in genes that contribute to thousands of diseases that negatively impact humankind. New pharmaceuticals and drug therapies are being generated, along with advanced technologies capable of previously unheard of interventions (e.g., strengthening immunity by inserting genes that suppress tumor growth).

But with the success of the HGP comes a series of moral, ethical, and legal implications bearing directly not only on patient-provider relationships but on families as well. Consider, for example, how genetic counseling involves helping patients and family members assess their inherited susceptibility, make decisions regarding treatment options, and shape their care in the face of an inevitably uncertain future. Below is a written description generated by a genetic counselor I worked on a project with designed to better understand the kinds of communication dilemmas arising in the of genetic counseling:

The woman contacting me has had breast or ovarian cancer, has daughters or sisters or nieces she is worried about, and wants to be tested in order to find information which might help her relatives. The issues here are whether these relatives want the information, and whether the woman realizes that a positive test would mean that she is at greatly increased risk for another cancer.

How do genetic counselors explain hereditary disorders and future health risks to patients? How do patients

express their fears about possible but uncertain diseases? In what ways do interviews vary depending on whether family members are present or not? We have only a limited understanding of how these discussions actually occur during genetic counseling sessions. We know even less about how those counseled share this information with their family members, outside of clinics (Beach, 2009), including the positive and negative consequences of talking about the implications of receiving (and/or avoiding) genetic testing. Extending the case study summarized above, what happens when a mother who may be susceptible to BRCA1 or BRCA2 breast cancer (National Cancer Institute, 2008) contacts a physician and requests that both of her daughters be genetically tested? What if only one of the two daughters wants to be tested and the other is vehemently opposed to discovering whether she is predisposed to a future and probable breast cancer diagnosis? How does the family manage potential conflicts arising from alternative stances toward receiving genetic testing (or not)? And if the family itself seeks genetic counseling to address and resolve these problems, what specific kinds of communication interventions are effective (or not)? What, then, are the long-term consequences of seeking genetic testing and counseling (or not) for individuals and families alike?

These questions only begin to address the ways in which communication is critical for managing future quandaries in medical care. Other communicative issues are equally daunting; information is readily available online concerning debates such as those surrounding governmental regulation of stem cell research (Stem Cell Information, The National Institutes of Health, <http://stemcells.nih.gov>, accessed March 18, 2008), privacy associated with online medical databases and access to medical records (Health Communication and Informatics Research, National Cancer Institute, <http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/hcirb>, accessed November 12, 2007), and malpractice associated with the humbling occurrences of death caused by unnecessary surgeries and related medical errors (www.medical-malpractice.com, accessed June 22, 2008). As complex as the study of patient-provider relationships seems to be, it is useful to situate medical encounters within these and other encompassing health communication frameworks, such as cancer control, population sciences, and behavioral research.

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PART VII

FACTORS AFFECTING COMMUNICATION

GENDER

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TV talk shows such as *Oprah* frequently feature experts on communication between the sexes; self-help books promise to teach readers the secrets of communicating with “the opposite sex”; and popular magazines such as *Essence*, *Cosmo*, and *Sports Illustrated* routinely include articles on how to attract, interact with, and hold the attention of the man/woman of your dreams. People are fascinated by how women and men communicate, especially how their communication differs.

Like the general public, academic researchers are interested in gender and communication. Since the 1970s, scholars have focused great attention on gender and communication. As a result, we now know a great deal about the ways in which sex and gender shape communication styles and, in turn, how our communication reinforces social views of women and men. One of the most important understandings to grow out of research is that we can become more informed and effective communicators if we understand the pivotal role that gender plays in both personal and cultural life.

Studying gender and communication heightens our awareness of taken-for-granted notions of sex and gender that are deeply woven into the social fabric and that we’ve been encouraged to accept. Once we become aware of these notions and think about them critically, we are empowered to accept those we find good or useful in a more informed way than we had. Equally important, becoming informed about gender empowers us to dispute conventional views of the sexes that we don’t find desirable or admirable. Sometimes, we challenge and resist social definitions of gender on an individual level—for instance, a man who chooses to be a stay-at-home dad instead of a primary breadwinner or a woman who is aggressive and domineering. We may also challenge and

attempt to change social views of gender on a broader level—for instance, arguing as some women in the 1800s did that women are rational enough to vote or contesting the long-standing practice of not allowing women in the U.S. armed services to be in combat roles.

In this chapter, we’ll discuss what we know about gender and communication and why it matters to us individually and to our society. The first section of the chapter provides definitions of three interconnected terms: sex, gender, and communication. In the second section, we examine how we develop gendered patterns of communicating and what language features are associated with feminine and masculine communication styles.

Understanding Sex, Gender, and Communication

Many people use the words *sex* and *gender* interchangeably, but actually they are discrete concepts. As we’ll see, the distinction between sex and gender calls our attention to the twin influences of biology and society—or nature and nurture—on our identities.

Sex

Sex is a biological category—male or female—that is determined genetically. Most individuals are designated as male or female based on external genitalia (penis and testes in males, clitoris and vagina in females) and internal sex organs (ovaries and uterus in females, prostate gland in males). Genitalia and secondary sex markers such as hair

growth and muscle mass are controlled by chromosomes and hormones. Most humans have 23 pairs of chromosomes, one of which determines sex. Typically, those people society labels male have XY sex chromosomes, and those that society labels female have XX chromosomes.

You may have noticed that I've used words such as *most* and *typically* when discussing sex. That's because there are variations from the most common patterns. For instance, some individuals classified as female have XO or XXX sex chromosomes, and some individuals classified as males have XYY or XXY chromosomes. Furthermore, intersexed individuals don't fit into the binary categories of male or female. They are born with the biological qualities of both sexes—for instance, internal sex organs characteristic of females and external genitalia characteristic of males. Transsexuals who have undergone hormone treatment and surgery may have some features and aspects of appearance that are not consistent with their sex chromosomes.

Gender

Gender is a more complicated concept than sex. In the 1970s, researchers began to draw a clear distinction between sex and gender. They defined gender as a social construction, which contrasts sharply with sex as a biological phenomenon. Understanding gender as socially constructed allows us to realize that views and expectations of masculinity and femininity grow out of specific historical moments and specific cultural contexts. Put another way, gender is the social meaning attached to sex within a particular culture and in a particular era. Gender influences the expectations and perceptions of women and men, as well as the roles, opportunities, and material circumstances of women's and men's lives.

Because gender is central to social order, society works very hard to convince us that its definitions and expectations of women and men are natural, normal, and right. From birth, most of us are socialized into our society's views of what it means to be a man or woman—what each sex should and should not do. Pervasive practices reflect and aim to reproduce social definitions of gender: pink and blue blankets, which are still used in many hospitals and home nurseries; toys marketed to boys (active, adventure toys) and girls (dolls and play stoves); chores parents typically assign to sons (outdoor tasks) and daughters (indoor tasks); kindergarten and elementary teachers' tendencies to allow boys to play rougher and be less attentive than girls are expected to be; workplace norms that make it acceptable for female but not male workers to take parental leave.

It's important to realize that studying gender involves learning about both femininity and masculinity. Gender is often perceived as a synonym for *women* or *women's interests*. Just as the study of race is mistakenly, but commonly, perceived not to have anything to do with Caucasians, the study of gender is routinely perceived as having nothing to do with men and masculinity. However, Western culture recognizes two genders, and some other cultures recognize more than two. Masculinity is just as socially constructed as femininity. Understanding how and why masculinity has

been constructed as it has helps us understand how many men define themselves and which attitudes and behaviors they do and do not consider appropriate for themselves. Studying gender helps us understand the processes by which each and all genders are constructed and—by extension—the ways in which existing constructions of each and all genders might be challenged and changed.

Beyond Gender as a Social Construction: A Performative Framework

By the late 1980s, many researchers found that defining gender as socially constructed didn't accomplish as much as they had originally thought. Although scholars still agreed that societies develop and advance particular views of femininity and masculinity, many came to believe that the social construction of gender is only part of the story and not the most interesting part. In 1987, Candice West and Don Zimmerman asserted that gender is not something people have (a personal quality) but rather something they do. Following this insight, Judith Butler (1993) argued that there is nothing “normal” or “natural” about gender. She rejected the widely held view that gender exists prior to particular actions. Instead, claimed Butler, gender comes into being only as we perform it in everyday life. We simultaneously enact and produce gender through a variety of mundane, performative practices, such as dress, gestures, and verbal acts, that embody—and, thus, confer an illusory realness on—normative codes of masculinity and femininity. In other words, for Butler and other performative theorists, gender is more appropriately regarded as a verb than as a noun. Gender is doing; without doing (without the action of performance), there is no gender.

We express, or perform, conventional gender through everyday practices such as dominating (masculine) or deferring (feminine) in conversations, offering solutions and judgments (masculine) or empathy (feminine) when a friend discloses a problem, and crossing our legs so that one ankle rests on the knee of our other leg (masculine) or so that one knee rests over the other knee (feminine). Conversely, we resist conventional views of gender if we act in ways that are inconsistent with the sex and gender society assigns to us.

But our performances of gender are not solo enterprises. They are always collaborative because however we express gender, we do so in a context of social meanings that transcend any individual. For instance, a woman who defers to men and tilts her head when talking to men (two behaviors deemed feminine and more often exhibited by women than men), is acting individually, yet her individual actions are stylized performances of femininity that are coded into cultural life, and it is precisely because these actions are coded and understood as feminine that a person performing them is perceived as feminine. Our choices of how to act in any given moment are based on, and are in response to, a social world made up of other people who

are either physically in the context or mentally present through our imagining of them.

Viewing gender as performative has three important implications. First, it leads to the realization that gender exists if and only if people act in ways that compel belief in the reality of masculinity and femininity and thereby fortify belief in that reality. Second, the argument that gender is not objective or natural implies that any gendered identity is as real (and as illusory) as any other. Thus, transvestites, gays, transsexuals, lesbians, bisexuals, and intersexed and transgendered people have sexual and gender identities that are as real—or unreal—as those of heterosexuals. Third, because a performative view of gender recognizes a range of genders, sexes, and sexualities, it undermines the conventional binary categories of male/female, masculine/feminine, gay/straight, and normal/abnormal. Because the performative view of gender, sex, and sexuality profoundly challenges conventional understandings of identity, it is powerful in opening up new questions about cultural values, beliefs, and definitions.

Communication

The third concept we will discuss is *communication*. Communication is a dynamic process of creating meaning through verbal and nonverbal symbols. Communication is related to sex and gender in a number of ways, four of which we'll discuss here.

Communication Socializes Us Into Gendered Identities

First, communication is a primary means by which new members of a society are taught existing views of gender. As parents interact with children, they teach gender. Boys may be discouraged from playing with dolls, and girls may be scolded for getting dirty—both messages that convey social views of gender in an effort to teach children how to perform identities that are consistent with existing social norms.

Parents are not the only ones who communicate society's views and expectations of gender. Siblings, other relatives, peers, and teachers talk differently to boys and girls

and give positive and negative responses to children's behaviors. Operating from conventional assumptions about appropriate behaviors for the sexes, a teacher may scold a girl who is raucous in first grade but allow a boy in the class to act up. Peers are likely to ridicule a boy who is scared of rough play; they may call him "sissy" or "mama's boy" in an effort to shame him into following norms for masculine behavior.

Media too socialize children into gendered identities by providing models of masculinity and femininity. Research shows that children's television programs tend to feature male characters who have active roles and female characters who have reactive or supporting roles. In both programs and advertising, girls are more likely than boys to be shown nurturing others (including pets and dolls), and boys are more likely to be shown engaging in adventures and risk. Video games and movies also provide models of masculinity and femininity, thereby helping socialize children into gender roles approved by Western culture.

Communication Expresses Gendered Identities

Second, as performative theorists assert, we use communication to express, or perform, gender. We know which clothes will be seen by others as masculine or feminine; we understand which postures are regarded as appropriate and inappropriate for women and men; we realize that certain words and tones of voice are regarded as more acceptable for men and others as more acceptable for women. In other words, we use verbal and nonverbal communication to "do gender."

Recently, I asked my students to give examples of behaviors that they perceive as expressing femininity or masculinity. Table 41.1 below presents a sample of the examples they gave.

Communication Challenges and Changes Social Views of Gender

Third, communication is a key means of changing gender. We can use communication to challenge existing views of men's and women's nature, behaviors, and rights. For example, the movement for women's suffrage, which began

<i>Behaviors That Express Femininity</i>	<i>Behaviors That Express Masculinity</i>
1. Wear makeup	1. Keep distance from other men
2. Bend over by bending knees	2. Bend over by bending at the waist
3. Smile	3. Don't smile often
4. Drop eyes if another stares at you	4. Hold eye contact if another stares at you
5. Share feelings	5. Do not talk a lot about feelings
6. Show interest in others	6. Show confidence and control
7. Be nice to others	7. Impress others

Table 41.1 Behaviors That Express Femininity or Masculinity

in the 1800s, included nonverbal (marches) and verbal (speeches, written documents) communication that challenged and ultimately changed the view that women were not entitled to rights such as voting, owning property, and pursuing higher education. Today, there are a number of fathers' groups that are challenging entrenched views that women are "natural" caregivers and so should have custody of children when parents split up. Senator Hillary Clinton's campaign to be the Democratic nominee for president challenged the view that women cannot run for president. We also challenge existing views of gender by engaging in transgressive everyday practices. Some of my students queer the binary categories of gender by, for instance, wearing a lacy dress and combat boots or skirts, heels, and a necktie.

Communication Names Issues and Identities

Finally, communication enacts naming, which is a critical means of making issues related to gender visible. We name things that we consider important and don't name things that we don't consider important. When we name phenomena that have not been named, noticed, or valued, we bring those phenomena into social awareness. Once we had names only for heterosexuals and homosexuals. The term *homosexual* was challenged, and today it is used less often than *gay* and *lesbian*, which are different ways of naming identities. Furthermore, we have named categories of sexual identity beyond the original two. Coining terms such as *bisexual*, *queer*, *trans*, and *intersexual* has named into social awareness identities that were previously unnamed and, therefore, largely unrecognized.

Communication can also name issues into social consciousness. Consider five phenomena related to gender and gender roles that once were not named but now have been named and, thus, brought into social awareness.

In a book that is credited with instigating the second wave of feminism in the United States, Betty Friedan (1963) called attention to "the problem that has no name." Friedan divided this problem into two parts. First, many middle-class stay-at-home mothers felt frustrated and not completely fulfilled because their lives were restricted to the home and family. Second, because the ideology of the time maintained that they were living the American dream, many of these women felt guilty for not feeling fulfilled and grateful. Friedan decided to name the problem; she called it the feminine mystique—the ideology that being a full-time homemaker was the ideal and the only ideal for women. When she gave a name to something that was common in women's experience but unmarked in language, Friedan gave visibility and social standing to what had been invisible and, thus, had no social legitimacy.

Sexual harassment is unwanted and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with performance in work and educational settings. Doubtlessly, sexual harassment has existed for centuries, yet it was not named until

the 1970s. Until that time, people, primarily women, who endured unwanted sexualized behavior at work and in school had no way to name what happened to them. The language of their culture provided no language that named the practice as illegal, much less immoral. Now that the term *sexual harassment* is part of our language, there is a way to name this experience for what it is.

Like sexual harassment, date and marital rape are not new phenomena. However, naming these practices as criminal acts—rape—is new. Only toward the end of the 20th century did most states adopt laws that specifically recognized nonconsensual sex between dates or spouses as the crime of rape. And only by naming nonconsensual sex in any context as a crime were the grievous violations recognized for what they are.

The sociologist Arlie Hochschild (2003) used the term *second shift* to name a phenomenon common in the lives of women who work outside of the home. The second shift is all the housework, cooking, and child care that women engage in after returning from a shift in the paid labor force. Hochschild reported that roughly 20% of men in dual-worker couples assume half of the work required to run a home and family. More recent studies have confirmed the persistence of inequity in responsibility for work in the domestic sphere. In naming this phenomenon as a form of work, the term *second shift* gives visibility to what had been invisible.

The second shift involves more than concrete tasks such as preparing dinner, bathing children, and vacuuming. In addition, it includes what Hochschild dubbed *psychological responsibility*, which is the responsibility to remember, plan, schedule, and so forth. For example, behind a prepared dinner sitting on a table are a number of generally unseen and unnoticed tasks such as considering household members' nutritional needs and dietary preferences, deciding on a menu, and shopping for the necessary ingredients.

Let's summarize what we've discussed so far. This first section of the chapter defined sex, gender, and communication. In the process, we highlighted the ways in which communication is related not only to individuals' gender but also to social understandings of gendered identities and issues. Our exploration of these three terms should give you a preliminary sense of how complex they are and should spark your thinking about the intimate ways in which gender shapes communication and, in turn, is shaped by communication. We turn next to a review of knowledge about gender and communication in our lives.

Gendered Communication Patterns

Male and female infants don't enter the world communicating in different ways. However, within just a few years, boys and girls do start engaging in some distinct communication behaviors. Many factors influence children's development, including their development as communicators. We'll focus on two particularly important influences on the development of gendered communication patterns: parents and peers.

Parents

Parents are an early and powerful influence on most children's understandings of gender. Perhaps most obviously, parents are typically models of masculinity and femininity. By observing parents, children often learn the roles socially prescribed for women and men. In heterosexual families that adhere to traditional sex roles, children of both sexes are likely to learn that women are supposed to nurture others, clean, cook, and show emotional sensitivity and that men are supposed to earn money, make decisions, and be emotionally controlled.

Parents' behaviors are another key influence on children's development of gendered identities and communication patterns. Although many parents today reject rigid sex stereotypes, many still communicate differently with sons and daughters and encourage, however inadvertently, distinct communication behaviors in sons and daughters. Typically, girls are rewarded for being cooperative, helpful, nurturing, and deferential—all qualities consistent with social views of femininity. Parents may also reward—or at least not punish—girls for being assertive, athletic, and smart. For boys, rewards are more likely to come for behaving competitively, independently, and assertively.

Ethnicity is related to parental gender socialization. Research shows that middle-class Caucasian parents in the United States emphasize and encourage achievement more when talking to sons than to daughters, and some Chicano/Chicana families discourage educational achievement in daughters to the point of regarding daughters who attend college as *Chicana falsa*—false Chicanas. On the other hand, Asian and Asian American families tend to encourage high achievement in children of both sexes.

Parents also convey distinct messages about assertiveness and aggressiveness to sons and daughters. As children, boys and girls don't differ a great deal with respect to feelings of anger or aggression. Because of gender socialization, however, they learn different ways of expressing those emotions. Research shows that parents, particularly white middle-class parents, tend to reward verbal and physical activity, including aggression, in sons and to reward interpersonal and social skills in daughters. Because many girls are discouraged from direct, overt aggression yet still feel aggressive at times, they develop other, less direct ways of expressing aggression, such as those featured in the film *Mean Girls*.

Parents, especially fathers, encourage in children what they perceive to be gender-appropriate behaviors, fostering more independence, competitiveness, and aggression in sons and more emotional expressiveness and gentleness in daughters. When interacting with children, fathers tend to talk more with daughters and to engage in activities more with sons. Mothers tend to talk more about emotions and relationships with daughters than with sons. Because both mothers and fathers tend to talk more intimately with daughters than sons, daughters generally develop greater relational awareness and emotional vocabularies than sons.

However, the general patterns for family interaction do not hold true for all families. In some families, sons are socialized to be emotionally aware and expressive. For example, a student of mine named Vince is very emotionally expressive—he hugs male friends and talks openly about feelings. As we were discussing family communication in my class, Vince noted that his family is Italian and they live in an Italian neighborhood. He pointed out that, as a group, Italians tend to be more expressive and emotional than many ethnic groups.

In general, parental gender socialization is more rigid for boys than for girls, particularly in Caucasian families, and fathers are more insistent on gender-stereotyped toys and activities, especially for sons, than are mothers. Fathers generally regard it as more acceptable for girls to play baseball or football than for boys to play house or cuddle dolls. Similarly, it's considered more suitable for girls to be strong than for boys to cry and more acceptable for girls to act independently than for boys to cling to others for support. The overall pattern is that parents, especially fathers, more intensively and rigidly push sons to be masculine than they push daughters to be feminine.

Peers

Peers have at least as much and perhaps more influence than parents on our identities and communication styles. A classic study by Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker (1982) gave us initial insight into the importance of children's play in shaping patterns of communication. The researchers noticed that young children tended to play in sex-segregated groups, and groups of girls and groups of boys generally played different kinds of games. These two observations have been confirmed by more recent research.

The games that boys typically played included football, baseball, basketball, and war, whereas the games that girls tended to play included school, dolls, and house. Students in my classes have added to these lists, noting that boys' games also include cops and robbers and soccer and girls' games include tea party and dress up. The games noted by Maltz and Borker, as well as those added by my students, operate by quite different rules and cultivate distinct communication styles.

The games that boys typically play involve fairly large groups—nine individuals for each baseball team, for instance. Most boys' games are competitive, have clear goals (touchdown, basket, capturing the robbers or evading the cops), involve physically rough play (blocking linebackers, shooting robbers), and are organized by rules (nine innings to a baseball game, two points per basket) and roles (forwards shoot baskets, guards protect forwards) that specify who does what and how to play.

Because the games boys typically play are structured by goals, rules, and roles, there is limited need to discuss how to play, although there may be talk about strategies to reach goals. In playing games, boys learn to communicate to accomplish goals, compete for and maintain status, exert

control over others, get attention, and stand out. Specifically, boys' games cultivate four communication rules:

1. Use communication to assert your ideas, opinions, and identity.
2. Use talk to achieve something, such as solving problems or developing strategies.
3. Use communication to attract and maintain others' attention.
4. Use communication to compete for the "talk stage." Make yourself stand out; take attention away from others, and get others to pay attention to you.

These communication rules are consistent with other aspects of masculine socialization. For instance, notice the emphasis on individuality and competition. Also, we see that these rules accent achievement—doing something, accomplishing a goal. Boys learn that they must do things to be valued members of the team. Finally, we see the undercurrent of masculinity's emphasis on invulnerability: If your goal is to control and to be better than others, you cannot let them know too much about yourself and your weaknesses.

Quite different patterns exist in games typically played by girls, and they cultivate distinct ways of communicating. Girls tend to play in pairs or in very small groups rather than large ones. Also, games such as house and school do not have preset, clear-cut goals and roles. There is no touchdown in playing house, and the roles of daddy and mommy aren't fixed like the roles of guard and forward. Because traditional girls' games are not highly structured by external goals and roles, players have to talk among themselves to decide what to do and what roles to play.

When playing, young girls spend more time talking than doing anything else—a pattern that is not typical of young boys. Playing house, for instance, typically begins with a discussion about who is going to be the daddy and who the mommy. The lack of stipulated goals for the games is also important because it tends to cultivate girls' skill in interpersonal processes. The games generally played by girls teach four basic rules for communication:

1. Use communication to create and maintain relationships. The process of communication, not its content, is the heart of relationships.
2. Use communication to establish egalitarian relations with others. Don't outdo, criticize, or put down others. If you have to criticize, be gentle.
3. Use communication to include others—bring them into conversations, respond to their ideas.
4. Use communication to show sensitivity to others and relationships.

The typically small size of girls' play groups fosters cooperative discussion and an open-ended process of talking to organize activity, whereas the larger groups in which

boys usually play encourage competition and external rules to structure activity. Research on preschoolers found that boys gave orders and attempted to control others, whereas girls were more likely to make requests and cooperate with others. In another investigation, 9- to 14-year-old African American girls typically used inclusive and nondirective language, whereas African American boys tended to issue commands and compete for status in their groups. The bottom line is that girls tend to engage in more cooperative play, whereas boys tend to engage in more instrumental and competitive play.

Masculine and Feminine Communication Among Adults

The lessons of children's play are carried forward. The basic rules of communication that many adult women and men employ are refined and elaborated versions of those learned in childhood games.

Feminine Communication

Extensive research has identified seven features of feminine communication, which a majority of women employ. As we discuss them, think about how these features might grow out of the games typically played by young girls. First, feminine communication involves disclosing personal information and learning about others. For many women, personal communication is the primary means of building close relationships.

Second, feminine communication attempts to create equality between people. Instead of vying for MVP (most valuable player) status, women are more likely to communicate in ways that level the playing field. To create equality, women often offer matching experiences ("I've experienced the same thing") and downplay their individual accomplishments. In addition, women tend to work to include others and keep the conversation balanced so that participation is relatively equal.

Third, feminine speech tends to offer substantial support for others. In conversations, women routinely express sympathy, empathy, and agreement with others ("Of course, you feel hurt," "I know just how you feel," "I think you handled that really well"). In addition, women often communicate support by showing interest in learning more about others and their experiences ("How did you feel when that happened?" "Is this experience connected to earlier ones in your relationship?"). All these conversational behaviors demonstrate interest in others and concern for how others feel and what happens in their lives.

A fourth feature of feminine communication is doing what Pamela Fishman (1978), in a classic article, labeled "conversational maintenance work." This is the process of keeping a conversation going by inviting others to speak, asking questions that draw others into interaction, responding to what others say, and encouraging others to

elaborate their ideas. Rather than working to get and hold the talk stage for themselves, women who enact feminine communication are more likely to invest in getting everyone on the talk stage.

Fifth, feminine communication tends to be highly responsive, especially nonverbally. Women exceed men in eye contact during conversations, head nodding, and facial expressions that show interest, as well as verbal responses that demonstrate engagement in others and what they are communicating.

Sixth, feminine communication tends to include more concrete descriptions and ideas than masculine communication. Women typically include details when describing events and experiences and provide specific examples to illustrate abstract ideas. In addition, women are more likely than men to cite personal experiences as bases for broad judgments and values.

Finally, feminine communication tends to be more tentative than masculine communication. Women are more likely to use hedges (“I sort of think that plan is dangerous”), qualifiers (“I don’t have a lot of experience with this issue, but . . .”), and tag questions (“The weather is really nice, isn’t it?”). Although the tentativeness of feminine communication has been criticized for being unassertive and powerless, it is also inclusive, leaving the door open for others to enter the conversation.

Masculine Communication

Researchers have identified six features of masculine communication, which are employed by a majority of men. As you read about these, you’ll probably notice that the features are cultivated by the games that young boys typically play. The first feature of masculine communication is control or the effort to control. Many men see interaction as an arena for pitting themselves against others and proving their worth. The effort to control is displayed by asserting opinions, challenging others, and telling stories and jokes that capture others’ attention.

A second feature of masculine communication is instrumentality, which is accomplishing objectives. As a rule, males use communication to manage tasks—to do something. In interaction, instrumentality is expressed through problem solving, giving advice, devising strategies, and developing plans. In contrast to the attention to feelings and process that is typical of feminine communication, masculine style puts greater emphasis on facts and results.

Third, masculine communication tends to be used to express dominance and control. Although there are many jokes about women’s talkativeness, it is actually men who talk more in most contexts. Overall and across interaction contexts, males—both boys and men—talk more often and for longer periods of time than females—both girls and women. In addition, men are more likely than women to reroute conversations to their interests and agendas and to interrupt others to exert control over interaction and to maintain command.

Fourth, masculine communication tends to be direct and assertive. In contrast to the tentativeness of feminine communication, the masculine style tends to be more forceful, authoritative, and confident. In addition, masculine communication tends to be more direct, absolute, and unqualified than feminine communication.

Fifth, masculine communication is more abstract than feminine communication. Men rely less than women on concrete examples, specific experiences, and concrete reasoning. Instead, men often talk at abstract levels, relying on generalizations and conceptual levels of description. For example, a man might note that Barack Obama is “politically progressive,” which is an abstract and general phrase. A more concrete observation would be that Barack Obama voted against the war in Iraq and for legislation to provide support for children.

A final feature of masculine communication is restricted emotionality. In general, men’s speech is less emotional, and they disclose less about feelings, fears, concerns, and personal thoughts than women. In addition, men tend to be less emotionally responsive to others’ communication. By extension, they are less likely than women to express sympathy, empathy, or other feelings in response to what others say.

Anthony Mulac (2006) recently studied women’s and men’s language to see whether the differences noted in earlier research still exist. Based on his findings, Mulac stated that women and men “grew up in different sociolinguistic cultural groups, groups that have subtly different styles and therefore subtly different ways of accomplishing the same communicative task” (p. 236). Note that Mulac calls these “subtly different styles,” which is a more nuanced and accurate description than offered by some popular advice book authors who claim that women and men are so different, they are from different planets. Mulac identified 6 distinctive characteristics of men’s use language and 10 distinctive characteristics of women’s language. As you consider Mulac’s findings, which are summarized in Table 41.2, ask how each characteristic fits with the features of women’s and men’s communication that we have just discussed.

Qualifying Research Findings

Before we conclude this discussion of gendered patterns of communication, I want to emphasize the limits of what research can tell us. Research on gendered styles of communicating provides us with generalizations about how women and men, in general, communicate in a specific cultural context. It cannot tell us how any particular individual will communicate. Some men communicate in primarily feminine ways, and some women communicate in primarily masculine ways. As we saw in the example of Vince, ethnicity interacts with gender to shape communication style. Men who are socialized in expressive ethnic communities are likely to be more emotionally expressive than men who are not. Likewise, women who are socialized in emotionally inexpressive ethnic groups tend to be

<i>Women's Language</i>	<i>Men's Language</i>
Intensive adverbs (That's really exciting.)	References to quantity (A BMW Mini Cooper gets 50% better gas mileage than a Honda Accord.)
Emotion references (I feel overwhelmed by love for my child.)	Judgmental adjectives (That's a stupid opinion.)
Dependent clauses (I am majoring in communication, which is a very dynamic field.)	Elliptical sentences (Good job.)
Sentence-initial adverbs (When I stay up late, I feel terrible the next day.)	Directives (Work on it.)
Uncertainty verbs (I might get the job.)	Locatives (location markers) (The house faces north, northwest.)
Oppositions (The teacher is demanding, yet she is also fair.)	I-references (I have a busy schedule.)
Negations (Speaking up in class will not make you sound like a nerd.)	
Hedges (I'm sort of thinking we should stay in tonight.)	
Questions	
Longer sentences	

Table 41.2 Women's and Men's Use of Language

less emotionally expressive than women who are socialized in Western feminine speech communities.

We should also note that most people—regardless of sex and gender—engage in some masculine and some feminine communication behaviors. If you compare your own verbal and nonverbal behaviors with the descriptions of masculine and feminine communication we've discussed in this chapter, you'll probably discover that your communication includes some features that are classified as feminine and some that are classified as masculine. Very few of us communicate in solely masculine or solely feminine ways.

Finally, what is considered masculine and feminine communication varies across cultures and over time. For this reason, what is regarded as masculine in the United States might be feminine or androgynous in another culture. Also, what is considered feminine or masculine today might have been perceived otherwise in a different era. For example, it is not uncommon today for males to wear earrings or necklaces. In the 1800s, a man who wore such jewelry would have been seen as inappropriately feminine.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced you to an area of research and teaching that has fascinated me for more than 20 years. In the first section of the chapter, I defined key concepts—sex, gender, and communication—and then examined how researchers have thought about each one and its relation to the other two. The second section of the chapter focused on gendered styles

of communication. We traced the influence of family and peers on children's development of gender identity and, by extension, gendered patterns of communication. We also considered specific features of masculine and feminine communication that researchers have identified.

What we've covered in this chapter tells us only what gender means in our society today. What it can or will mean in the future is an open question and one that you will take part in answering. Each of us is part of the ongoing process of constructing gender, communication, and culture. Each of us affects what they are and will be.

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ETHNICITY

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I am an African American, southern, Christian woman, born when the South recognized segregation as the embodiment of its strongest tradition—one that was legally mandated and had to be observed on penalty of ostracism for whites and even death for blacks. What I learned and practiced and lived from the day I was born is my culture. It was second nature to me and as much a part of my Louisiana upbringing as breathing.

I have always understood that culture and communication styles were an outgrowth of one's existence. With segregation looming large in my community as I grew up, everything about me was prescribed by cultural factors: who I was, where I belonged, what I could and could not do, where I could go or stay (live), when I could or could not do something, and how I must act. Everything was connected with my culture.

The knowledge base of my culture was its community, its people, and its institutions, and I learned from them all. Those early encounters taught me lessons about the rules of engagement for interpersonal interactions with both the White and Black people I would meet throughout my life.

I remember once, as a child of about 8 or 9, being sent to this White couple's home to pick up my older sister's weekly wages (for housekeeping). Not understanding "my place," I knocked on the front door but did not get an answer. I knew someone was home because of the sound of pacing back and forth and the movement of the window shades and curtains. Eventually, after a long wait at the door and constant knocking on my part, the owner opened the door ever so slightly, telling me to go around to the back. I told him what I wanted, and I guess I must have looked puzzled, so he quickly explained, very kindly, that the air conditioning was on and if he opened the door wider, all the air

conditioning would leave the house! Knowing nothing about air conditioning and believing that adults don't lie, I obeyed, went to the back door, collected my sister's wages and a piece of candy for myself, and went home.

After observing my family's looks of amusement, disgust, and shame, as well as listening to their remarks at my retelling, I learned several lessons about communication with Whites. My first rule was that I was to distrust them and never take what they said at face value. I also learned that if I was clear, direct, and persistent, I could get a White person to break down his or her resolve and begin negotiating.

I had very little contact with Whites as I grew up because my family wanted to protect me from the tremendous negatives of the reality of our existence. Also my contact with Whites was limited due to the very nature of the South at that time. Black people stayed in their neighborhoods, and Whites stayed in theirs, unless there were legitimate business reasons to do otherwise. The few contacts I did have simply reinforced my understanding of communication with Whites. (Communicating with people of other cultural groups was nonexistent for there was hardly any appreciable difference among them, from my limited understanding.)

Except for the occasional brush (name-calling) with the White kids who rode the bus past us as we (Black kids) walked to school, I never had a conversation or interaction with a White person my age until I was a graduate (PhD) student. Therefore, when the need for conversation and interaction with Whites arose (when they became my classmates), I was initially intimidated: I had been led to believe that they were naturally smarter (more intelligent) than me (or any Black person). I had heard from adults in my youth that "you have to study twice as hard as Whites to get half as far," which was meant to keep us focused on our studies

(but served to also raise the standards too high for some Black students). As my experience began to teach me, I learned better. Our parents and teachers had always told us otherwise. They would say, “The one thing Whites cannot take from you is what’s in your head. Study hard; learn even more than they learn. It doesn’t matter if the books are outdated; learn anyway.” I remember my first day of class in graduate school. I was in an English literature class, and a student from the back of the class asked a particularly naïve question. From the front, I turned completely around to assure myself that this was a White student before I said to myself, “I guess I’m home free in this class, if this is the level of intelligence that I have to deal with.”

I developed a somewhat cautious, questioning, and suspicious manner of communicating with Whites. I became with them proper, firm, and resolved. More than 30 years later, I still find myself using this style of communication with Whites, unless we have a personal relationship. My communication style (as is most people’s) is different with people from my own racial/ethnic/cultural background.

Growing up in the South, I was taught to speak to every adult I saw, no matter how many times during the day I saw them; to respond to them courteously by saying “Yes, m’am” (or sir); never to dispute the word of an adult; and never to look an adult straight in the eye, especially when being scolded. (“Girl, don’t you look at me in that tone of voice,” we would be told.) Respect and deference to adults was a requirement, and if ever reported otherwise, severe and swift punishment was given. As a little girl, I would pass “Miss Anna’s” house on my way to see my friend. I remember that, on one occasion, I didn’t speak to her, for I had done so a few hours before. As I passed her house, she called out to me: “Little girl, did I sleep at your house last night?” “No, m’am,” I said, with puzzlement. “Then why didn’t you speak to me? Did the cat take your tongue?” “No, m’am. How you doing today?” “Just fine, thank you. And the next time you don’t speak, me and your momma ‘gon tan your little hide. You understand me?” “Yes, m’am.”

Respect for adults was a serious matter. Each adult had the authority to spank a child, if spanking was needed. This respect and authority were assumed by every Black adult who knew one’s parents, and if the parent heard that her or his child had received a spanking from someone, the child was bound to get another for the same infraction when she or he got home. Whites were not given this unspoken authority, nor did they take it. Their threat was to ask for your parents’ names.

Children knew to be respectful to Whites, as to any other adults, but they often took liberties with them that they would never take with friends of their parents. An example that comes to mind is a time, as a teenager, when I worked as a receptionist for a Black-owned taxi company. The White owner of a store in town called a cab for a Black customer. She asked if we had a taxi that could pick up her customer, and my response was “Yes, we do.” She was outraged and asked if I knew who she was. My response was “Yes, you are Mrs. Anderson.” “Don’t you know that I’m a White woman, and didn’t your folks teach

you to say ‘Yes, m’am’ and ‘No, m’am’ to White folks?” Of course, I responded that I had been taught to be courteous to everyone and that I had been courteous to her. She eventually demanded from the owner that he fire me for “sassying” (talking back to) White people or she would not give him any more business. I refused. I was fired.

Disagreements about how Black people should speak and interact with Whites happened all the time, so most parents had prepared their children for certain eventualities. Usually, parents insisted that their children acquiesce to what the White person said for two reasons: one, so that the child would not get in trouble with the authorities or with any White person and, two, so that the child would be able to keep her or his job (the money was needed). In my case, I was saved because I had another job as a musician at a church and, most important, I *had* been courteous.

There were other things that dictated my (southern) behavior, as well. From the time I can remember, I went to church at least three times on Sunday and at least once during the week. We were told that with all the poverty and other indignities suffered during the course of a week, Black folks would go out of their minds if they did not have the Church as support. In church, they were able to “take their burdens to the altar (or to the Lord) and leave them there.” This ritual, this deference to God, would allow them to cope with the next week’s difficulties and situations. It was at church that we became familiar with our African heritage (though Africa was never mentioned—it had been made more a badge of shame than of honor).

It was at church that we were introduced to songs that brought memories of our past to the forefront, songs such as “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,” “Gonna Lay Down My Burdens, Down by the River Side,” and “Steal Away, Steal Away Home.” These songs and others also showed us how our forebears were able to make it through slavery by depending on each other and on God. Drums and tambourines, the spontaneous holy dance, the call-response of the minister and the congregation, the prayers to God that also invoked the spirits of our ancestors—all were given a place and space in spirited worship services that allowed Black folks to be in touch with the very essence of their being. Songs told us to “hold on, a change’s gon’ come” because “God’s gon’ trouble the waters.” These songs were taught to us to give us the strength and courage to move forward.

Music, dancing, singing, and storytelling, whether in public or private settings, were a part of most interactions or gatherings. Even in serious conversation, the cultural tradition is to make points clear by sharing an experience, telling a story, referencing a Biblical passage or proverb, quoting some adage that had been overheard from an adult conversation or a sermon or hymn in church. This practice continues to this day. In gatherings of friends, it is not unusual, no matter what the topic, to hear someone say, “As my mother would say . . .” It is an African American cultural pattern to give homage to the ancestors, to remember and respect the past.

African American culture is solidly rooted in the Christian Church. Probably the most important institution we have is still the Church. It is probably the only institution that we can call our own, for though it is not indigenously ours, it was made ours by the ingenuity of our forebears. It was the place where Black folk could find relief, comfort, and peace from the negative forces of the world. We were taught early to respect and revere God and His house. The church was sacred ground, for not only did we worship there, we also learned how to live, how to conduct ourselves, and who we were as a people.

The church was also the place where we were taught to protest ill-treatment. The tradition of protest grounded in the Church was not confined to the 1950s and 1960s but reached back historically to the 1800s with the example of Absalom Jones, Richard Allen, and Bishop Henry McNeal Turner. We often heard of Booker T. Washington through discussions of the importance and prominence of Black colleges and universities. Teachers and a few business leaders talked quietly about W. E. B. Du Bois when they spoke proudly of the good that he did through the organization he founded, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). They spoke quietly of him and the organization because they knew that if Whites found out that they were promoting and supporting the organization, they would be fired and even run out of town. It was considered subversive. Anything that dealt with ridding the South of segregation was considered anti-American or communist inspired and was the ground for all kinds of retaliation.

Despite the fear of losing their livelihoods, our parents, teachers, ministers, business people, and so on showed us pride, perseverance, and determination, telling us that, despite the odds, we would make it. I remember in the 1960s when we all went off to college, our parents proudly told us to go on and protest, to stand up for our people and for our rights but just try not to get our pictures in the newspapers because they (our parents and community folks) might get fired or run out of town. In the end, they evidently decided that their modeling behavior of “doing what was right” was more important than losing their jobs, their homes, or their businesses. (And while, initially, they were threatened with the loss of their jobs, the Whites realized they were unable to run their businesses without the Black people, so they rehired them.) They taught us to fight for our rights and for our freedom, to resist bondage no matter what the consequences. This seems to be a cultural trait dating all the way back to Africa. But for us in the South, we were taught what to do and how to do it in the church; the place we went for solace was also the place we went to learn to protest.

As a child growing up, the church was the center of our lives in the South. There was very little in the way of entertainment for Black youth then outside of school activities. Socializing, like most everything else, was left to the ingenuity of the adults, the children, and the needs of the community. It was through this ingenuity that cultural values, ways of knowing and being, were ingrained. After-school hours and weekends were spent cleaning the house, washing

and ironing clothes, fixing up things in the house and around the home that needed repair, helping neighbors or someone from the Church who needed help. Responsibility; concern for family, friends, and neighbors; respect for the home and the neighborhood were taught. As youth, we saw our community members rally around those in need, and as a result, we learned a respect and reverence for adults, especially older adults. We were constantly taking food to the elderly or someone who was ill. We had to go to the store for those who couldn't walk or found it difficult to do so.

There were certainly colorful ways to teach us lessons about how to behave, just as there were about how to treat each other, how and why to tell the truth, and so forth. Sometimes, we were told powerful stories with morals; at other times, we were given adages about truth and behavior. We all knew that “a child was to be seen and not heard.” That little saying had to do with the fact that no adult would tolerate “back talk” from a child. A child did exactly what an adult told her or him to do—nothing more, nothing less—or there would be severe consequences to pay. I heard over and over again that “what goes around comes around,” and I understood its meaning and teaching as if you do bad things to people, someone will do bad things to you. But when I heard a group of adults talking about something particularly egregious, I heard one say, “Don't nothing go over a devil's back that don't buckle under his belly.” I was floored. I had never heard that statement before, not in reference to things children did. I soon found out that for the old folks to use this reference, it had to be unbelievably bad behavior. I discovered later that something bad happened to the person who had initiated the first act. I heard the same group saying, “I told you, God don't like ugly!” And then the other person said the familiar “Folks don't believe that what goes around comes around.”

Girls were usually upbraided by adults who saw them do mean things to other girls with a gentler rebuke: “Pretty is as pretty does.” We all wanted to be considered pretty, so we were admonished by calling attention to our behavior with references to our physical attributes. We understood them to mean that we could not be pretty girls unless we treated people with a sweet, pretty spirit.

The dearest story I will always remember was about respect: not the usual respect a child must always have for adults, but how one particular man showed respect for my friends and me. It absolutely changed my behavior, which was why my mother took the time to explain it to me (and my friends) in such particular detail.

My friends and I had been playing and were sitting on the front porch resting, and giggling as little girls do. An old man (at least to us) who was passing by the house saw us, stopped, took off his hat and deferentially nodded to us as he said, “Good evening, Miss Peaches, Ms. Micky, and Miss Honey” (every Black child seemed to have had a nickname in the South). Naturally, we spoke to him, but then began giggling almost uncontrollably. Deacon Hall, as he was called, replaced his hat and went on his way.

My mother was nearby in the house and heard the entire exchange. She called us inside and had us sit down. We couldn't imagine what she wanted for we were just playing, staying out of her way. She had a very stern look on her face when she started to talk to us. She first asked us why we were laughing so hard when Deacon Hall spoke to us. We told her how silly and funny he was for calling us "Miss" and bowing at us with his hat in his hand. She, then, told us the story of slavery and segregation and how "Negro" people were treated. She told us how the Negroes had to work for White people, clean their yards, attend their cotton plantations, and entertain or play with their children. All the while when the children were 5, 6, 10, and 11, the men call them Mary, Jenny, and Martha (by their first names). But as soon as they turned 12 years old, these old men had to stop calling them by their names and called them "Miss Mary," "Miss Jenny," and "Miss Martha" just because they were White and the men were Black. Black men have to bow to them and take their hats off to them.

White folks say that that's the way they want Black folks to show White "women" respect. Deacon Hall believes that if he has to show White women respect when they turn 12 years old, then the least he can do is show his "own kind" respect, too. "So I never want to hear any of you laugh at Deacon Hall. Instead, I want you to smile at him every time you see him and speak to him. I want you to respect him because he's showing you how much he respects you." Throughout my mother's talk with us, she was crying. We didn't understand her tears then, but we all do now. I cannot remember ever disrespecting Deacon Hall or any other adult again. It was a powerful lesson, as were most of our lessons about race.

Just as powerful were our teachings about love, respect, and responsibility for family. These lessons started at home and were reinforced in school, at church and in the wider community. As children, we believed that the name of God and "mother" were practically the same. We always heard sayings such as "There's nothing like a mother's love," "A mother's love is more precious than gold," and "What did your mother say?" The family (as in most cultures) was the center of our existence. Being Black in the South, we came to know also that if our parents were not around (e.g., if they were at work), our older siblings were in charge. It was their responsibility to take care of the younger siblings in every way. I hardly knew the difference, except in name, between my parents and my older siblings, for I had to obey them in the same way I obeyed my parents. They helped me to do everything: They helped me with my school work, cooked and fed me, gave me baths and dressed me, fought my battles and interceded on my behalf. As they grew up and left home to start their lives on their own in places where segregation was not so blatantly practiced, they continued to act as surrogate parents. Each of them helped our parents provide for college for the younger ones. It was their responsibility.

As our parents aged, taking care of them became the responsibility of the siblings, as well, for their parents, the

thinking goes, cared for them the best they knew how when they were young and unable to care for themselves. According to each of their "talents and gifts," all the children provided for our parents, so that their lives were lived out at home, happy and fulfilled until their deaths. This was our duty, our responsibility, and, most important, our desire. It seems now, for many older Black southerners, an abomination to observe children placing their parents in nursing homes, despite "how times have changed."

One of the biggest things that "outsiders" celebrate about Black southern culture is our food. The South is known for its delicious food, and most southerners are excellent cooks. I believe that one of the reasons food is such a fixation is the tendency to use practically every living creature for eating. Growing up, I remember that the active pastime for men and boys was hunting. Most men had rifles, and a rite of passage for boys was receiving a B-B gun for Christmas. (Boys often got in trouble for aiming at and/or shooting at the wrong thing.) Fathers planned outings to go into the woods to hunt, often taking their boys along to teach them. They would come back with quail, rabbits, squirrels, possums, deer, and the boys would proudly bring back a small bird. They would hang their catch outside to drain the blood and "skin" the hides. All parts of these animals would be used (e.g., the intestines of hogs, fondly called chitterlings). The smell was awful, but our mothers (and sisters) would prepare the animals for delectable meals, using all manner of seasonings to rid them of their wild, natural taste.

Later, I discovered a lot of this was done because of poverty. Black families in the South were usually poor. Recipes had been passed down through generations of slaves who had been given only the leftover parts of animals to eat. "They made the best out of a bad situation and fed their families" is one of the more popular sayings that explains Black southern foods. It is because of poverty and ingenuity that one of the famous southern cultural traditions is its very tasty, spicy foods. The cakes and candies were made to reward the children for their good behavior and for eating whatever was placed before them.

There is not a time when we southerners go home for visits that our friends don't have a list of goodies that they require us to bring them back: meats, sauces, breads, cakes, and candies.

African American culture is an extremely complex subject, just as American culture is diverse and complex. Because a large part of American culture is based on immigrant cultures, depending on where one resides, the culture may consist of tendencies, beliefs, and ways selected from several different immigrant cultures. Additionally, as times and laws change, people relocate, technology advances, and educational levels increase, interactions with people of different backgrounds become a common part of our lives. No one in the United States of America lives in isolation.

Even southern culture during segregation varied depending on where—in which state and which part of the South—one resided. Rural and metropolitan ways of

interacting and socializing are also different, as individuals from the same families are different. People grow and change. Some change because the times change. Newer generations experience some of the basic tenets of their culture, but they also develop their own values and beliefs. Some are based on extensions of what they learned from their parents, but some also come from what they learned and experienced from their own surroundings and the ways they look at the world.

Though most of what I have discussed about Black American southern culture was that which was instilled in me as a child growing up in my southern town—where interactions were mostly Black to Black, by the time I left for graduate school in 1969, the revolution was well on its way. Not only had Black people gotten civil rights laws changed, but White women had joined the protest and were fighting for their rights as well.

My own initial realization that African American culture is a complex subject happened when I was a PhD student in my first intercultural communication class at UCLA. The class consisted of mostly White students, but there were two other African Americans as well. Clearly, there were differing opinions and perspectives between the Black and White students, but for me, the most salient disagreement was between another Black student and me.

The discussion centered on how people select role models as part of their cultural selves. What is it in one's culture that makes one person pattern her or his life after another? Is it her or his chosen profession, the sound of her or his voice, the way a woman or man carries herself or himself, or what and how she or he wears her or his clothes? And then there is the issue of values—what is important to a person, what does she or he find worthwhile, what does she or he consider right or wrong, what does she or he respect or disregard? It was this discussion that made me realize that there is not a monolithic African American perspective shared by all within the race and across generations.

Culture also has to do with environment, with exposure, with one's way of life. I talked of teachers as being my role models (as did the other female Black student in the class, whose parents had migrated from the South). The male student kept looking at me, incredulously, all the while I spoke. He finally exclaimed, "*Teachers!?* What kid wants to be a teacher? They're not cool; they have no money! No cool cars, no sharp clothes! Parents and teachers can't compete with the fast life of the city, sad to say, but I'm from New York City, and that is my reality."

Yet, as I relive our conversation, I realize that *his* reality still manifested itself into his being a PhD student. What accounts for that? Where were his parents born and raised, or their parent's parents? Despite "his reality," who had he chosen for his role models? How did he decide that he wanted to be a researcher, an academician? How far-reaching is culture?

Often, we look askance at our young people today and fail to see any of our own cultural traits or traditions in them. All we see is the media/technology culture that

surrounds their generation. Yet we hear them proudly speak of themselves as African Americans or Blacks. We see them dutifully care for their sick parents. We hear them speak the language of their peers: hip-hop, neo-soul, bling-bling, YouTube. We think that they have exchanged one Black American culture for another. But is that realistic?

There continue to be competing claims on "Blackness." This competition began in the 1960s, when we wondered aloud, "Am I Black enough?"; when we recognized that we actually enjoyed and liked our White friends; when we chose to straighten our hair and stopped wearing our "afros"; or when we chose to buy our homes in the suburbs and send our children to tony private schools for a better education.

I have no doubt that I am the product of my environment, that I reflect the opportunities and experiences I have had, that I am driven by the needs and wants and desires of my existence, and that I am my culture in a unique form. I communicate from this perspective, and I am confident of this truth.

Suggestions for Discussion

By recounting the story of Miss Peaches, I hoped to provide a personal account of African American culture from my perspective. But I always thought that while this perspective was unique to me, it was also shared by many others in my community. In fact, I believe that my story reveals quite a bit about how African Americans communicate, both within their own communities and outside of those communities.

In this section, I want to identify some of the dimensions of the story that I believe are worthy of further consideration from a communication perspective. I hope that you will reflect on the following dimensions of the story and come to your own conclusions when considering the challenges that I pose for each dimension.

Common Culture. It is widely believed that African Americans share a common culture. From my perspective, there are parts of Miss Peaches's story that reflect a common culture, and there are parts that argue against this idea. I hope that you will go back to the story and look for what it is about the story that justifies this belief and what dispels this notion.

Communal Culture. I pointed out earlier that an aspect of Black American culture is that it is communal. Look for examples of communalism in Miss Peaches's story. Is the characteristic of communalism limited to African Americans? Think about examples of communalism from other ethnic groups or from your own experiences and/or observations. How, if at all, does communalism vary among ethnic groups? How could communalism provide either a benefit or a barrier to effective communication between people of different ethnicities?

Afrocentrism. Afrocentricity is a broad notion of communication that deals with the idea of an African-centered means of interpreting what we perceive of the world. What, if anything, can you see in Miss Peaches's story that makes it Afrocentric? How does awareness of an Afrocentric point of view help or hinder communication among African Americans or between African Americans and people of other ethnicities? Is "Whiteness"—the tendency to view the communication patterns of the dominant culture as being "normal" and "taken for granted"—the opposite of Afrocentrism?

Interchangeability. I used both of the terms *Black* and *African American* in telling Miss Peaches's story. What is the significance of using these terms interchangeably? Are there times when one term is preferred over the other? Can you "get in trouble" if you are not African American by using the "wrong" term?

Nonuniqueness. Some of the cultural traditions I discussed from my experience of being African American are seen in other cultures. What does this say about culture in general? Are all cultures really mostly alike with only a few differences among them, are cultures mostly different with only a little overlap, or is the truth somewhere in between?

The Legacy of Segregation. Since segregation is no longer practiced in the United States on an official level, one might easily wonder what value there is in discussing it in today's society or in the context of African American culture. Yet segregation is still a very significant portion of African Americans' experience in the United States, and its legacy remains fresh through stories such as the one about Miss Peaches. How does the segregation of the past affect communication between various ethnic groups today? How does this legacy still turn up in everyday activities (e.g., separate Black tables in campus dining halls and campus clubs whose members are, pretty exclusively, Black students)? Should we forget segregation and if so, how? If not, why not?

Religion. In Miss Peaches's story, there were several instances where religion as a cultural tradition was mentioned. In the African American community, some scholars point to religion as being one of the negatives of this culture, but for Miss Peaches, religion was always a positive aspect of life as an African American in the United States. I hope that you will give some thought to how this aspect of Black culture can be seen as both positive and negative. And returning to the previous point, it has been said that church is one place where segregation still exists in the United States. I hope that you will think through why this seems to be the case, and what about separation in worship is both positive and negative.

Black Enough? Toward the end of Miss Peaches's story, I reflected on how Black culture has been in a constant state

of revision and how younger people may criticize older people for being, perhaps, "out of touch" or even "not Black enough." To me, it's the nature of culture to evolve, and yet some things do endure. I hope that you will think about the various cultural forms that being Black takes and that you'll consider how competing claims on who represents the "real" Black culture are part of that evolutionary process.

The Role of Gender and Generation. Miss Peaches's story is about a woman who grew up and progressed through adulthood in a particular time and place. The story of a man from that same time and place would have similarities, but it would also have important differences. And African Americans who came of age even a generation later share a different story. As you consider Miss Peaches' story, think about what you can extrapolate from her narrative to understand gender, generational, and ethnic influences on cultural groups.

One or Many? Miss Peaches's story relates one person's experience and ideas about African American culture. It is, indeed, only one person's story; but if certain elements of it ring true, then it is probably shared by others as well. As you reflect on this story, I encourage you to think about how the perspective of one person's life informs you about African American southern culture.

In the final section of this chapter, I have provided citations to a range of excellent current scholarship on how various approaches to the study of communication consider the role of ethnicity in the communication process. I hope that you will use these sources as a means of deepening the understanding of the role of ethnicity that I have introduced to you by telling you the story of Miss Peaches.

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION

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Sexual orientation emerged as a key issue in the communication discipline over the past 30 years. The topic initially surfaced in the 1970s as an issue brought forth primarily by activist scholars and over time evolved into an aspect of communication dynamics studied within and across virtually every field of communication. The term is typically used to describe the directionality of a person's physical and/or psychological attraction, with regard to the desired partner's sex. Sexual orientation is generally conceptualized to exist on a continuum rather than to occur as a discrete category. Scientists see genetic predispositions, environmental influences, and culture as the main contributors to a person's sexual orientation, acknowledging that individuals may express differently or reconceptualize their sexual orientation over the life span.

Less commonly defined as sexual preference because of that term's implicit notion of choice, sexual orientation has come to function as a gender or sexual identity category, particularly in North American and European cultures. However, in other cultural contexts, same-sex attraction or same-sex sexual behavior are often experienced separate from gender or sexual identity categories. Driven by queer theory, changing generational communication practices, and localized resistance to homogenizing Western values, some are questioning the political benefit and sociocultural relevance of labeling one's identity on the basis of one's sexual behavior. At the same time, activists and community members continue to call attention to the power of identity-based social organizing in the continued political struggle for equal rights. The terms *sexual orientation* and *sexual minority* are contested, particularly in light of queer scholarship, in the study of nonheterosexual individuals and groups. Today, some communication scholars continue

to use the term *sexual minority* in reference to nonheterosexual populations to call attention to the fact that its members belong to a numerical social minority that continues to be disadvantaged in terms of legal rights and social customs. Researchers tend to estimate the percentage of exclusively gay or lesbian individuals in a given population in a range from 3% to 10% across cultures.

The sexual minority model has been challenged by communication scholars emphasizing that those individuals' gender identities and sexual orientations tend to change over the life span. However, in light of persisting social and legal discrimination in the United States, some scholars argue that it is more important to study the dynamics affecting people who identify as nonheterosexual at a given point in time than to study the more abstract, cultural phenomena that provide the context for expressions of sexual orientation.

Today, sexual orientation is included in standard communication textbooks and recognized as a variable affecting communication patterns, an issue creating specific communication dynamics (e.g., outing, coming out), a media phenomenon, and a gender-related identity construction co-created in cultural settings.

Emergence of Sexual Orientation as a Communication Issue

Coinciding in time with the emergence of a gay liberation movement in the United States in the early 1970s and its transformation into a broader gay and lesbian rights movement in the late 1970s, scholars and teachers of communication began raising the issue of sexual orientation.

Most commonly, the beginnings of the U.S. gay and lesbian rights movement are attributed to the Stonewall Riots, June 27–29, 1969, in New York City, which occurred after a police raid on a gay bar. Since then, social and cultural acceptance of same-sex attraction and sex have increased in the United States. World history accounts for numerous changes in social and legal conventions and understandings of sexual orientation as a moral, legal, personal, private, medical, social, or religious issue. Periods of acceptance within nations and cultural communities have often been followed by periods of social persecution, although it seems that the current global level of nondiscrimination and protection is unprecedented.

The U.S.-based gay rights movement grew out of resistance to the repression, criminalization, and pathologization of same-sex practices as psychological disorders in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s. While sexual orientation no longer was commonly treated as an illness following the removal of homosexuality from the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in 1973, there is no federal legal protection from discrimination on the basis of real or perceived sexual orientation to date. Less than half of the U.S. states have adopted laws prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in public and/or private employment. The related issue of discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression particularly affects transgender people, who may or may not identify as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Diagnostic categories pertaining to the lives of transgender people, such as "gender identity disorder" and "transvestic fetishism," continue to be included in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. Trends in legislation, however, are countered by trends in the corporate world. A record number of Fortune 500 companies offer protection from discrimination to gay and lesbian employees and their partners, and a steadily increasing number of private employers have adopted nondiscrimination policies, diversity training, and benefits designed to accommodate "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer" (l/g/b/t/q) families.

Analogous to the growing disciplinary awareness of the underrepresentation of women or ethnic minorities, several key concerns emerged in the 1970s: the invisibility of non-heterosexual people in communication textbooks and curricula; the pedagogical presumption that all students are heterosexual; the lack of gay and lesbian faculty, and the civil rights concerns of gays and lesbians.

Communication literature from this early time period primarily sought to rectify the legacy of unquestioned heteronormativity—typically defined as the assumption that people are heterosexual and that heterosexuality is the norm—by conducting studies with a focus on individuals who did not identify as heterosexual. The famous Kinsey Reports published in 1948 and 1953 by a team of researchers led by the biologist Alfred Kinsey had fundamentally challenged the notions of sexual behavior

prevalent in the 1950s. The Kinsey Reports documented the existence of sexual orientation on a continuum, implying that while some individuals are exclusively heterosexual or exclusively gay or lesbian, many experience varying levels of attraction to the same and the opposite sex.

Initially, some scholars studied the communication patterns and experiences of gay men and lesbians within their own communities; some scholars set out to document differences in communication dynamics between heterosexual and gay and lesbian speech communities; some scholars focused explicitly on language and its role in gay and lesbian communication. With these studies, communication scholars brought to light the differences and similarities in communities resulting from sexual orientation dynamics.

James W. Chesebro was probably the first U.S. communication scholar to explicitly conceptualize same-sex orientation, or the construction of homosexuality, as predominantly a communication problem. In 1981, he edited the groundbreaking collection of essays titled *Gayspeak: Gay Male and Lesbian Communication*. The volume was prepared through the (then) Caucus on Gay Male and Lesbian Concerns of the (then) Speech Communication Association. For the communication discipline, this collection of 25 essays was unique because of its emphasis on communication within gay and lesbian communities as well as between gay/lesbian and heterosexual communities. The essays explored verbal and nonverbal communication. They addressed the social meanings of the words *homosexual*, *gay*, and *lesbian*, as well as communication within gay communities and the phenomenon of homophobia—the irrational fear of, or aversion to, homosexuality or l/g/b/t/q people.

The essays also addressed institutional forces shaping public images of gay males and lesbians, gay liberation as a rhetorical movement, gay rights and political campaigns, and the construction of homosexuality by heterosexual communication practices. The publication of this volume made a substantial contribution to the slowly growing validation and respectability of the study of sexual orientation within communication studies. Communication scholars increasingly began to present competitively referred papers and panel contributions at regional and national communication conventions. But it wasn't until 1994 that a follow-up volume to Chesebro's *Gayspeak* was published.

The text, *Queer Words, Queer Images: Communication and the Construction of Homosexuality*, edited by Jeffrey Ringer (1994), sought to extend the first contributions of communication theory pertaining to sexual orientation. The essays in this volume examined the rhetoric of gay politicians, the symbols and strategies used during the coming-out process, the strategies used to resolve conflicts in gay and lesbian relationships, considerations about coming out in the classroom, and media portrayals of gay men and lesbians. While the text focused on extending insight into unique gay male and lesbian communication patterns, it moved the treatment of sexual orientation further into the discipline by presenting sexual orientation as an issue

whose study can enrich a general, holistic understanding of human communication. Ringer's goals for the book were to provide current substantive research findings on homosexuality from a communication perspective, to identify how research into gay and lesbian behavior informs communication theory in general, to provide a research agenda for the future, and to provide a supplemental textbook for communication courses. At the time of its publication, sexual orientation was typically not addressed in communication textbooks.

The majority of scholarship generated between the early 1970s and late 1980s did not question the dichotomy of heterosexuality/homosexuality. Like other communication research at the time, it was mostly conducted by white researchers involving white participants; it was predominantly conducted and published in English; and the experiences of bisexual, intersex, transsexual, or transgendered people were rarely mentioned. The experiences of gay men and lesbians were often studied as discrete phenomena. Access to human participants was difficult. The risk for researchers and human participants was substantial and skewed participation to those less affected by social, legal, and political considerations, as examined in Toni McNaron's (1996) *Poisoned Ivy: Lesbian and Gay Academics Confronting Homophobia*, which reported on the experiences of about 300 lesbian and gay academics.

Starting with the late 1990s, three overlapping social developments particularly affected the communication dynamics surrounding sexual orientation: an evolving social focus on cultural diversity, communication changes resulting from the popularity of emerging technologies, and trends in popular culture and media representation.

Social Focus on Cultural Diversity

Recent research and scholarship have addressed the dynamics of sexual orientation within specific co-cultural groups, in other national or ethnic cultures, and on a global level. Scholarship involving bisexual and transgender people has increased and seeks to be more inclusive of sexual orientations and gender identities other than gay male or lesbian in communication studies. The phrase *lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer* (l/g/b/t/q) was widely adopted, locally and globally, to denote nonheterosexual communities. On college campuses in particular, several groups opted to acknowledge intersex individuals, straight supportive people, and those questioning their sexual orientation and gender identity by including them in group titles and acronyms. Within the communication discipline's leading academic associations, name changes to sections and divisions reflected the desire to be more inclusive. The National Communication Association's (NCA's) Caucus on Gay and Lesbian Concerns changed its name to the Caucus on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns and broadened the title of its Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender (GLBT) Studies Division; the

International Communication Association renamed its Gay and Lesbian Studies Interest Group the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Studies Interest Group. Scholars in these interest groups pursue the analysis and critique of discourses of sexuality and gender, particularly those that inform the lives of l/g/b/t/q people. Studies examine links to broader social and cultural practices and investigate individual and group identity formation.

Popular Culture and Media Representations

A significant body of scholarship has focused on media constructions and representations of sexual orientation. The (in)visibility of l/g/b/t/q people in the media emerged as a popular topic of communication scholarship in the last decade, prompting assessments of historical developments in the making. In the 1950s and 1960s, mass media portrayals of l/g/b/t/q people were limited to criminalized or diseased characters. L/g/b/t/q people appeared rarely and remained largely invisible; a few portrayals were heavily coded, allowing for in-group consumption only. Such portrayals of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender characters have been decoded in documentaries and media analyses such as Vito Russo's (1987) landmark book and film *The Celluloid Closet*. Russo, a gay activist and film historian, cofounded the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), a media-monitoring group that follows representation of l/g/b/t/q characters in the mainstream media.

In the 1970s and 1980s, portrayals became more sympathetic. Same-sex orientation was typically construed as a problem, however, and the often one-dimensional characters were preoccupied with their same-sex desire. Such sympathetic portrayals were often linked to the gay and bisexual men's communities that struggled with the spread of HIV infections and AIDS, such as in the 1993 movie *Philadelphia*, which centers on a gay man suffering from AIDS who is fired from a conservative law firm because of his condition. Portrayals of l/g/b/t/q people changed drastically in the 1990s and 2000s, when gay and lesbian characters began to be cast in recurring characters rather than one-time appearances and were shown as multidimensional characters. Media scholars began to bring to light past underrepresentation and to critically analyze new forms of representation. Sheridan Nye, Nicola Goodwin, and Belinda Hollowes (1994) examined the underrepresentation of lesbian voices on British radio and pointed out the lack of research on lesbian media consumer practices. They suggested that gay men dominated community newspapers, magazines, and advertising media and argued for an active movement to create broadcast channels of communication that would allow lesbian people to address one another and society as a whole.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, bisexual and transgender characters saw greater visibility on television,

in the news, and in the movies. The mainstream appeal of transgender characters in movies such as *Boys Don't Cry* and *Transamerica* brought visibility to a marginalized community within the 1/g/b/t/q population. Since then, hundreds of studies within and beyond communication studies have analyzed the portrayal of 1/g/b/t/q and straight characters in television and film. Robert Alan Brookey and Robert Westerfelhaus analyzed the portrayal of gay male drag queens in *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar*. The then-highly controversial “coming-out episode” of the show *Ellen*, which featured the first openly lesbian leading character on prime-time television, was debated and analyzed by communication scholars. In September 2007, readers of the popular gay and lesbian magazine *The Advocate* voted the actress Ellen DeGeneres as their No. 1 hero in the magazine's 40th-anniversary issue because of the cultural impact of her television show. Gay and lesbian characters appeared in supporting roles on primetime shows such as *NYPD Blue*, *ER*, and *Law & Order*. The popularity of the sitcom *Will & Grace* and reality show *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* spawned a flurry of analyses. Television shows with predominantly gay or lesbian characters aimed at primarily 1/g/b/t/q audiences such as *Queer as Folk* and *The L-Word* became popular. Communication scholars analyzed the portrayals of gay and lesbian characters in textual analyses, questioning, for example, the class status and highly feminine presentation of the majority of characters on *The L-Word*.

Openly gay and lesbian participants took part in reality television shows such as *The Apprentice*, *Survivor*, *Idol*, and *The Real World*. Communication scholars assessed the often successful, and in instances, surprising mainstream reception of shows focusing on 1/g/b/t/q characters or themes. Didi Herman (2003) argued that shows such as the British Television show *Bad Girls* succeeded in creating a certain degree of homonormativity—defined as a representation of same-sex desire as normal and unremarkable, which may contribute to increased social visibility and acceptance.

1/g/b/t/q audiences emerged as distinct and popular targets for marketing and advertising campaigns. Research in advertising, marketing, and public relations quickly focused on the ability to reach 1/g/b/t/q markets but then expanded to test the inclusion of 1/g/b/t/q content in mainstream advertising outlets. Some studies affirmed the effectiveness of clear lesbian interaction (compared with those with veiled lesbian attraction) in mainstream display advertising; others documented the appeal of cross-dressing and gender-ambiguous characters and themes in television commercials. Other studies suggested the effectiveness of implicitly homophobic messages in advertising campaigns. The idealized body images of men and women in advertising geared at 1/g/b/t/q audiences came under criticism. Media scholars engaged in discourse analyses and conducted content analyses of advertising and marketing within 1/g/b/t/q-oriented media as well as mainstream media, including highly targeted health communication inquiries such as analysis of noncommercial tobacco content in the lesbian, gay, and bisexual press. The

communication scholar Larry Gross (2001) chronicled the gradual emergence of gay and lesbian visibility in news and advertising and demonstrated a gradual shift in *The New York Times* coverage in his book *Up From Invisibility: Lesbians, Gay Men, and the Media in America*. The commercial and artistic success of the 2005 Academy Award-winning film *Brokeback Mountain*, directed by Ang Lee, reflected the changes in popular culture since the film focused on a complex emotional and sexual relationship between two cowboys. In addition to mainstream media addressing 1/g/b/t/q content, a number of broadcast networks created by, and geared exclusively at, 1/g/b/t/q audiences emerged in the 2000s.

The communication scholar Bonnie Dow (2001) offered a detailed contrast of contemporary queer visibility on television and the lack of actual legal and political progress on equal rights. Dow argued, as do a number of other scholars today, that positive media portrayals do not necessarily translate into greater political equity. She interpreted the success of shows such as *Will & Grace* and *Ellen* not as a sign of increasing public acceptance of open same-sex orientation in the media but as a celebration of personal honesty, rendering television portrayals personal but not political. She is joined by other communication scholars who point to the interpersonal, rather than political, construction of 1/g/b/t/q identities prevalent in media constructions. Some, such as Jeffrey Bennett, caution against dismissing the performance of sexual orientation in a culture that increasingly conceptualizes sexuality as fluid. Bennett analyzed two reality dating programs, *Boy Meets Boy* and *Playing It Straight*, which exposed the inability of individuals to determine another's sexual orientation, regardless of their own orientation.

Communication scholars agree on the documented and unprecedented visibility of 1/g/b/t/q people and issues prevalent in mainstream and alternative media today. They disagree, however, on the implications of this visibility. Legal and social policy change in the United States has not matched the pace of increased visibility in the media, and even in the media, the notion of sexual orientation remains cast as an issue. Some scholars note that the current popularity of 1/g/b/t/q social and cultural topics in the media is likely to be short-lived and may pass without advancing fundamental actual legal and political representation. Others point to the power of increased visibility to change people's perceptions and find it asserted in growing social acceptance.

The Influence of Emerging Technologies

The relevance of Internet-based communication, which allowed 1/g/b/t/q people to speak for themselves, create their own images, seek partners, and establish communities in electronic space, has greatly affected the relationship between sexual orientation and communication. The medium became so popular with 1/g/b/t/q populations in such a short time that they appeared to be the most widely

represented demographic group on the Internet in the early 2000s. Internet-based practices such as blogging and creating Web pages facilitated the coming out of individuals to such a degree that the practice became essentially unremarkable. While early Web pages, news magazines, and online community groups by and for 1/g/b/t/q people were heavily dominated by an assertion of pride and resistance, within a few years, people began to look for greater diversity and to portray their electronic selves as multifaceted people. For individuals in isolated physical or social locations, the Internet offered the only chance to finding out about a larger community in an anonymous way, a role it continues to play for many in such locations. In tandem with changing personal electronic communication practices, greater representation in the popular media fuelled the increasing visibility of 1/g/b/t/q people.

Communication scholars examined Internet portals such as PlanetOut.com and Gay.com, which are directed at 1/g/b/t/q visitors, by focusing on mainstream marketing and surveillance of 1/g/b/t/q communities at a time when niche marketing to such consumers was very popular. Others studied the embodiments of cybersexualities by 1/g/b/t/q and heterosexual Web users. The popularity of online chat rooms in male gay communities and, to a lesser extent, in lesbian communities, provided ample data for the study of online interaction management; studies also explored the practice of Webcasting in online communities. In addition, the rapid creation and production of online magazines by 1/g/b/t/q Web users for 1/g/b/t/q Web visitors and readers attracted scholars from various national and linguistic backgrounds to analyze the cultural constructions of sexual orientation offered on globally available Web sites. Jonathan Alexander, for example, interviewed the Webmasters of a gay-affirmative Web site serving Southern Africa, calling attention to the cultural construction of such sites since many Africans do not describe same-sex identities or behavior in terms of gay or lesbian identities. In 2004, Alexander published a report sponsored by the GLAAD Center for the Study of Media and Society on the ways in which 1/g/b/t/q youths used the World Wide Web to articulate their personal, social, cultural, and political concerns on self-created sites. Alexander reported on the diversity of content of the sites created, the resistance to commercialism, and young people's ability to design Web spaces that meet their needs, needs that appear to be markedly different from those of earlier generations of 1/g/b/t/q youth.

Sexual Orientation and Queer Communication Studies

During the 1990s, queer scholarship and theory began to manifest itself as a major intellectual movement. The work of queer theorists such as Judith Butler, Teresa DeLauretis, and David Halperin was integrated into communication studies, at first mostly in the areas of critical and cultural studies and performance studies.

Some communication scholars began to identify themselves as queer theorists, regardless of their own sexual orientation, and contributed to the application of queer theory in communication studies. One of the earlier applications of queer theory to communication studies with a focus on performance is Fred Corey and Thomas Nakayama's 1997 *Text and Performance Quarterly* essay "Sextext." The essay, presented as a fictional account of text and body as fields of pleasure, prompted strong responses and controversy, illustrating disciplinary resistance to queer theory as an intellectual framework and the topic of gay male sex as a legitimate topic of inquiry. Within a decade, however, queer theory had established itself as a major recognized intellectual framework used by communication scholars. The communication scholar Judith Halberstam (1996) proposed a notion of female masculinity, situating "stone butch" identities between female masculinity and transgender identities. Halberstam argued that popular language needs to integrate new words that represent the notions of gender variance established in academic scholarship. In other words, scholars have called attention to the fact that thinking about ourselves in static categories, such as "man" and "woman," "gay" and "straight," does not reflect the range of gender expressions humans experience. Brenda Cooper (2002) offered a critical analysis of the film *Boys Don't Cry*, which she praised for its innovative narrative on female masculinity.

While the prominence and popularity of queer theory has undoubtedly led to greater visibility and support for scholarship on sexual orientation, it has also come under scrutiny for obscuring the need for such scholarship. Many, if not most scholars, acknowledge the value of not contributing to static descriptions of population groups based on one particular aspect of their identity. But some also argue that as long as some members of the population at large do not have the same rights as others, based solely on their sexual orientation or gender identity, research on these groups as groups is needed.

From a pedagogical perspective, several scholars have argued that sexual orientation remains a minority and diversity issue that needs to be addressed. Bryant Alexander (2006) not only acknowledged the potential of queer theory but also considered the value of self-articulation as a black/gay man/performer/teacher/scholar. E. Patrick Johnson (2001) sought to reconcile the theoretical benefits of queer theory and the practical standpoints of 1/g/b/t/q people of color in a new theory of and for gays and lesbians of color—"quare studies." James Darsey (2004), who coauthored with Fred Jandt one of the earliest essays on coming out from a communication studies perspective, reviewed three contemporary texts on gay culture and communication. His review of these books on the construction of homosexuality and HIV/AIDS via the media or national communication campaigns focused on the issue of representation. Darsey questioned the critical lens through which queer scholars tend to approach their analysis and suggested that not all readers can be presumed to share the authors' views of 1/g/b/t/q lives.

Sexual Orientation From a Global Perspective

Starting in the mid-1990s, the impact of cultural, political, economic, and social globalization trends began to be reflected within communication studies, including those studying concepts related to sexual orientation. Communication scholars representing previously unrepresented ethnic and cultural minority groups began to study specific communication dynamics to prevent an artificial homogenization of the study of sexual orientation in the communication literature. Frequently, such scholarship sought to integrate the dynamics of national, ethnic, cultural, and sexual identities. For example, Gina Masequesmay (2003) engaged in participant observation of a support group for Vietnamese lesbians, bisexual women, and female-to-male transgender people. Her research sought to show how gender and sexuality interplay in the process in which Vietnamese American identity is established. Frederick Corey (1996) studied gay male interaction in Irish pubs and examined sexual difference, cultural identity, and illegal immigration in Irish America.

Barbara Freeman published a feminist cultural and critical analysis of articles about lesbians in the Canadian women's magazine *Chatelaine* between 1996 and 2004. At communication conventions, scholars presented research exploring the particular cultural understandings of sexual orientation and differences in specific communities in diverse nations, ranging from examinations of the media relations strategy of the 1/g/b/t/q Tongzhi Hotline Association movement in Taiwan to conceptualization of same-sex sexual behavior on online sites in the Middle East and Africa. Parallel in time, communication scholars began to explore the international and global dimensions of sexual orientation. Driven by economic, social, political, and cultural globalization, a global gay rights movement began to emerge in the early 2000s that centered on advocating for legal rights and protection for 1/g/b/t/q people. Globally, a proliferation of legal rulings occurred aimed at either granting legal protection to 1/g/b/t/q minorities or at solidifying and legalizing discrimination against such minorities. Supported in part by greater media visibility, legal rights for 1/g/b/t/q people appeared to be on the increase from a global perspective. Scholars documented, examined, supported, challenged, and critiqued the emergence of global English as the global gay rights language. Global human rights organizations such as Amnesty International adopted campaigns focusing on discrimination against 1/g/b/t/q people.

Sexual Orientation in Social Scientific Research

Communication scholars have studied sexual orientation from a social scientific perspective as a variable or discreet

characteristic playing a role in communication and as a cultural phenomenon. Early scholarship on sexual orientation in communication focused on the coming-out processes (intrapersonal, interpersonal, mediated), as well as the politics of "outing" others.

For example, the relationships of lesbians and gay men were the subject of a chapter in a 1995 volume on understudied relationships edited by the interpersonal communication scholars Julia Wood and Steve Duck. In this chapter, Michelle Huston and Pepper Schwartz sought to move research on gay men and lesbians away from a focus on normalizing their experiences. Huston and Schwartz pointed to systematic differences and similarities in gay and lesbian relationships compared with heterosexual relationships. They argued that the study of gay and lesbian relationships is important not only to bring light to understudied types of relationships but also to help communication scholars understand how human relationships are affected by gender, power, and social practices, such as the institutionalization of same-sex marriage.

A decade later, communication scholars have moved on from the generalizations about 1/g/b/t/q communicative practices and explicitly address the heterogeneity of 1/g/b/t/q speech communities. However, the importance of shared linguistic practices as a resource for group cohesion and identity remains prevalent, as scholars of language and communication such as Fern Johnson and William Leap stressed in their work. For example, several scholars have studied the way teenagers use language to express negative or discriminatory attitudes toward others with nonheterosexual orientations or variant gender identities. Such language use has been found to contribute to the creation of school climates hostile to 1/g/b/t/q individuals. More recently, scholars have also documented ways in which teenage conversations sometimes challenge heteronormativity (where which heterosexual orientation is presumed to be normal) and heterosexism (where heterosexual orientation is portrayed or understood to be better than same-sex or bisexual attraction).

The contentious issue of the legalization of same-sex marriage preoccupied much of the sexual orientation literature; the research agenda during the late 1990s and early 2000s reflected the social, cultural, and political emphasis on this issue. While some communication scholars examined the relational effects of prohibited legal marriage for same-sex partners, others focused on the language practices resulting from such nontraditional relationships and family constructions. Some scholars approached this topic from the perspective that the exclusion of 1/g/b/t/q people from access to legal marital rights warrants research and generation of policy recommendations. Others argued that rather than affirming the place of marital rights in society, scholars should focus on studying and generating policy recommendations for separating individual legal rights (e.g., inheritance, taxation, insurance coverage) from marital rights.

The increasing number of individuals outing themselves also contributed to a social and scholarly focus on 1/g/b/t/q family constructions. More lesbian and gay couples began to coparent their biological or adopted children openly, a social practice that invited study by interpersonal and family communication scholars. Communication scholars explored symbolic attempts to construct nonbiological lesbian mothers as legitimate parents by documenting how family members create special names to acknowledge the presence of two mothers—one biological, one not—within one household. They also studied the general dynamics of fatherhood, motherhood, and parenthood in 1/g/b/t/q families and created models of romantic and family relationships for 1/g/b/t/q couples and families.

Several scholars have examined the phenomenon and role of self-disclosure with regard to sexual orientation. Self-disclosure carries a primary role in interpersonal communication involving 1/g/b/t/q people because, unlike discrimination based on visible (skin color, disability) or audible (accent) characteristics, 1/g/b/t/q people often have to choose between passing for a heterosexual or self-disclosing membership in a stigmatized group. Self-disclosure has also been found to play a significant role in interactions between individuals who are affected by HIV or AIDS status.

The construct of homophobia, typically defined as a fear of same-sex attraction, lesbian, or gay people, has also been studied widely in communication studies. Such scholarly attention is warranted by the observation that a majority of 1/g/b/t/q people report having experienced verbal harassment, including physical threats, on the basis of their sexual orientation. Kory Floyd and Mark Morman (2000) had participants complete a questionnaire measuring their levels of homophobia and linked higher levels of homophobia with more negative assessments of affectionate statements between same-sex individuals. This is one of many studies involving perception processes of same-sex orientation. Jeffrey Hall and Betty La France (2007) studied how homophobic messages were constructed in a male fraternity and showed that fraternity members who perceived the presence of gay members as a threat to the desired male-male bonding also held more negative attitudes toward gay fraternity members.

Speech communication scholars also conducted controlled experiments to determine what people listen to when judging a speaker's sexuality, leading to the conclusion that perceptions of sexuality are ideologically linked to other perceptions of personality and personhood. Catherine Gowen and Thomas Britt (2006) examined the joint effects of gay male linguistic variation and sexual orientation on the stigmatization of male students applying for college admission. Gowen and Britt found that participants responded more positively to the gay male speaker when he spoke with stereotypical gay speech than with standard speech but less positively to heterosexual speakers with gay speech. Sexual orientation and gay speech did not predict admission or scholarship decision ratings.

Speech communication experts Mary Gorham-Rowan and Richard Morris (2006) conducted aerodynamic analyses of male-to-female transgender voice production since a feminine-sounding voice is often highly desired by male-to-female transgender persons.

The construction of 1/g/b/t/q identities has been an important focus of research on sexual orientation in communication studies. Using social identity theory, scholars have documented heterosexual communication schemas for conversations with gay men. Victoria Land and Cecilia Kitzinger analyzed tape-recorded phone conversations in English lesbian households and found that coming out in phone conversations disrupts heteronormative assumptions. Shinsuke Eguchi (2006) argued that due to current societal situations, gay and bisexual men may internalize homophobia and construct conflict within themselves. Eguchi suggested that a better understanding of external and internalized homophobia would help members of 1/g/b/t/q communities resolve intra- and interpersonal conflicts more effectively.

Studies of particular 1/g/b/t/q communities sought to demonstrate the group construction of co-cultural identities. For example, Myra Hird and Jenz German (1999) examined the ways in which a lesbian community in Aotearoa, New Zealand, narrowly defined what kind of lesbian they would consider to be an authentic member of their community. They joined other scholars pointing to the negative construction of bisexual attraction, desires to parent, feminine appearances, sado-masochism, and sexual assertiveness within many lesbian communities. Using literary, psychological, and sociological models, scholars from various humanistic and social scientific fields of study have proposed models of gay and lesbian identity development.

Health communication scholars also began designing studies with a focus on greater sexual diversity in the last 15 years. Such studies focused on issues specific to communities engaging in shared sexual practices linked to health risks. In this vein, health communication scholars found that an exposure to a storyline about syphilis in gay men had a positive public health outcome on users of Internet chat rooms for men who have sex with men (MSM). A pattern mirrored in other specialty areas of communication, this particular field began with studies conceptualized by and for heterosexual communities, then saw an effort to design studies focusing on the experiences of 1/g/b/t/q communities, followed by an effort to steer away from study designs focusing on sexual orientation. Rather than conceptualizing such studies as geared at gay men, for example, the population construct MSM has emerged as more useful, since it focuses on the practice, which may be engaged in by men who identify as heterosexual, bisexual, or gay.

Organizational communication scholars have also extended their studies to include 1/g/b/t/q communities. A series of scholars have examined workplace discrimination and the effects of homophobia on 1/g/b/t/q individuals;

corporate attitudes toward gay and lesbian employees; and differences and similarities between heterosexual and 1/g/b/t/q employees. Michaela Meyer (2004) identified three key tensions that influence the formation and maintenance of community: unity and difference, commitment and apathy, and empowerment and disempowerment. The coexistence of these tensions poses a challenge to community organizing, she suggested, and analysis of these tensions may be helpful to organizing practices beyond 1/g/b/t/q communities.

Sexual Orientation in Communication Studies Today

In 2001, an updated bibliography of books and journal articles on 1/g/b/t/q topics published by members of the NCA or the International Communication Association included 24 books and an average of five journal articles per year from the mid to late 1990s. For the years between 1973 and 1990, the number of such journal articles in communication journals was estimated to be about one per year. Currently, the Communication and Mass Media Complete database yields about 100 entries with the keyword *sexual orientation* and about 200 for the keywords *homosexuality* and *gender identity* each. However, use of the keywords *gay* and *lesbian* generates more than 1,000 entries. Keyword searches for *bisexual*, *transsexual*, or *transgender* yield about 50 or fewer hits for each in this database. The visibility of 1/g/b/t/q issues has increased on a general cultural, political, social, and legal level generally and specifically within communication scholarship and pedagogy. In 1999 alone, more than 50 convention papers or panel presentations at the NCA convention addressed lesbian/gay/bisexual or transgender issues. Many of these were sponsored by divisions or programs other than the GLBT Caucus or Division; a panel on homophobia in communication courses was selected as a spotlight panel for the overall convention. At the 2002 NCA convention, the panelists Chesebro and Gust A. Yep identified the historical transformations affecting the communication discipline. The panel addressed how 1/g/b/t/q and heterosexual cultures have and should transform each other, and the presentation conceptualized these cultures as co-cultures. The panel members asked provocative questions such as the following: Is it true that gay men can also represent lesbians while lesbians can only represent themselves? Are there misogynous issues involved in how the concept of gay and lesbian communication is used? In what ways and to what degree is gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender communication a meaningful concept?

In 2003, Yep, Karen E. Lovaas, and John P. Elia published an edited volume titled *Queer Theory and Communication: From Disciplining Queers to Queering the Discipline(s)*. In several ways, this edited text has been seen as a follow-up to *Gayspeak* and *Queer Words*. Yep and colleagues framed their text in the understanding that it's

time to move on from studies focusing on the communication experiences of 1/g/b/t/q people as a minority group. Instead, they suggested, scholarship should focus on the ways in which all individuals' sexual and gender identities shift and vary and how they are intertwined with issues of race, class, and culture. This volume was the first to bring together queer scholarship in communication in a volume. A 2006 reader on sexualities and communication in everyday life edited by Lovaas and Mercilee Jenkins further challenged students to move beyond dichotomous views of heterosexual and 1/g/b/t/q identities, further sought to integrate queer theory into communication studies, and assisted in the understanding of the intersections of sexuality with other identity constructions.

Some have argued that despite the increase in the number of studies on 1/g/b/t/q issues in the 1980s and 1990s, such studies continue to lack visibility and recognition in the communication discipline. Sexual orientation remains a vital topic of communication study; changing social and cultural practices invariably call for new studies on emerging phenomena. It appears likely that research and scholarship on sexual orientation will continue to overlap, converge, and diverge as scholars from various methodological perspectives study manifestations of sexual orientation. The correction of myths will remain a challenge to research on sexual orientation and communication. It was not until the late 1990s, for example, that demographic assessments suggesting the relative wealth of gays and lesbians were corrected and replaced with studies suggesting that 1/g/b/t/q people are likely close to the income average of heterosexual people. With increased visibility and increased awareness of the heterogeneity of 1/b/g/t/q people, it is also likely that more studies will document convergence of communication dynamics in 1/g/b/t/q and heterosexual communities.

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CULTURE

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That there is a relationship between culture and communication is obvious when misunderstandings occur in international relations and business: When a U.S. president greeted the people of Poland, his translator said in Polish, “The President says he is pleased to be here in Poland grasping your secret parts.” Chevrolet attempted to market its Nova compact car in Latin American countries. In Spanish, *no va* means “does not go,” or “it doesn’t run.” The car was renamed the Caribe. And for the 1994 World Cup, both McDonald’s and Coca-Cola reprinted the Saudi Arabian flag with its sacred words “There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet” on millions of paper bags and cans. Muslims objected to its use as a sales device and that the bags and cans with the sacred words would be thrown in the trash. On a more individual level, when any of us live for an extended period of time in a country other than our native land, we may experience some feelings of disorientation and anxiety when we discover that our assumptions about life and ways of behaving can be challenged.

In this chapter, we’ll review in more detail the relationship between culture and communication. First, we’ll distinguish among the various terms used to refer to this relationship. Then, we’ll review the barriers that can impede effective communication among individuals and the cultural values that help describe the ways cultures differ.

Then, we’ll look more closely at the relationship between culture and communication by comparing two cultures. Finally, we examine case studies of imperialism, immigration, and international advertising as examples of intercultural communication.

Defining the Relationship

There are many approaches to studying the relationship between culture and communication. International communication was a term used to refer to the study of the flow of communication among countries—particularly the communication between national governments—and the comparative study of national mass communication systems. More recently, global communication has been used to refer to transborder communication by groups, institutions, and governments.

The term *cross-cultural communication* technically refers to comparing phenomena across cultures. For example, a cross-cultural study of child rearing would compare what is done in many cultures. Development communication is used to refer to the study of communication to promote social and economic growth in poverty-stricken countries and areas.

The more generic term *intercultural communication* generally refers to face-to-face interactions among peoples of diverse cultures. The formal study of intercultural communication in the United States is said to have originated in 1946, when Congress passed the Foreign Service Act, which established the Foreign Service Institute to provide language and anthropological cultural training for foreign diplomats. Others date the origin to the publication of Edward T. Hall’s book *The Silent Language* in 1959. While Hall was associated with the Foreign Service Institute, he brought anthropological concepts to the practical world of Foreign Service. He also clearly defined culture as basically a communication process creating the climate for the

study of intercultural communication within communication departments rather than anthropology departments (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1990).

All these terms require an understanding of the term *culture* itself. In the 19th century, the term was commonly used to refer to Western civilization. In fact, it was commonly believed that all cultures progressed from savagery and barbarism to what was identified as Western civilization. While we may be surprised by that belief, it was not that uncommon. Ancient Greece and imperial China also believed that their own ways of life were superior to others. The idea that there was not one superior culture was slow to evolve.

Today, the term *culture* typically includes the following understandings:

- A community large enough to produce new generations without relying on outside people
- The totality of that community's thought, experiences, and patterns of behavior and its assumptions, understandings, and values about life that guide behavior
- The process of social transmission of these thoughts and behaviors from birth in families and other institutions over the course of generations
- That members consciously identify themselves with that community—referred to as cultural identity or the identification with and acceptance into a group that has shared symbols and behavior norms

Note that this definition of culture is not necessarily the same as the definition of a nation-state. One nation-state might include more than one culture. That recognition has led to the use of the terms *subculture* and *co-culture*. Within one nation-state, groups composed of a large number of people who identify with a culture, from which they derive distinctive values and rules of behavior, are referred to as a subculture. Subcultures are often based on economic or social class, ethnicity, race, or geographic region. French Canadian is a subculture within Canada, for example. As the prefix *sub* on the word *culture* seems to imply being under, secondary, and inferior, the term *co-culture* was suggested to convey the idea that no one culture is inherently superior to other cultures. One might question whether true situations of co-culture exist. To be so, one culture could not impose its values and rules of behavior on the other. For example, one could not impose its unique legal system on the other.

One final term should be introduced—subgroup. Subgroups, or membership groups, may provide members with some values and patterns of behavior. Subgroups exist within a dominant culture and are dependent on that culture. One important example is occupation, in which most people dress alike, share a common vocabulary and similar values, and share communication media such as newsletters and magazines. Examples are nurses and doctors, police officers, and employees of large organizations such as Disney.

Barriers to Intercultural Communication

One way to further study the relationship between culture and communication is to recognize the barriers to effective intercultural communication. LaRay M. Barna (1997) developed a list of six such barriers: anxiety, assuming similarity instead of differences, ethnocentrism, stereotypes and prejudice, nonverbal misinterpretations, and language.

Anxiety

When we are anxious because we are not sure what is expected of us, it is only natural to focus so much on what we are doing that we are not fully present in the communication itself. For example, speakers of English as a second language may experience anxiety over their English language skills and focus so much on how they are pronouncing words that they limit their interactions with English speakers.

Assuming Similarity Instead of Difference

Oftentimes, visitors to a new culture focus on the things that seem the same, that is, driving on the same side of the road, eating similar foods, and enjoying the same music and movies. When we assume similarity, we can ignore important differences. We may share photos of grandparents but have very different values about where those grandparents should live and the extent to which they should be involved in our lives.

Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism refers to negatively judging aspects of another culture by the standards of one's own culture. We are ethnocentric when we believe that our culture is superior and not understand that whatever exists in one culture makes sense if we understand that culture. If the average summer temperature was 43 degrees Celsius (109 degrees Fahrenheit), it would be logical to adjust school and business hours into evening hours to conserve energy. Long lunches and afternoon siestas make sense. It would be ethnocentric to attribute those long lunches and afternoon siestas to laziness.

Stereotypes and Prejudice

Both these terms refer to making judgments about another based on group membership. Stereotype refers to negative or positive judgments made about another based on any observable or believed group membership. Anyone can stereotype. Is the appearance of possible identification with a cultural group evidence of driving skills? Of athletic skills? Of math skills? Stereotypes impede communication

as they cause us to assume that a belief is true of any one individual, their use reinforces the belief that may in fact not be true at all, and they become a self-fulfilling prophecy for the person stereotyped.

Whereas stereotypes can be positive or negative, prejudice refers to the irrational dislike, suspicion, or hatred of a particular group, race, religion, or sexual orientation. The Roma (mistakenly named Gypsy by medieval Europeans, who thought all dark-skinned peoples came from Egypt) experienced persecution by Nazi Germany and Eastern European Communist governments. Japanese-born Koreans have been victims of social, economic, and political prejudice, as did the Irish in the United States.

Nonverbal Misinterpretations

Nonverbal symbols create meanings for others. Nonverbal communication refers to messages sent without using words. Many nonverbal expressions vary from culture to culture, and it is just these variations that make nonverbal misinterpretations a barrier. Consider the following examples.

Proxemics

Proxemics refers to our use of personal space. Edward Hall (1959) demonstrated that cultures differ substantially in their use of personal space. Hall demonstrated that in North America, personal space is from 18 inches to 4 feet, the lower end being handshake distance, the distance most people in North America stand from each other in public. In Latin American and Arab cultures, that distance is much less. In an intercultural context, one may attempt to stand closer by moving in, while the other may attempt to maintain the customary personal distance by moving back.

Kinesics

Gestures, body movements, facial expressions, and eye contact are referred to as kinesics. In his book *Bodytalk*, Desmond Morris (1995) explained that gestures can be intentional or unconscious. In ancient Rome, lower classes used four fingers and the thumb to pick up food; upper classes used two fingers and the thumb. This may have been unconscious, but it clearly communicated class.

The meaning of conscious gestures can vary from culture to culture. The forefinger-to-thumb gesture forming a circle can mean “okay” in the United States. In France, it can mean zero or worthless. In Japan, it can mean “money.” In Brazil, it can clearly communicate an offensive meaning. Even things such as nodding agreement can vary. Most cultures do indicate “yes” by an up-and-down nod of the head and “no” by shaking the head from side to side. But in Albania and Bulgaria, the gestures can be reversed. In Sri Lanka, a yes to a specific question is indicated as a the nod of the head, but general agreement is indicated by a slow sideways swaying of the head.

Certain facial expressions such as smiles are universal, but many are not. In the United States, people in conversation

maintain some degree of eye contact. If one person avoids eye contact, the other may assume that the person is evasive or dishonest. In some Asian cultures such as Japan, students will often avoid making eye contact with their instructors as a sign of respect. If a U.S. instructor did not have that cultural understanding, a communication barrier would exist.

Chronemics

Chronemics refers to the study of our use of time. The fact that cultures have differing meanings for the use of time can become a barrier. What time dinner is served, what time you arrive for a party, how long you are kept waiting for an appointment all depend on where you are.

Haptics

Haptics refers to our use of touch to communicate. In Thailand and Laos, it is rude for a stranger to touch a child on the top of the head because the head is regarded as the home of the spirit or soul. It is believed that a child’s spirit or soul is not strong enough to be touched and has a tendency to become ill if patted. In New Zealand, the hongi, the touching of noses to share the breath of life, is the traditional greeting of the Maori.

Language

To understand how language can be a barrier, we need to go back to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in order to account for the differences in languages across cultures. Scholars have divided the hypothesis into the linguistic determinist interpretation and the linguistic relativity interpretation. The linguistic determinist interpretation is that language controls thought and cultural norms, that is, each of us can only know that part of the world that our language permits us to know or that the language of our culture predetermines we can know. In other words, culture is controlled by and controls language. In the linguistic relativity interpretation, the difference between languages is not what can be said but what is relatively easy to say. The classic example is vocabulary. The Hanunov tribe has 92 separate words to refer to *rice*. From this we can assume that rice is important to that culture. Of course, other languages can see and understand how the 92 Hanunov tribe words for rice are different. They just don’t have separate words for each of those different states of rice. Another classic example is grammar. In the Eskimo language, it is common to use the word *if* rather than the word *when* in reference to the future, as in “If I graduate from college . . .” rather than “When I graduate from college . . .” *When* seems to communicate more certainty than *if*. Linguists assert that the more common use of *if* is associated with the harsh environment of the Eskimo, where there is little control over nature.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis can be used to explain translation problems between languages (Sechrest, Fay, & Zaidi, 1972).

Vocabulary Equivalence

This recognizes that languages differ in the number of categories or words available. Remember the 92 single words for rice. It is accurate to translate each of these into the single English word *rice* but to do so would lose the specificity of the original.

Idiomatic Equivalence

Think of the many idioms in English: *kicked the bucket*, *out to lunch*, *raining cats and dogs*, *break a leg*. Now think how the meaning is totally lost if these were to be translated word for word.

Grammatical–Syntactical Equivalence

Languages do not necessarily have the same grammar. You may need to understand a language's grammar to understand the meaning of a word. For example, in English, words can have different meanings as nouns, verbs, or adjectives. Look at the two simple phrases "book a place" and "place a book" to understand that in word-for-word translation, meaning would be confusing.

Experiential Equivalence

Objects and experiences may differ in cultures, while the word may be the same. Instead of using the Vietnamese word for *census*, which translates as "investigation of the population," the U.S. Census was sensitive to Vietnamese immigrants' experience with Vietnam's government tracking to individuals and used the phrase *Thong ked an so*, which translates as "survey of the population."

Conceptual Equivalence

In a similar fashion, abstract ideas may be different in different languages. The former U.S. President Jimmy Carter identified conceptual equivalence with the phrase *human rights*. According to President Carter, each country uses the term to refer to what it does well. In the United States, human rights typically refers to freedoms in the Bill of Rights, such as freedom of speech. In other countries, human rights refers to adequate housing or universal health care.

Finally, when a group with more power enforces the use of its language on another group, as Sapir-Whorf suggests, it is also enforcing its own culture on that group. Others suggest that the spread of any language also means the spreading influence of the culture associated with that language. Of course in the modern world, the dominant language is English. It is estimated that one-fourth of the world's population is familiar with English to some extent. English dominates in science, technology, commerce, tourism, diplomacy, and pop culture. Some 80% of the world's electronic databases and communication networks are in English. Even computer keyboards are typically

based on the English alphabet. The former French president, Jacques Chirac, told a group formed in France to preserve the use of French in cyberspace: "If in this new medium our language, our programs, our creations don't have a strong presence, our future generations will be economically and culturally marginalized." The French government has since decreed that e-mail will be pronounced *courriel*, from the French words *courier électronique*.

In fact, many of the world's 5,000 to 6,000 languages are on the verge of extinction. More than half are moribund or are no longer learned by children and therefore will disappear. Only about 10% of the world's languages are spoken by more than 100,000 people. Perhaps 90% of the world's languages will be moribund or dead by the end of this century. The loss of any language means the loss of the culture of those who spoke it and the loss of the knowledge that those cultures had codified in their languages.

Cultural Values

To better understand how cultures differ, in this section, we will examine the concepts of high-versus low-context cultures, the concept of face, and what has become known as dimensions of culture.

High- Versus Low-Context Cultures

The concept of high- and low-context cultures was popularized by Hall (1976). Think of context as the environment in which a communication takes place, which helps define the meanings of the communication. Think of a romantic restaurant for a date. The environment helps define the message. Cultures in which little of the meaning is determined by the context because most of the message is encoded in the language itself are labeled low context. In low-context cultures verbal messages are highly valued. Verbal messages are elaborate, highly specific, detailed, and redundant. Cultures in which less has to be said or written because more of the meaning is in the environment or already shared by people are labeled as high context. Very little is in the explicit coded message. High-context cultures are more sensitive to nonverbal messages and are more likely to provide a context and setting and let the point evolve. In high-context cultures, people are brought closer by the importance of their shared context. The message may be lost in low-context cultures.

Examples of low-context cultures are Switzerland, Germany, North America, and the Nordic states. Examples of high-context cultures are China, Japan, Korea, most Latin American cultures, and southern and eastern Mediterranean cultures such as Greece, Turkey, and Arab states.

Imagine a high-context German negotiating a business contract with a low-context Chinese. The German may want to meet at any convenient place, may want to get right to the point, and may want to record agreements in writing. The Chinese may give thought to the setting where the

meeting is to take place and to the timing of the meeting and may want to establish a relationship with the other party before any negotiations take place. Understand that this example is a cultural studies approach as it describes an ideal personification of the culture to explain the actions of individuals.

The Concept of Face

Related to the concept of high- and low-context cultures is the concept of face. Face can be understood in two ways: Face can refer to the confidence of others in one's moral character, without which one cannot function properly in society. Face can also refer to one's prestige or reputation achieved through life.

In high-context cultures such as China, communication is more indirect or implicit and more likely to use intermediaries because social harmony and face maintenance are crucial. Communication through intermediaries eliminates face-to-face confrontation and reduces the risk of losing face. There is more indirect face negotiation and more mutual face or other face maintenance (Ting-Toomey, 1985).

In low-context cultures such as the United States, there is more direct face negotiation and more self-face maintenance. Imagine that you receive a lower test grade than you expected and on examination notice that your instructor has added up the points incorrectly. In a low-context culture, you would probably confront the instructor with the error demanding that the grade be corrected as soon as possible. Imagine how you might handle that same situation in a high-context culture. As the student, would you want to point out a mistake to your instructor?

Dimensions of Culture

In 1980, the Dutch management researcher Geert Hofstede first published the results of his study of more than 100,000 employees of the multinational IBM in 40 countries (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede was attempting to identify the value dimensions, which vary among cultures. Although his work has been subjected to criticism, his dimensions have been frequently used to describe cultures and as the basis of research in several disciplines. Hofstede identified four dimensions: individualism, masculinity, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance. Later, a fifth dimension, Confucian dynamism (later more commonly referred to as long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation), was identified.

Individualism Versus Collectivism

The dimension refers to how people define themselves and their relationships with others from loosely structured to tightly integrated. In individualist cultures, the interests of the individual prevail over the interests of the group. Individualist cultures stress self-direction and

self-achievement. In collectivist cultures, the interests of the group prevail over the interest of the individual. Collectivistic cultures stress in-group loyalty and conformity. Examples of countries high in individualism are United States, Australia, Great Britain, Canada, The Netherlands, and New Zealand. Examples of countries high in collectivism are Guatemala, Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, and Indonesia. A male student from Colombia may study in the United States and earn a PhD, teach at a distinguished university, and publish important books, but when he returns to Colombia, people to whom he is introduced will want to know to whom he is related. Colombians want to know which family the student comes from because that places the student in society much more so than his individual accomplishments.

Young Yun Kim (2005) points out a relationship between individualism-collectivism and Hall's low- and high-context cultures. Furthermore, Kim characterizes individualism-collectivism as the most commonly used theory in cross-cultural research in communication, psychology, and anthropology.

Masculinity Versus Femininity

Hofstede labeled as masculine cultures those that strive for maximal distinction between what women and men are expected to do. Cultures that place high values on masculine traits stress assertiveness, competition, and material success. Those labeled as feminine cultures are those that permit more overlapping of social roles for the sexes. Cultures that place high value on feminine traits stress quality of life, interpersonal relationships, and concern for the weak.

Examples of masculine cultures are Japan, Austria, Venezuela, Italy, Switzerland, and Mexico. Examples of feminine cultures are Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark, Costa Rica, and Yugoslavia. Jandt (2007) points out that the Nordic countries also rank highest on the United Nations Gender-Related Development Index, which reflects health, education, and income and the Gender Empowerment Measure, which reflects the political and economic advancement of women. The Nordic countries have the highest percentage of parliament seats held by women and have adopted gender equality and women's empowerment as national policies. They have legislated equal rights, inexpensive child care, free contraception and abortions, and parental leave policies.

Power Distance

Power distance refers to the way cultures deal with inequalities or the extent to which less powerful members of groups within a country expect and accept that power, prestige, and wealth are distributed unequally. Cultures with high power distance have power and influence concentrated in the hands of a few rather than distributed throughout the population. These countries tend to be

more authoritarian and may communicate in a way to limit interaction and reinforce the differences between people. Children are expected to be obedient toward parents and display respect for those of higher status.

High-power-distance countries include Malaysia, Guatemala, Panama, Philippines, Mexico, and Venezuela. Low-power-distance countries include Sweden, Ireland, New Zealand, Denmark, Israel, and Austria.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which people in a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations and feel a need for written and unwritten rules. Students from high uncertainty avoidance cultures expect their teachers to be experts who have all the answers. In the workplace, there is a need to work hard. Rules, precision, and punctuality are valued.

Countries high in uncertainty avoidance include Greece, Portugal, Guatemala, Uruguay, Belgium, and El Salvador. Countries that are low in uncertainty avoidance include Singapore, Jamaica, Denmark, Sweden, Hong Kong, and Ireland.

Long-Term Versus Short-Term Orientation

After Hofstede's original work, a new dimension labeled Confucian work dynamism, now more commonly called long-term versus short-term orientation, was added. This dimension includes values such as thrift, persistence, having a sense of shame, and ordering relationships. Long-term orientation refers to dedicated, motivated, responsible, and educated individuals with a sense of commitment and organizational identity and loyalty. Long-term orientation is consistent with thrift, savings, perseverance toward results, and a willingness to subordinate oneself for a purpose. Short-term orientation is consistent with spending to keep up with social pressure, less savings, and a preference for quick results.

Countries that are high in long-term orientation are China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Brazil. Countries with short-term orientation include Pakistan, Nigeria, the Philippines, Canada, Zimbabwe, and Great Britain.

Case Study Example

There have been many studies using the Hofstede dimensions. One example is Merritt and Helmreich's (1996), who surveyed 9,000 male commercial airline pilots working for airlines owned, managed, and operated by national cultures. Those pilots surveyed were of the same culture as the nationality of the airline. The results were consistent with the Hofstede research: Pilots from the United States, Britain, and Ireland had the highest individualism scores; pilots from Taiwan and Korea had the lowest. Pilots from Brazil, Korea, Mexico, and

the Philippines had the highest power distance scores; pilots from New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa had the lowest. The masculinity-femininity dimension did not discriminate within the pilot profession. A subset of the uncertainty avoidance items dealing with attitudes toward automation did indicate that cultures endorsing rules and procedures as a way of resolving uncertainty also endorse the use of automation. Pilots from Taiwan and Korea had the highest uncertainty avoidance scores; pilots from Hong Kong (British pilots), New Zealand, the United States, and Ireland had the lowest. More specifically, Anglo pilots with low power distance and uncertainty avoidance scores showed the least inclination to accept and trust automation but were also drawn to it. They disliked the lack of individual control and inflexibility that automation dictates yet enjoyed learning to work with the new technology. Pilots with high power distance and uncertainty avoidance scores were enthusiastic about automation because automation is perceived as authoritative and brings a reassuring level of certainty to flight management. Later, we'll see additional evidence that the Hofstede research did identify an important way of helping explain the relationship between culture and communication.

Cultural Perspectives on Communication

Earlier, we saw that from the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that culture and language are inseparable. Now let's expand that to say that culture and all communication are inseparable. Godwin C. Chu (1977) observed that every cultural pattern and every single act of social behavior involve communication. Therefore to be understood, culture and communication must be studied together.

While this chapter has focused so far on defining culture, to fully explore the relationship between culture and communication, we need to explore what is meant by communication. Several chapters in this *Handbook* have defined the concept. What should be added here is that how communication itself is defined varies among cultures. Assuming that most commonly known definitions of communication come from Western cultures, to illustrate that communication itself is an element of communication, this chapter introduces a perspective on communication from cultures influenced by Confucianism. The societies heavily influenced by Confucian tradition are China, North and South Korea, Singapore, and many East Asian countries with large Chinese communities.

The Chinese scholar K'ung-Fu-tzu (later Latinized as Confucius by the Jesuits) lived from 550 to 478 BCE, a time of collapse of the feudal system in China. Confucius proposed a government based on morality and merit, and he set up an ethical-moral system intended to govern all relationships in the family, community, and state. Confucianism emphasizes virtue, selflessness,

duty, patriotism, hard work, and respect for hierarchy, both familial and societal. Confucianism guides social relationships: “to live in harmony with the universe and with our fellow man through proper behavior.” Confucianism considers balance and harmony in human relationships to be the basis of society. Consistently, then, communication is seen as a mechanism for maintaining harmony. Carey (1989) contrasts this understanding with the traditional Western understanding of communication in that communication in a Confucian understanding “is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs” (p. 18).

June Yum (1988) describes five ways Confucianism has influenced interpersonal communication.

Particularism

There are no rules governing interactions with someone whose status is unknown. Instead, there are several patterns guiding interactions with others whose status is known. For example, in Korea, friends (*chingu*) are within a few years of age. Two strangers in Korea in the first minutes of conversation determine each other’s age and adjust their language appropriately to show respect. If a male acquaintance is older than the speaker’s “friendship age range,” the acquaintance is then addressed as *adjussi*, roughly equivalent to “uncle.” Korea also has special vocabularies for each sex, for different degrees of social status and degrees of intimacy, and for formal occasions.

Role of Intermediaries

One does not say what one actually thinks if it might hurt another. Rituals are followed in relationships. In China, it is not unusual to use a third party in dispute resolution to avoid direct confrontation.

Reciprocity

Complementary obligations are at the base of relationships. Gratitude and indebtedness are important. People feel uneasy to be indebted to someone, and payback is necessary to regain balance in the relationship. In Western cultures, obligations in relationships are contrary to individualism.

In-Group/Out-Group Distinction

In-group members engage in more open and deeper communication and may find it difficult to develop personal relationships with out-group members. There can even be different language codes for in-group members.

Overlap of Personal and Public Relationships

Business and pleasure are intertwined. This stands in contrast to Western practices of keeping public and private

lives separate. In China, much of commercial life is “lubricated” by *guanxi*, a concept translated as “connections.” Business relations are cemented by relationships of trust and mutual obligation.

Chinese terms for the English word communication include *jiao liu* (to exchange), *chuan bo* (to disseminate), and *gou tong* (to connect among people). The Chinese term *he* denotes harmony, peace, unity, and kindness. Seeking harmony with family and others is the goal of communication in Confucian cultures.

Cultures in Contact

Obviously, then, with such diverse perspectives, intercultural communication can be a challenge. We can see this challenge in the case studies presented below—examples of imperialism, immigration, and international advertising.

Imperialism

The critical tradition among U.S. communication scholars thinking about culture focuses on power and oppression. The term *othering* refers to the labeling and degrading of cultures, such as indigenous peoples, by a dominant group in language. Shome (1996) refers to this labeling of “underdeveloped” cultures of others as discursive imperialism.

Captain James Cook arrived in Hawai‘i in 1778. Cook and his men wrote of the Hawai‘ians as “savage or animal-like or heathen.” They interpreted the Hawai‘ians’ reactions to Cook as deifying him. In ship journals, the Hawai‘ians were described as venerating Cook almost to adoration, looking on him as “a kind of superior being,” and honoring him “like a god.” The Europeans labeled the Hawai‘ians in their language use, and hence their thought and subsequent actions, not by their uniqueness but on the basis of what they were not, that is, not civilized by European standards.

The language and thought made it consistent for them to treat the Hawai‘ians as they had labeled them. This contributed to the near destruction of the Hawai‘ian culture, loss of government, lands, and cultural identity culminating in the U.S.-backed overthrow of the Hawai‘ian monarchy. In 1993, a U.S. Congress resolution apologized to Hawai‘ians for the 1893 overthrow, noting that the economic and social changes resulting from that had been devastating to the culture and to the health and well-being of the Hawai‘ian people.

You can think of other examples of imperialism that demonstrate this aspect of the relationship between culture and language. The language used by a culture with greater relative power to label others can be used to justify suppression and even extermination.

Immigration

In this section, we’ll briefly examine the movement of people from one culture into another, whether for a short

stage or a permanent relocation. A person who visits another culture as a tourist may find the differences new and exciting and not experience much that is unsettling or a stimulus for rethinking how one thinks about one's self. A sojourner lives in a new culture for a limited period of time, from a few months to several years as a student or guest worker, while an immigrant fully expects to remain in the new culture.

Sojourners and immigrants are likely to experience "culture shock," or the feelings of disorientation and anxiety that most people experience while living in a new culture. Physical symptoms include overconcern about cleanliness, extreme stress on health and safety, great concern over minor pains, and a craving for things from home. Psychological symptoms include insomnia, fatigue, isolation and loneliness, criticism of the new culture, irritability, and emotional and intellectual withdrawal. It's not only that one's familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate (with regard to simple things such as transportation systems, foods, and the like), there is also an awareness that one's basic assumptions about life may no longer be appropriate. Pedersen (1995) has described culture shock as a five-stage process:

1. Initial euphoria, or the "honeymoon stage," where everything is new and exciting: The person is basically a tourist with his or her basic identity rooted in the home culture.
2. Disintegration of familiar cues and irritation and hostility toward the differences experienced in the new culture: Recognizing that one just isn't sure what one is expected to do can result in feelings of inadequacy and in withdrawing and becoming isolated.
3. Reintegration of new cues and an increased ability to function in the new culture: Surprisingly, though, even though one can function, one can feel anger and resentment toward the new culture for "being different."
4. Gradual adjustment toward autonomy and recognizing the "good" and "bad" elements in both the home and the new cultures: The individual becomes more comfortable in the new culture as more things are known and predictable.
5. Reciprocal interdependence, where the person has achieved biculturalism by becoming able to cope comfortably in both the home and the new culture: This stage can take years to attain.

For the immigrant, this development of functional and psychological fitness for a new culture has been referred to as acculturation. Young Yun Kim (1988a, 1988b) has identified predictors of an immigrant's success in acculturation.

Similarity of the Cultures

The similarity of the original culture to the new culture is one of the most important factors of successful acculturation. A Canadian has less difficulty with acculturation into the United States than does a rural Vietnamese.

Personal Characteristics and Experiences

Younger immigrants adapt more easily than older ones. Educational background plays a part, as does the immigrant's personality. Individuals who are high risk takers and who are gregarious, for example, acculturate more easily. Finally, previous travel and information garnered from the mass media can come into play.

Berry, Kim, and Boski (1987) have described acculturation in relation to two dimensions: the value placed on maintaining one's original cultural identity and the value given to developing relationships with other groups in the new culture. Using these two dimensions to describe acculturation results in four categories:

1. Marginalization refers to losing one's cultural identity and not having any psychological contact with the larger society. The person has feelings of "not belonging anywhere." The Hmong who served as mercenaries for the U.S. CIA in the 1960s and 1970s in Laos were forced to flee Laos after the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. Many of the original Hmong immigrants to the United States had few marketable skills and were ill prepared for modern life in the United States. These older, rural Hmong could not return to the culture they had fled and lacked the skills to acculturate in the United States and so existed in a marginalized state.

2. Separation and segregation refer to maintaining one's original culture and not participating in the new culture. The Amish in the United States exist as a culture that has chosen to live apart from the dominant culture and resist acculturation.

3. Assimilation results from giving up one's original cultural identity and moving into full participation into the new culture. Assimilation can be a long-term and sometimes multigenerational process. By family name, individuals of German heritage may be one of the larger, if not the largest, group in the United States. In the 19th century, German was the second most commonly used language in the United States. By the 21st century, these individuals are totally assimilated, and little, if any, identification with Germany can be said to exist.

4. Finally, true integration is maintaining important parts of one's original culture as well as becoming an integral part of the new culture. For some immigrants, there is no inconsistency in having loyalty to two cultures. In fact, that is valued. Certainly modern transportation and the mass media have made true integration more possible. An immigrant to the United States from Germany in the 1880s may have had little opportunity for either a return visit or occasional contact with family, friends, and institutions in Germany. Today's immigrant to the United States from the Philippines may have opportunities for return visits and easy contact with family, friends, and institutions in the Philippines through e-mail, the Internet, and satellite television. And as well, the immigrant's

category of acculturation significantly affects communication with others on an interpersonal level.

International Advertising

Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Disney, McDonald's, KFC, and Spam are marketed worldwide. If the world were one culture, the marketing of these products wouldn't change worldwide. Of course, that is not the case, and we can see the relationship between culture and communication again in the marketing of products.

De Mooij (1998) has related international advertising to Hofstede's dimensions of culture. Japanese advertising reflects Confucian and collectivistic values. The goal of advertising in Japan is to win the trust and respect of the consumer. Advertising in Japan is serene, mood creating, and subtle, with much symbolism, dependency, nature, and respect for elders.

Advertising in Taiwan generally links the product to the consumer's traditional Chinese values, such as family relations and respect for authority. The advertising is indirect and promises an ideal that may be reached through the use of the product. Spanish advertising is less direct than the advertising style of northern European countries because Spain's culture is more collectivistic. People are more likely to be depicted in family and other groups. Feminine aspects of the culture are seen in the softer approaches and relatively low use of celebrity endorsements. The use of art, color, and beauty is strongly related to uncertainty avoidance.

U.S. advertising reflects assertiveness, the direct approach, and competitiveness, which relates to a configuration of masculinity and individualism. Overstatement and hyperbole are typical, as are direct comparisons among products.

Even the most global of products, McDonald's, stresses its ties to the local culture.

Conclusion

Culture has continued to be defined and studied through communication. As the editors of a most successful collection of intercultural readings wrote,

In many respects the relationship between culture and communication is reciprocal—each affects and influences the other. What we talk about, how we talk about it; what we see, attend to, or ignore; how we think, and what we think about are influenced by our culture. Culture cannot exist without communication; one cannot change without causing change in the other. (Samovar & Porter, 1991, p. 21)

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RISK

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The movie, *Erin Brockovich*, starring Julia Roberts, told the story of a young mother with no legal training who won a court victory against Pacific Gas & Electric. Brockovich discovered that the company was illegally dumping chromium VI, a hazardous waste that caused severe illness for residents living nearby. Because of her efforts, her law firm won a class action suit against the company. The movie portrayed a case where the less powerful prevailed in court against a large company.

Because this story concerned efforts to communicate about a physical hazard, it is a story about risk communication.

The *Erin Brockovich* case is one sort of risk communication situation. Risk communication also involves underestimated hazards such as fire alarms that sound during a midterm exam or a tuna fish sandwich left in someone's lunch box too long, eaten, and vomited. Risk communication concerns physical hazards of any sort, those that harm people, those that do not, those that people are worried about, and those that people are not worried about but should be. Often, risk communication is about getting people excited or calming them down (e.g., Gordon, 2003; Gordon & Rowan, 2003).

In this chapter, you will learn what risk communication is. You will also learn about the factors that affect how angry or apathetic people feel about a risk, obstacles to communicating risk, and steps for addressing these obstacles. This chapter helps you think about your reactions to risks, safety, and danger. Knowledge about risk communication is important in public relations, journalism, management, counseling, health care, and emergency response.

Risk Communication: Definition and Connection to Related Fields

Definition

Risk communication is the process of sharing meaning about any physical hazard such as dangerous work sites, environmental pollution, radiation, food-borne illness, cancer, tobacco, climate change, crime, suicide, and terrorism (Rowan, 1991, 1994; Rowan, Botan, Kreps, Samoilenko, & Farnsworth, 2009; Rowan, Kreps, Botan, Sparks, Samoilenko, & Bailey, 2008). Risk communication occurs in interpersonal communication settings, organizations, and mediated environments such as the Internet, print news, and television. Some believe that risk communication mainly concerns reputation management. If an official makes a decision that brings harm to others, reputation managers help that person re-earn the lost trust (e.g., Benoit, 2004). In this chapter, and in communication research, risk communication is a broader endeavor that explores all challenges involved in communicating about physical hazards.

To understand risk communication, it is important to learn first about two related fields, risk assessment and risk management. Risk assessment involves determining the nature, likelihood, and possibility of hazards for individuals or populations. Risk assessors work for governments, research organizations, and the private sector. Their assessments provide technical support for decisions made about hazards.

Most risk assessments involve four core questions:

1. Hazard identification (Does the substance cause harm?)
2. Dose-response assessment (How much x causes harm to z ?)
3. Exposure assessment (Do they breathe, ingest, touch it?)
4. Risk characterization (A complete picture of the hazard) (National Research Council, 1983)

Some risk assessors analyze the effects of pesticides on animals. Others are “food safety detectives.” There are also risk assessment procedures in engineering, medicine, and occupational health and safety. Risk assessment can explain why chromium VI, the kind *Erin Brockovich* investigated, is harmful. In brief, chromium VI causes cancer in humans. It is used for “chrome plating, dyes and pigments, leather tanning, and wood preserving” (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 2001). Chromium (without the VI) is a naturally occurring element found in rocks, animals, plants, soil, and volcanic dust and gases.

Risk Management

Risk managers develop and implement policies that reduce the harm or likelihood of hazards. In one sense, anyone who owns or manages something that could be hazardous (a car, a home, a boat, a business) is a risk manager. In a more formal sense, those in the profession of risk management work in finance, government, corporate, and nonprofit contexts. Many with the title of risk manager are employed by financial institutions. Risk managers rely on risk assessments, regulations, policies, research, law, and ethics to safeguard the people and resources they protect (e.g., Pidgeon, Kasperson, & Slovic, 2003; Plough & Krimsky, 1987).

Social Scientific Studies of Risk

In the social sciences, there are many fields studying how people cope with risk—immediate, acute risks such as an earthquake or terrorist attack and long-term ones such as chronic disease. Scholars study hazard perception and management through the lenses of academic fields such as risk communication (e.g., Morgan, Fischhoff, Bostrom, & Atman, 2002), crisis communication (e.g., Coombs, 1999; Sellnow, Seeger, & Ulmer, 2005), persuasion (e.g., O’Keefe, 2002), health communication (e.g., Booth-Butterfield, 2003; Witte, Meyer, & Martell, 2001), disaster sociology (Drabek, 2001; Dynes & Rodriguez, 2005; Quarantelli & Dynes, 1985), neural sciences (e.g., Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001), decision sciences (e.g., Slovic, 2000), and behavioral economics (e.g., Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). For example, in economics, discrepancies between expert and lay perceptions of financial risk were explored as early as the 1920s. In sociology, there is extensive research on the behavior of groups

during disasters (e.g., University of Delaware, Disaster Research Center, www.udel.edu/DRC/publications; University of Colorado, Boulder, www.colorado.edu/hazards). Scholars in several fields have explored responses surrounding the Love Canal chemical dump, the Chernobyl nuclear accident, the Alar on apples scare, and the 1984 Bhopal disaster—an accidental chemical release that killed more than 2,000 people in India. The Bhopal disaster awakened many to the realization that risks could be under- and overestimated by both experts and those affected by these risks (e.g., Plough & Krimsky, 1987; Shrivasta, 1987).

One finding from this research is that “experts” and “lay audiences” differ in their perceptions of risk and benefit. To think about this research, look at the items in List A and List B. Which ones upset you more?

List A

- Smoking tobacco
- Bicycle accidents
- Automobile accidents

List B

- Nuclear power plants
- Toxic chemicals in landfills
- Emissions from incinerators

Some view the items in List B as a greater source of danger and outrage than those in List A, despite the fact that data consistently show that smoking, automobiles, and even bicycles result in injury and death for humans more frequently than do nuclear power plants, toxic chemicals in landfills, and incinerator emissions. As Paul Slovic, Baruch Fischhoff, and others have found, risks that are perceived as voluntary, familiar, detectable, and natural tend to be underestimated, whereas risks perceived as imposed by others, unfamiliar, difficult to detect, and man-made tend to be overestimated (e.g., Fischhoff, 1989; Fischhoff, Slovic, Lichtenstein, Read, & Combs, 1978; Sandman, 1993; Slovic, 2000).

This pattern is partly explained by the ways in which people encounter a hazard. Unlike risk assessors, who focus on a physical hazard’s physical nature and consequences (i.e., the number harmed or killed), those who manage a hazard and those affected by it care about whether the hazard is voluntary, familiar, fair, just, detectable, and “monitor-able” (e.g., Sandman, 1993). For example, people may find secondhand smoke at their workplace and *Escherichia coli* bacteria on their fresh vegetables more upsetting than their own smoking or the number of automobile accidents in their city. In each instance, activities such as smoking or driving are perceived as voluntary and familiar, so they are less upsetting than harms imposed by others.

This response is not entirely unreasonable: The risks one chooses are detectable and monitor-able by the person choosing them, whereas harms imposed by others are not. And yet lives can be lost because too much attention is paid to one risk and not enough to the hazard causing the greatest harm. For instance, statistics show that firearms are more likely to be associated with death due to suicide than with death in connection with crime or an accident. As Ropeik and Gray (2002) noted, “While the use of firearms in crimes receives the most media attention, the largest number of gun deaths remain suicides” (p. 89). Ropeik and Gray also wrote that those most likely to commit suicide by firearm are over age 65. Because suicide is perceived—wrongly—as a voluntary choice, and not a symptom of illness, there is less attention to this cause of death than there is to death by gunshot in the course of a crime. Risks that feel involuntary get more attention.

The CAUSE Model for Addressing Risk Communication Challenges

The CAUSE Model for Risk Communication (Rowan, 1991, 1994; Rowan et al., 2008; Rowan et al., in press) is a tool that helps communicators analyze risk communication situations, identify obstacles to effective communication, and overcome them. The model was created by noting that all risk communication situations have the components any communication situation has: message sources, channels, content, and receivers. Following Bitzer (1968), I argue that risk communication situations are distinctive because communicating about physical hazards creates predictable tensions. Specifically, when physical hazards are the topic, we expect that there may be five fundamental tensions or obstacles. Each is indexed by the letters in the word CAUSE. Because stakeholders may distrust a message source (e.g., news from a manufacturer), risk communication situations may be plagued by a lack of Confidence. Because stakeholders may not detect (hear, see) a warning, risk communication situations are beset by a lack of Awareness. Because risk communication situations are affected by confusion about what a message means (e.g., what “tornado warning” means), risk communication is challenged by a lack of Understanding. Because risk communication situations can cause disagreement among the well-informed (e.g., about whether the benefit of nuclear power is worth the risk), risk communication situations are influenced by a lack of Satisfaction with analyses of physical hazards and their management. Finally, because risk communication situations are plagued by the difficulty of encouraging people to do what they say they believe (e.g., reliably buckle their seat belts), risk communication situations are burdened by a lack of Enactment.

In addition to identifying obstacles, CAUSE directs users to research that may overcome them. That is, there is research on

Earning	Confidence (in message sources),
Creating	Awareness (that a warning was sent and received),
Deepening	Understanding (about what the message means),
Gaining	Satisfaction (with analyses of problems and proposed solutions), and
Motivating	Enactment (moving audiences beyond agreement to action).

Earning Confidence, the C in CAUSE

Obstacles. When we communicate about physical hazards, two fundamental obstacles involve stakeholders’ perceptions of the messenger’s motives and competence. That is, audiences may reject a message because they question the messenger’s motives or ability to make accurate statements about a hazard.

Assume that a manufacturing facility has a chemical spill. If news coverage suggests that the organization’s leaders are unresponsive to the public’s concerns, the chemical spill seems more dangerous than it would if the company were compassionate and responsive. Sandman, Miller, Johnson, and Weinstein (1993) tested this idea. Groups were given news stories with information about the same physical hazard—clean up of a perchloroethylene spill. The content of the stories was the same. One group read a news account that indicated that there was considerable distrust or controversy. In the other news account, there was little indication of such problems. Those who read the news account filled with reports of controversy thought that the hazard was more severe than those reading an account without that information.

In addition, people reject assertions if they perceive that the message sender lacks *competence*. In *Erin Brockovich*, the heroine initially struggled to be viewed as competent. She did not have a law degree, and her clothing was more provocative than professional. During the movie, however, she interviews victims of the chromium VI releases and locates records showing that Pacific Gas & Electric knew that chromium VI was dangerous and failed to clean it up. Eventually, her intelligence, thoroughness, and persistence establish her competence.

Solutions. There are other approaches to earning an audience’s trust or confidence. One is spokesperson training. Training helps managers avoid common errors such as inadvertently seeming to disrespect stakeholders’ concerns. In a televised interview, Dr. Bruce Ames of the University of California, Berkeley, explained why the amount of pesticides on most fruits and vegetables was not likely to harm health. He said, “The amount of pesticide residue—man-made pesticide residue—people are eating are actually trivial and very, very tiny amounts” (Stossel, 2007; also, see Ames, Magaw, & Gold, 1987). Ames is an expert on this topic, and his statement has merit from a risk

assessment standpoint. But if one's goal is to earn audience confidence, it fails that test. The comment seems to imply that the audience's concerns and health are unimportant. Instead, courses in risk communication encourage communicators to earn trust by acknowledging an audience's concerns and answering the questions of most interest to them. According to Chess (2000), audiences most want to know, "What's the danger? What are you doing to protect me? What can I do to protect myself?" (see also, Dynes & Rodriguez, 2005).

A more comprehensive approach than viewing credibility as a matter of spokesperson training is to view this challenge as one of building credibility "infrastructure." Heath and his associates make this argument (Heath & Abel, 1996; Heath & O'Hair, 2008; Heath & Palenchar, 2000). To earn trust, organizations need to do regular safety audits and conduct drills to ensure that everyone they affect is familiar with how to judge safety and act in an emergency. If an organization manages a physical hazard such as a manufacturing process that could harm workers or the environment, then management needs to find ways to make its processes monitor-able by others.

Enhancing an organization's monitor-ability is the third approach to earning confidence, one advocated by Peter Sandman. Sandman (1993; see also, www.psandman.com) argued that no one earns trust by asking for it. To illustrate, he told the story of an incinerator controversy in Japan. He wrote,

The big issue with incinerators is temperature. The resolution of the controversy . . . was a 7-foot neon sign on the roof of the incinerator, hooked to a temperature gauge. If a citizen wanted to know if the incinerator was burning hot enough all he or she had to do was to look out the window. (p. 36)

Other ways to enhance an organization's monitor-ability are not merely to promise to be responsible but also to offer concerned groups the chance to negotiate a contract covering—for example, "What will happen in case of an accidental spill or release, how neighbors will be notified and how damages will be paid" (Sandman, 1993, p. 59).

Gaining Awareness, the A in CAUSE

According to Perry (Perry & Mushkatel, 1984), audiences may fail to receive a warning for two reasons: They may not be able to detect it or decode it. Detection involves the senses: One hears, smells, sees, and feels warnings. Decoding has to do with comprehending words or symbols in a message.

Obstacle 1: Detection. Think about a tornado approaching. How should emergency managers send a message that would reach every person on a university campus in time to protect them? Many students are focused on their studies or talking with friends. Many campuses are large. To increase the chances that everyone detects such messages, some

universities have warning sirens; others send emergency messages by text messaging. Unfortunately, not all students sign up to receive emergency text messages. If a major storm or other incident would occur, only some of those on campus would receive the message. Increasingly, research is identifying ways to improve emergency preparedness on campuses (e.g., Langford, 2007), but more work is needed.

Ensuring detection of risk messages is a challenge in other contexts. Warnings are placed on foods, medicines, and household products. Scientists test these labels for effectiveness (e.g., Viscusi & O'Connor, 1987). One challenge is that consumers accustomed to safe products may not be reading warning labels.

Obstacle 2: Decoding. Decoding involves being able to read the words and symbols used in warnings. Decoding skill is essentially literacy skill, and there is research on literacy challenges in health communication (e.g., Davis, Williams, Branch, & Green, 2000). For a safety context, consider the tornado again. Suppose an emergency manager sends a text message that says a tornado watch is in effect for Hamilton County. College Student X has signed up for text messaging. Does he know that he is in Hamilton County? This is a decoding difficulty; that is, the receiver can pronounce the words *Hamilton County* but he may not understand that they have relevance to him. Other decoding issues occur when people try to communicate about their location to emergency personnel. Although one might assume that 9/11 operators should know how to get to each location on a campus, according to one emergency professional (J. Callan, personal communication), 9/11 operators may be better at locating street intersections and street addresses than buildings on a multibuilding campus (for research on direction giving or referential communication, see Rowan, 2003).

Solutions. Perry and Mushkatel (1984) found that rather than immediately taking the recommended protective action, when people hear a warning, they respond by talking to one another ("Did you hear that?" "Should we do something?"). While taking time to talk could be dangerous, these researchers found that people need to engage in "confirmatory behavior." Talking to others helps people decide what the warning means, if they should respond, and how to respond. Perhaps warnings would be even more effective if message senders assumed that people will talk to share the warning. A text message such as "Tornado to hit campus. Tell people. Go to lowest floor, away from glass" may be effective. It may be that urging recipients to talk about a warning would increase its effectiveness, assuming the talk was brief.

Other steps are to increase text size and attention-getting graphics on warning labels, learn which languages are predominant in a target area, and learn which members of a population are experiencing hearing loss. Some disabilities are easy to detect, but hearing loss may not be. Ideally, organizations might have employees fill out

confidential surveys asking what the best ways are to communicate emergencies to them.

People have awareness of a word or symbol if they can detect it and recognize its referential meaning (i.e., that Hamilton County is my county; taking a pill twice a day means taking it once in the morning and once at night). In addition, though, one often needs more than awareness of a risk message. To appreciate messages about many risks, one needs deeper understanding about the meanings of key terms, the conditions under which a substance is hazardous, and so forth. Research says that there are several key obstacles to understanding complex science and technology (e.g., Rowan, 1999, 2003). Here are two challenges and ways to address them.

Deepening Understanding, the *U* in CAUSE

Obstacle 1: Confusing Terms. Although unfamiliar scientific terms such as nanotechnology or acrylamide seem the ones likely to confuse audiences, in fact, familiar words such as toxic, chemical, random, hormone, smoker, or even risk, terms that are easy to pronounce and spell, may be the bigger stumbling block if those communicating do not realize that they are using the term in a way that differs from their audience's interpretation.

Steps to Clarify Confusing Terms. Communicators can clarify the meaning of a frequently misunderstood term by taking several steps. These are (a) define the word's essential meaning, (b) say what it does not mean, (c) give several varied examples of its use so that audiences see the concept's meaning instantiated in several contexts, and (d) discuss a false instance that audiences may think is an example but is not. I call explanations that have these components effective elucidating explanations (e.g., Rowan, 1999, 2003). For instance, people may assume that because a substance was emitted during a manufacturing process, neighbors close to the plant were exposed to it. To clarify the distinction between emission and exposure, one might say that emission means release into the environment. (Note that oxygen and carbon dioxide are emissions according to this definition. The essential parts of the term's meaning are release and environment.) In contrast, exposure means contact.

Second, give a range of varied examples of the term, not just one example. This step is taken to ward off misconceptions about some irrelevant feature of a single example being core to a term's meaning. To illustrate instances of exposure, one might write, "You are exposed to a substance if you eat, touch, or inhale it. Exposure is measured with blood or tissue samples; emissions are measured in pounds released." To illustrate radiation, which is energy traveling through space, one would list radio waves, sunlight, X rays, gamma rays, not just one of these examples and not just the man-made or the natural instances. Seeing a range of examples helps audiences avoid wrongly inferring that all radiation is man-made.

Finally, it is sometimes helpful to discuss a false example and explain why it is false. In everyday use, the word *random* means "unpredictable" or "unimportant." In social science, the term refers to a specific way to select and assign participants in a study. Casual uses of the word *random* (e.g., "That remark was totally random") are false examples or nonexamples of a procedure where a researcher "randomly assigns participants to a condition." In this case, the researcher is not being casual or treating the participants as unimportant. Instead, the researcher is being very careful to make sure that every member of a population such as college students has an equal chance of being either in one group, such as a group getting a new instructional method, or in another group, getting the traditional instruction. Random assignment to groups allows scientists to infer that if the treatment group's performance on a test is significantly different from those in the control group, that difference occurred because of the treatment and not some other factor.

Obstacle 2: Difficulty Understanding Risk Numbers. A second problem that hampers deep understanding of physical hazards is that health and safety risks are often described numerically. Consider this statement, quoted by Woloshin, Schwartz, and Welch (2002): "This year, approximately 182,800 women in the United States will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer, and approximately 40,800 will die from breast cancer" (p. 799).

While these numbers are large, it is hard to know what relevance they have to any particular woman. Ideally, readers want to know if they personally need to take steps to reduce their chances of contracting this disease. As these authors argue, to envision and use risk numbers, one needs to provide context and clarity.

There are several ways to do so. Woloshin and his colleagues (2002) analyzed statistical data on cancer incidence. Based on their analyses, they created easy-to-interpret risk charts for physicians' offices. Here is a portion of one of their charts:

Risk chart for women who currently smoke*

*Someone who has smoked at least 100 cigarettes in her life and who currently smokes any amount now counts as a smoker.

Find the line with your age. The numbers next to your age tell how many of 1,000 women will die in the next 10 years from each cause of death.

Age	Heart Attack/Stroke	Cancer (all kinds)	Any Cause
30	2	2	14
40	5	7	32
50	19	30	80
60	71	80	199
70	108	147	470

SOURCE: Woloshin et al. (2002, p. 802, Figure 3).

This chart allows a patient and a physician to focus on three predictors—age, gender, and smoking status—and then consider the links between those factors and the likely causes of death.

An important point to remember in communicating risk numerically is that there is no neutral way of presenting risk (Peters, Hibbard, Slovic, & Dieckmann, 2007). Any single numerical presentation focuses attention on some aspects of a hazard but not on others. It is best to seek multiple ways of thinking about a risk to understand it. As Kupperman and Nease (2000) wrote, “A medication appears less attractive when explained as having a 5 percent chance of side effects than when described as having a 95 percent chance of producing no side effects” (p. 6).

Creating Satisfaction, the S in CAUSE

Obstacles to Securing Satisfaction (With Recommended Solutions). The fourth obstacle highlighted by the CAUSE model is lack of satisfaction with analyses of physical hazards and their management. Someone may understand the disease of depression and how medications for the disease work but disagree that these medications are a good idea for him or her. Similarly, community members may understand that a train carrying spent nuclear fuel by rail through their town poses a very low risk of exposure to ionizing radiation for inhabitants but still not agree that the train should be allowed to travel through their town.

There are many other reasons why people may be unsatisfied with risk assessments and proposals for risk management (e.g., Clark, 1984; O’Keefe, 2002). Here are two:

1. Stakeholders may underestimate their personal susceptibility to harm and the severity of the potential harm (e.g., Will tanning beds cause me to get skin cancer? How susceptible are lawn care workers to hearing loss? [Smith et al., 2008; Witte et al., 2001]).
2. Stakeholders may overestimate how likely, frightening, dangerous, or dreadful some event may be (e.g., riding in an airplane, living near a manufacturing facility, surviving a fire, population increases, etc.).

Solutions: Addressing Underestimation of Risk. To address disagreement because of underestimation, one tested method is to offer ways to learn more about personal vulnerability (Kreuter & Strecher, 1995). For example, the Web site www.yourdiseaserisk.harvard.edu/ helps patients determine their vulnerability to a dozen cancers as “average, below average, or above average.” The site also lists steps that individuals can take to minimize cancer or other disease risk (e.g., taking a multivitamin tablet daily or increasing daily servings of leafy green vegetables).

Furthermore, if a hazard is underestimated, it may be because it seems natural, voluntary, or remote—some of the risk perception factors most likely to cause a risk to be ignored. To overcome these perceptions, communicators could offer information that suggests that the hazard is actually unnatural, imposed, and likely to cause harm soon (Sandman, 1993; Slovic, 2000). Skin cancer rates are increasing (Purdue, Beane Freeman, Anderson, & Tucker, 2008). While the sun is obviously a natural phenomenon, one might doubt how “natural” it is to expose one’s skin to the sun: fashions encouraging people to wear less clothing are trends. Tanning beds are not natural, and their use is associated with melanoma, the most dangerous skin cancer (International Agency for Research on Cancer, 2007). To question how voluntary smoking is, one could note that many begin smoking in late childhood or early adolescence (Krainuwat, 2005; Najem, Batuman, Smith, & Feurman, 1997). Third, future consequences may be closer than they seem: A 2008 study found melanoma incidence—the deadly skin cancer—is increasing for people aged 15–39 (Purdue et al., 2008).

Solutions: Addressing Overestimation of Risk. One source of overestimation occurs when people feel great fear toward hazards unlikely to do great harm. To manage fear, it is helpful to consider research on how frightening events are processed by the brain. Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, and Welch (2001) wrote that there are two kinds of emotions: “*anticipatory emotions* are immediate visceral reactions (e.g., fear, anxiety, dread)” (pp. 267–268) to hazards. In contrast, *anticipated emotions* are not felt-in-the-moment. *Anticipated emotions* are those people think they *may* feel at some point in the future. *Anticipatory emotions* cause heart racing and stomach churning. As Loewenstein and colleagues (2001) explained, anticipatory emotion

causes us to slam on the brakes instead of steering into the skid, immobilizes us when we have the greatest need for strength, causes sexual dysfunction, insomnia, ulcers, and gives us dry mouth and jitters at the very moment when there is the greatest premium on clarity and eloquence. (p. 269)

On the other hand, the absence of any fear makes it difficult to care about a hazard. The challenge for communicators is to move an audience from feeling powerless to feeling satisfied that a recommended step will work and they can personally perform that step.

Witte and her associates (e.g., Stephenson & Witte, 1998; Witte et al., 2001) have conducted studies exploring conditions in which people become convinced that a recommended step will protect them from harm and that they can perform that step. That is, people want what Witte and her associates call response efficacy and

self-efficacy beliefs. Response efficacy is the belief that a recommended step will be effective. Self-efficacy is the belief that one can perform the recommended step. Using this analysis, officials who want a town to allow nuclear waste to travel through their community by rail should not simply assert that the likelihood of harm to residents is low. Instead, they should respectfully ask town inhabitants if they are interested in helping manage the hazard. Those transporting the spent fuel should share information on how to protect inhabitants in case of an accident and work with the town to create a contract covering emergency plans, drills, and conditions under which damages would be paid if an accident were to occur (Sandman, 1993; Witte et al., 2001).

Furthermore, self-efficacy is likely to develop if people (a) have taken the recommended action previously, (b) are physically capable of doing so, (c) receive messages encouraging the recommended behavior, (d) see others enacting the behavior, and (e) identify with groups where the desired behavior is encouraged (Bolan, Murphy, & Gleeson, 2004; Harwood & Sparks, 2003; Witte et al., 2001). For example, realistic training, rehearsals, and drills may be effective in helping people manage fear because they give participants a chance not only to feel anticipatory fear but also to manage this fear by, for example, grabbing an oxygen mask in a simulation of a plane losing its oxygen. At the author's university, residence hall counselors train to keep residents safe by participating in "Fire Academy." Instead of merely listening to lectures on fire safety, participants go to special training where they actually crawl through smoke-filled rooms, following the procedures taught to professional firefighters for staying alive in a fire. Participants find this realistic training informative and motivating (J. Callan, personal communication).

Motivating Enactment: The E in CAUSE

The final step in the CAUSE model for communicating about risk involves recognizing that satisfaction with a recommendation does not inevitably translate to enduring behavioral change. When a bare-headed cyclist suffers a head injury, his or her friends may vow to wear helmets the next time they ride, but movement from the desire to wear helmets to actually doing so is not a certainty. Behavior change research shows that there are two predictable obstacles: difficulties in initiating change and in sustaining the new behavior (e.g., Booth-Butterfield, 2003; Clark, 1984; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984; Prochaska, Norcross, & DiClemente, 1995).

Obstacle 1: Resistance to Initiating Behavior Change. Even when people agree that change is warranted, they struggle because change is stressful (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984; Prochaska et al., 1995). As Prochaska

and associates explained, change involves inevitable losses, such as enjoyed prior habits. According to Booth-Butterfield (2003), one should consider whether the behavior one wishes to change is relatively "embedded" or "unembedded." Embedded behaviors are frequent and integral to daily routine. For some, watching television daily and buckling seat belts are routines. In contrast, unembedded behaviors occur infrequently. Occasional trips to a city or cleaning the attic are examples of these kinds of behaviors.

Obstacle 2: Maintaining Behavior Change. Maintaining behavior change involves turning unembedded behavior into an embedded one. Unfortunately, shortly after a new risk reduction behavior is adopted, it can be easily extinguished (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984).

Solutions to Encourage Behavior Change. Booth-Butterfield (2003) recommends that prior to making a change, one should consider how often a new behavior should occur, with whom, and in what setting, and how participants will react and feel. When a precise, reliable time for the behavior is identified, others who will be performing the behavior are found, the right setting is located, and inducements to encourage the right feelings are offered, then the new behavior is more likely to occur. Clark (1984) argued that behavior is most likely to change when initial steps are made easy, simple, and rewarding. Prochaska, Levesque, Prochaska, Dewart, and Wing (2001) recommended that a change initiator minimize the negatives by noting that the negatives are usually temporary. Someone new to exercising might tell himself or herself that the time it will take to exercise daily will be offset by reduced risk of injury and a sense of well-being.

Sustaining a new behavior is the next challenge. Airline passengers who fly frequently feel that they know all the safety instructions, so forcing themselves to attend to safety placards on each flight is difficult. Prochaska and colleagues (2001) suggested creating new goals to sustain behavior change. Perhaps a frequent flier could remind himself or herself that between 1983 and 2000, more than half of all passengers involved in serious aircraft accidents survived (Ripley, 2008, p. 45). According to Ripley, those who survive reported having read and remembered safety instructions. In a health context, good behaviors can be sustained with encouragement and reminders from physicians, such as appointment reminders (Lantz, Stencil, Lippert, Beversdorf, & Jaros, 1995).

While reminder cards and rehearsing may seem small matters, there is evidence this is not the case. Ripley (2008) told the story of Rick Rescorla, the head of security for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter at the World Trade Center. Rescorla was a Vietnam veteran who started "running the entire company through his own frequent,

surprise fire drills” (p. 44). The company, an investment banking firm, had employees who could literally make millions of dollars in the time a fire drill might take. Regardless, Rescorla had them drill. He would time them and encourage them to move quickly by yelling through a bullhorn. On September 11, 2001,

Rescorla heard an explosion and saw Tower I burning from his office window. . . . (He) grabbed his bullhorn, walkie-talkie and cell phone and began systematically ordering Morgan Stanley employees to get out. . . . When the [second] tower collapsed, only 13 Morgan Stanley colleagues—including Rescorla and four of his security officers—were inside. The other 2,687 were safe. (p. 45)

Rescorla and the security guards perished that day. His steadfast commitment to rehearsing evacuation, even with top executives, saved their lives.

Conclusion

This chapter defined risk communication as the process of sharing meaning about physical hazards, described the related fields of risk assessment and risk management, and presented the CAUSE model for effective risk communication. Risk communication is one of the most interesting and important areas of communication research.

The world is not going to run short of physical hazards or difficulties communicating about them. Readers of this chapter should feel encouraged to learn more about risk communication research and to contribute to this field themselves. The more savvy risk communication researchers there are, the safer we all will be.

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FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

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The first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution are commonly known as the “Bill of Rights.” While this grand title sounds impressive, it creates an erroneous impression about the text to which it refers. The title suggests that the first 10 amendments to the Constitution establish a uniform set of freedoms and privileges guaranteed to all Americans. It suggests that there is a certain permanent quality about these protections; that these rights have a substance that can be touched. Moreover, it implies that the Founders of the republic, through the process of amendment, were able to perfect and articulate a shared understanding of “freedom” that is durable enough to transcend time, bridging their age with the 21st century.

The problems associated with such images are obvious on close reading. The Bill of Rights does not delineate a set of perfectly understood and inalienable freedoms and privileges. Rather, it is a list of general statements declaring what rights citizens may claim in disputes with the government. The actual protection afforded by these rights is often vague and elusive, and this is particularly true of the freedom of expression. The pertinent guarantees are specified in the First Amendment, which emphatically proclaims,

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for redress of grievances.

In this single sentence, the Founders defined the relationship between the government and the right of the people to criticize their elected officials. While the mandate expressed in the Free Speech Clause is absolute—“Congress

shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press”—the meaning of these 14 words is not as obvious as the words may suggest. Although the language is clear and straightforward, it is not as transparent as it seems. The very simplicity of the words is deceptive, so unequivocal that they have become equivocal, largely because it creates a right so absolute that it must necessarily be limited.

A comprehensive history of the Free Speech Clause is beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to say that since the First Amendment was ratified in 1791, Congress has adopted and the Supreme Court has permitted restrictions on the content of speech. In many instances, the restrictions have been justified by asserting that the speech at issue has so little redeeming value that it is outweighed by the social interest in order or morality. This first half of the chapter explores these areas, and having considered the nature of “low-value” speech, the second half of the chapter identifies some general principles developed by the Supreme Court to assess the constitutionality of government restrictions on speech.

A Two-Tier Approach to Freedom of Expression

Walter Chaplinsky was a Jehovah’s Witness who attempted to distribute religious literature on the streets of Rochester, New Hampshire. Because his message was controversial—he promised to preach the “true facts of the Bible,” and he denounced organized religion as a “racket,” Chaplinsky was quickly surrounded by a hostile crowd. Believing that violence was imminent, a traffic officer asked Chaplinsky

to accompany him back to the police station for his own protection. Along the way, the twosome met the Rochester City Marshal, whom Chaplinsky denounced as follows: “You are a God damned racketeer . . . [and] a damned Fascist and the whole government of Rochester are Fascists or agents of Fascists” (*Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*, 1942, p. 569).

Chaplinsky was promptly arrested and subsequently convicted by a jury for violating a New Hampshire statute that made it a crime to “address any offensive, derisive or annoying word to any other person who is lawfully in any street or other public place.” When Chaplinsky appealed his conviction, he found surprisingly little sympathy from either the New Hampshire Supreme Court or the U.S. Supreme Court. What makes this case interesting is not the result—the Supreme Court unanimously upheld Chaplinsky’s conviction—but rather the sweeping language contained in Justice Frank Murphy’s opinion. While he only needed to argue that Chaplinsky’s intemperate outburst posed a threat to public safety in order to uphold the conviction, Justice Murphy’s opinion in *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) includes a famous paragraph that seemingly places several broad categories of speech entirely beyond the protection of the First Amendment. In the pivotal passage, Justice Murphy notes,

There are certain well-defined and narrowly limited classes of speech, the prevention and punishment of which have never been thought to raise any Constitutional problem. These include the lewd and obscene, the profane, the libelous, and the insulting or fighting words—those which by their very utterance inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace. It has been well observed that such utterances are no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and are of such slight social value as a step to truth that any benefit that may be derived from them is clearly outweighed by the social interest in order and morality. (pp. 571–572)

These sweeping dicta, more than the decision in the case, offer a unique insight into the nature of freedom of expression in the United States.

Instead of focusing narrowly on fighting words, Justice Murphy laid the foundation for what scholars such as Harry Kalven (1988) have labeled a “two-tier theory” of the First Amendment. Speech in the higher tier, even if it is odious or distasteful, is entitled a full measure of First Amendment protection. At the same time, speech in the lower tier has minimal value, and it can be suppressed by the state with less judicial scrutiny. Lest there be any doubt about which speech lacks ideas and has no redeeming social value, Justice Murphy set out four neat categories: the lewd and obscene, the profane, the libelous, and the insulting or fighting words. To illustrate the nature of such speech, it seems appropriate to briefly consider the categories singled out by Justice Murphy for diminished protection under the First Amendment.

The Lewd and Obscene

The first U.S. Supreme Court decision to consider whether sexually explicit speech was worthy of constitutional protection was *Roth v. United States* (1957). In a decision that he later came to regret, Justice William Brennan built a theory of obscenity premised on the two-tier theory. Working from *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*’s (1942) assumption that “all ideas having even the slightest redeeming social importance—unorthodox ideas, controversial issues, even ideas hateful to the prevailing climate of opinion—have the full protection of the guarantees,” Justice Brennan concluded that obscenity was outside the First Amendment as it was “utterly without redeeming social importance” (p. 484). As it was without value, Justice Brennan did not consider whether there were harms associated with obscenity that might justify its regulation. In short, obscene speech is so worthless that it does not deserve to be measured by the standards applied to speech containing legitimate content.

In the years since *Roth v. United States* (1957), the Supreme Court has never revisited this assumption. Instead, the Justices have spent their time searching for a workable definition of obscenity and setting standards for assessing laws regulating sexually explicit speech. The most recent effort to define obscenity is contained in *Miller v. California* (1973), a decision that limits obscenity “to works which, taken as a whole, appeal to the prurient interest in sex, which portray sexual conduct in a patently offensive way, and which, taken as a whole, do not have serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value” (p. 24). To enforce this definition, the Supreme Court added some standards for laws regulating obscenity. First, the *Miller* decision requires the use of “contemporary community standards” to determine whether or not speech is obscene. This means that there is no national standard for obscenity; a work that is protected in one community might be obscene and unprotected in another community. Second, the *Miller* decision also adds a requirement that state laws must be clear and specific in describing the type of sexual conduct that is prohibited. Finally, the *Miller* decision allows “serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value” to redeem an otherwise obscene work.

In recent years, the sexual exploitation of children has become a special problem, and the courts have been forced to consider the constitutionality of a variety of measures designed to combat child pornography. Since obscenity is unworthy of constitutional protection, a law targeting child obscenity would be permissible so long as it adhered to the *Miller v. California* (1973) definition of obscenity. Laws targeting child pornography are more complicated, however, as these measures often seek to ban the portrayal of minors in sexual performances, even if the performances are not legally obscene. The constitutionality of one such law was tested in *New York v. Ferber* (1982), a case involving a store owner convicted of selling films showing children under the

age of 16 masturbating. The jury concluded that although the materials in question were not legally obscene, the defendant was nonetheless guilty of violating New York State's child pornography law. The Supreme Court unanimously upheld the conviction, thereby establishing nonobscene child pornography as a new category of prohibited expression and giving legislators "greater leeway in the regulation of pornographic depictions of children" (p. 756).

The Profane

At first glance, it may seem that the profane should be grouped with the lewd and obscene as such speech often contains sexual references. Under closer inspection, however, most profanity is not erotic and could therefore never be obscene. While it may be offensive to some, the Supreme Court has shown a surprising tolerance toward profanity. This relaxed attitude is evident in the "mother-fucker trilogy" of the early 1970s, three cases in which authorities sought to prosecute speakers for uttering this particularly distasteful phrase in public. In each instance, the Supreme Court vacated the conviction and held that speech could not be punished simply because it might be offensive to someone in the audience. The Justices then remanded the cases to the lower courts to determine whether the words might tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace.

The more difficult questions involving profanity today are related to the medium of expression. In *Federal Communications Commission v. Pacifica Foundation* (1978), for example, the Supreme Court upheld a ban on indecent language broadcast over the public airwaves during a time of day when children would likely be in the audience. While acknowledging that "these words ordinarily lack literary, political, or scientific value," the plurality opinion authored by Justice John Paul Stevens admitted that "they are not entirely outside the protection of the First Amendment" (p. 746). Citing precedent, Justice Stevens concluded that speech cannot be banned simply because it is offensive. The restriction on broadcast indecency was justified, however (1) because the broadcast media is pervasive and (2) because the broadcast media is uniquely accessible to children.

The Libelous

In *New York Times v. Sullivan* (1964), the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of an Alabama law that allowed public officials to sue for defamation if the words are such as to "injure him in his public office, or impute misconduct to him in his office, or want of official integrity, or want of fidelity to a public trust" (p. 267). Unlike *Roth v. United States* (1957), however, Justice William Brennan's opinion in *Sullivan* denied the *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) categories their "talismanic immunity" (p. 269). Instead of assuming that

libelous utterances "are no essential part of any exposition of ideas," Justice Brennan started from the premise that the "freedom of expression upon public questions is secured by the First Amendment has long been settled by our decisions" (p. 269). Since the speech at issue was protected political criticism, Justice Brennan fashioned an "actual malice" rule that would require public officials to prove that a defamatory statement was made "with knowledge that it was false or with reckless disregard of whether it was false or not" (p. 280).

While the *Sullivan* decision has been applauded—one prominent scholar proclaimed it was an occasion for "dancing in the streets," it is important to note that the Supreme Court has never held that libelous speech as a class is worthy of constitutional protection. In *Gertz v. Welch* (1974), for instance, the Court used language eerily reminiscent of *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) when it suggested that "neither the intentional lie nor the careless error materially advances society's interest in 'uninhibited, robust, and wide open' debate on public issues" because "there is no constitutional value in false statements of fact" (p. 340). So, too, the Court has limited First Amendment protection in cases involving libelous statements about a private matter that is of no public concern.

In the years since *Sullivan*, the Supreme Court has expanded the actual malice rule to include both public figures as well as public officials, it has broadened the definition of public officials to include those who have substantial responsibility for the conduct of government affairs, and it has defined official conduct to include private matters that touch on a person's fitness for public office. These protections have created a space for speech on matters of public concern, even speech that includes false statements. Defamatory statements regarding matters of public concern are only subject to liability if it can be shown that they are made with actual malice. It should be noted, however, that false statements of facts about private persons receive limited First Amendment protection.

Fighting Words

According to the *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) opinion, fighting words consist of two classes of speech: words that by their very utterance inflict injury and words that tend to incite an immediate breach of peace. The Supreme Court eliminated the first class—words that by the very utterance inflict injury—in *Cohen v. California* (1971), a case that came about when Paul Robert Cohen entered the Los Angeles County Courthouse wearing a jacket bearing the words "Fuck the Draft" to protest the Vietnam War. Although no one complained about the language used on the jacket, Cohen was arrested by the police and charged with breach of peace. On appeal, the Supreme Court overturned Cohen's conviction. Writing for the majority, Justice John Harlan concluded, "It cannot possibly be maintained that this vulgar allusion to the Selective

Service System would conjure up psychic stimulation with anyone likely to be confronted with Cohen's crudely defaced jacket" (p. 20). As Justice Harlan saw the case, Cohen was being punished for the offensive content of his jacket, not because of its erotic nature or for fear that it would trigger a violent reaction. In the words of Justice Harlan,

While the particular four-letter word being litigated here is perhaps more distasteful than most others of its genre, it is nevertheless often true that one man's vulgarity is another's lyric. Indeed, we think it is largely because government officials cannot make principled distinctions in this area that the Constitution leaves matters of taste and style so largely to the individual. (p. 25)

Because reasonable people might find different words objectionable, Justice Harlan concluded that it was unconstitutional to punish speech on the theory that its very utterance might inflict injury.

The *Cohen v. California* (1971) decision narrowed the fighting words exception to include only language that tends to incite an immediate breach of the peace. This would seem to require an abusive personal epithet, addressed to a specific individual and delivered in a face-to-face context, under circumstances likely to result in violence. It is difficult to imagine how written words, language addressed at large audiences or broad classes of people, or speech mediated through the Internet could ever be suppressed under the reformulated *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) test. The definition of fighting words is so narrow, in fact, that the Supreme Court has not upheld a single conviction for the use of fighting words since *Chaplinsky* was decided in 1942. Given that fact, scholars such as Kent Greenawalt (1995) have wondered whether any fighting words remain.

Beyond Chaplinsky

Over the years, the Supreme Court has gradually reduced the *Chaplinsky* list to obscenity, libelous speech made with actual malice, and fighting words that incite a breach of peace. These are not, however, the only categories of speech that have been singled out for reduced First Amendment protection. Perhaps the two most glaring omissions from Justice Murphy's original list of low-value speech involve commercial speech and expressive conduct.

Although it is ubiquitous, commercial expression has historically received little First Amendment protection. In *Valentine v. Chrestensen* (1942), the Supreme Court unanimously declared that commercial advertising (in this case, handbills being distributed on the streets of New York City) was not essential public information but rather expression intended to produce a private profit. In a dismissive opinion that was only half a page in length, the Justices noted that while it was clear that public streets could be used "for the exercise of the freedom of communicating information and disseminating opinion," it was

equally clear that no such privilege protected "purely commercial advertising" (p. 54). For more than 30 years, the *Valentine v. Chrestensen* doctrine prevailed, and the state and federal courts consistently ruled that commercial speech was unworthy of First Amendment protection.

During the 1970s, however, the Supreme Court reversed direction and rehabilitated commercial speech in a series of remarkable opinions authored by Justice Harry Blackmun. One of Justice Blackmun's more notable declarations occurred in *Virginia State Board of Pharmacy v. Virginia Citizens Council* (1976), where he argued, "Advertising, however tasteless and excessive it sometimes may seem, is nonetheless dissemination of information as to who is producing and selling what product, for what reason, and at what price" (p. 765). By this reasoning, advertising is akin to high-value speech because a free-market economy allocates resources based on personal economic decisions. This argument does not, however, extend to false or misleading advertising, as it contains no such information. Nor does it mean that advertising receives the same measure of protection as noncommercial expression. Two years after *Virginia State Board of Pharmacy v. Virginia Citizens Council* (1976) was decided, the Supreme Court stressed the point by emphasizing that commercial speech remains in a less protected category "commensurate with its subordinate position in the scale of First Amendment values" (*Ohralik v. Ohio State Bar Association*, 1978, p. 456). This is a notable distinction because it suggests the court will allow regulations on advertising that might not be permissible in the realm of noncommercial expression.

The Supreme Court has also held that *speech plus*—expression that is accompanied by conduct such as picketing, burning a draft card, or wearing an armband—receives less First Amendment protection than does "pure speech" (such as giving a talk to an audience in an auditorium). The general principle is that the more "plus" (conduct) in the act of expression, the less that expression is protected by the Constitution. An example occurred in *United States v. O'Brien* (1968), when the Supreme Court upheld David Paul O'Brien's conviction for burning his draft card to protest the Vietnam War. Writing for the majority, Chief Justice Earl Warren declared, "We cannot accept the view that an apparently limitless variety of conduct can be labeled 'speech' whenever the person engaging in the conduct intends thereby to express an idea" (p. 376). When "speech" and "nonspeech" are combined in the same expressive conduct, Chief Justice Warren concluded, "a sufficiently important government interest in regulating the nonspeech element can justify incidental limitations on First Amendment freedoms" (p. 376).

Finally, it should be noted that some commentators have proposed adding new categories of speech to the original *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) list of low-value speech. Alexander Bickel (1975), for example, would add "filthy and violent rhetoric" and other forms of "assaultive speech" on the grounds that such discourse undermines

our common moral environment. Catherine MacKinnon would add pornography because she views it as more insidious than obscenity. Not only does pornography have little social value but MacKinnon (1993) believes that it demeans women and validates attitudes that lead to discrimination and violence against the female half of the population. For similar reasons, Mari Mastuda would add racist hate speech to the *Chaplinsky* list. According to Matsuda (1989), this speech shares three identifying characteristics: (1) the message is of racial inferiority; (2) the message is directed against a historically oppressed group; and (3) the message is persecutorial, hateful, and degrading. Much as pornography denigrates women, Matsuda argues that racist hate speech has real consequences in the daily lives of the members of minority groups singled out for such verbal abuse.

Standards for Judicial Review

Having come this far, it might safely be concluded that Justice Murphy erred when he suggested that there are “certain well-defined and narrowly limited classes of speech” that are unworthy of First Amendment protection. These categories are neither well-defined nor are they limited. Ever since *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) was decided, the Supreme Court has struggled to find a workable definition of obscenity. At one point, an exasperated Justice Potter Stewart lamented the difficulty of “trying to define what may be indefinable.” He then added one of the more memorable lines about obscenity, “I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that” (*Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 1964, p. 197).

So too, the Justices have struggled with the categories that comprise the *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) list. While obscenity remains outside the First Amendment, the Court has rehabilitated profane and libelous speech and narrowed the definition of fighting words. Although not on the original list, the Court has also held that commercial speech and speech plus are entitled to less protection than high-value speech. Even with these additions, it has been suggested by some that assaultive speech, pornography, and racist hate speech should receive less First Amendment protection.

There is, however, a more fundamental problem with the *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) dicta. With all due respect to Justice Murphy, the problem with low-value speech is not that “such utterances are no essential part of any exposition of ideas” or that they “are of such slight social value as a step to the truth.” In fact, the problem is exactly the opposite. The Supreme Court singled out the lewd and obscene, the profane, the libelous, and the insulting or fighting precisely because this speech clearly communicates messages that the Justices found objectionable. By discounting the value of such speech, Justice Murphy marginalized its value and avoided the need to assess its content.

This observation notwithstanding, the two-tier theory helps explain why some classes of speech receive more

constitutional protection than other classes of speech. As the name implies, the two-tier theory creates a hierarchy of speech. Speech in the upper tier—high-value speech—receives a full measure of constitutional protection. Speech in the lower tier—low-value speech—necessarily receives less protection. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that low-value speech receives no constitutional protection. In *R.A.V. v. St. Paul* (1992), Justice Antonin Scalia cautioned that it is sometimes said that these categories of expression are “not within the area of constitutionally protected speech,” or that the “protection of the First Amendment does not extend” to them. Such statements must be taken in context, however, and are no more literally true than is the occasionally repeated shorthand characterizing obscenity “as not being speech at all” (p. 383).

In other words, while low-value speech is entitled to less First Amendment protection, it is not “invisible to the Constitution.”

To enforce the hierarchy of speech, the Supreme Court employs different standards of judicial review when assessing laws regulating speech. While the Supreme Court has never adopted an absolute interpretation of the Free Speech Clause, the Court has been reluctant to uphold restrictions on high-value speech. If speech falls in the upper tier, the Court employs a “strict scrutiny” test that requires that a restriction on speech be justified by a compelling state interest and achieved through the least restrictive means. Under this level of review, it is difficult to justify restrictions on high-value speech. In contrast, the Court employs “intermediate” or “minimal” scrutiny when reviewing restrictions on low-value speech. By design, these standards are more deferential to the government. For example, a regulation can be justified because it satisfies a “legitimate” instead of a “compelling” state interest. Rather than requiring the “least restrictive” means, the Court will accept “reasonable” means. Since these standards are easier to satisfy, the Court upholds most regulations on low-value speech.

Laws Regulating Freedom of Expression

The fact that speech has value does not, however, mean that it can never be regulated by the government. While the language of the First Amendment is absolute, the Supreme Court has upheld a variety of measures restricting the freedom of expression. It is, unfortunately, impossible to summarize First Amendment jurisprudence neatly as the Supreme Court has offered a variety of rules, tests, and standards for assessing efforts to regulate speech. The result is a complicated body of law that has befuddled some of the greatest legal minds. By way of illustration, the Court has created a four-pronged test for regulating commercial speech; there are three standards for assessing state laws regulating obscenity, three types of public forums, and multiple standards for judicial review. There

are also unique rules for regulating speech in special settings such as schools, the military, and prisons.

While lengthy legal treatises have been devoted to the circumstances under which government can regulate expression, several broad principles can be identified. These principles are not transcendent, but they help explain how the Supreme Court approaches laws that restrict expression. Moreover, because they are not unique to specific areas, these principles can be broadly applied. The five principles hold that (1) prior restraints are generally unacceptable; (2) the advocacy of abstract ideas is protected; (3) restrictions on speech must be content neutral; (4) reasonable restrictions governing the time, place, and manner of communication are permissible; and (5) the freedom of speech must sometimes be balanced against competing constitutional rights or government interests.

Prior Restraints Are Generally Unacceptable

Prior restraint occurs when the government stops a message before it is communicated. This contrasts with another method of communication control referred to as post facto punishment, which means that the source of the message is punished after the communication has occurred. This may seem like a trivial distinction, but it has significant practical consequences. If a theater is prohibited from screening a movie, prior restraint has occurred. If the theater is allowed to screen the film, after which it is prosecuted for “disseminating obscenity,” post facto punishment has occurred. The difference, of course, is that prior restraint prevents the audience from viewing the film, while post facto punishment occurs after the audience has seen the objectionable content.

While prior restraint has a long history in English law, the U.S. Supreme Court did not consider the constitutionality of prior restraints until *Near v. Minnesota* (1931). This case involved a challenge to a Minnesota statute that allowed local officials to obtain a court order that blocked publication of “obscene, lewd and lascivious” or “malicious, scandalous and defamatory” content. In response to partisan attacks, local officials invoked the law and obtained an order blocking publication of future issues of *The Saturday Press*, a newspaper published by Jay M. Near. When Near challenged the order, the Supreme Court declared that the Minnesota statute violated the First Amendment, in a narrow 5–4 decision. According to the majority opinion authored by Chief Justice Charles Evan Hughes, “the general conception that liberty of the press, historically considered and taken up by the Federal Constitution, has meant, principally, although not exclusively, immunity from previous restraints or censorship” (p. 716).

While the decision was rightly heralded by Fred Friendly (1981) and others as a landmark victory for a free press, the holding is tempered by some important qualifications. First, Chief Justice Hughes was careful to note that

the liberty of the press did not confer immunity against post facto punishments. So, while government officials might not be able to prevent publication of a libelous newspaper, aggrieved parties could sue the publisher for defamation after the paper was printed. Second, Chief Justice Hughes warned that in a limited number of circumstances, prior restraint would be permissible. To illustrate this possibility, Chief Justice Hughes noted that “no one would doubt but that a government might prevent . . . the publication of the sailing dates of transports or the number and location of troops” or act to protect the “security of community life . . . against incitements to acts of violence and the overthrow by force of orderly government” (p. 716).

Advocacy of Abstract Ideas Is Protected

While the First Amendment limits the use of prior restraints to extraordinary circumstances, the Supreme Court allows the post facto punishment of expression in certain instances. So, for example, the Court will allow the state to punish speech that advocates criminal activity. The modern standard for incitement was established in *Brandenburg v. Ohio* (1969), a case involving a speech given by a leader of the Ku Klux Klan of Ohio. The speech—which warned of “revengeance” against the President, the Congress, and the Supreme Court—was recorded by a local television station. After hearing excerpts from the speech on the news, local officials arrested Brandenburg, who was tried and convicted for violating Ohio’s Criminal Syndicalism Act, a law that made it a crime to advocate the use of violence or terrorism in order to accomplish political or industrial reform. The Supreme Court overturned Brandenburg’s conviction on the grounds that

the constitutional guarantees of free speech and free press do not permit a State to forbid or proscribe advocacy of the use of force or of law violation except where such advocacy is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action. (p. 447)

In *Brandenburg v. Ohio* (1969), the Supreme Court set out a clear standard, stating that, to be punishable, antigovernment speech must have the intent of producing “imminent lawless action” and is “likely to incite or produce such action.” To sustain a conviction, the government must prove three things: (1) that the speaker advocates breaking the law, (2) that the speech calls for immediate lawless action, and (3) that the immediate lawless action is likely to occur. As Franklyn Haiman (1981) has observed, this is a challenging burden because it requires proof not only that the speech advocates illegal action but also that the action is likely to occur. Because of *Brandenburg*, the abstract advocacy of ideas, even dangerous ideas, is now protected by the First Amendment.

Restrictions on Speech Must Be Content Neutral

A third principle involves the distinction between content-based and content-neutral restrictions on expression. A law that is content-based singles out expression based on the content of the speech. So, for example, a law that banned wearing swastikas in Jewish neighborhoods or prohibited cross burning as an expression of racial animosity would be content-based because it targeted speech based on its message. In contrast, a law that banned all noisy activities outside a school or near a hospital would be content neutral because it applies to all speech, regardless of the message.

In recent years, the Supreme Court has shown little sympathy for content-based regulations on expression. One of the Court's more emphatic declarations on the subject can be found in *Police Department of the City of Chicago v. Mosley* (1972). In an oft-quoted passage, Justice Thurgood Marshall declared, "Above all else, the First Amendment means that government has no power to restrict expression because of its message, its ideas, its subject matter, or its content" (p. 95). In this instance, the Court held that a city ordinance that prohibited picketing near schools was unconstitutional. The flaw in the law, according to the majority, was due to the fact that the ordinance was not a flat ban on all picketing. Rather, that law contained an exception for labor picketing, and that meant that it singled out nonlabor picketing based on its content.

Under closer examination, it may seem odd that the Supreme Court is less sympathetic to content-based than to content-neutral restrictions. Both restrictions limit speech, but a content-neutral restriction will often be more restrictive than a content-based restriction as it reaches more speech. For example, a ban on all forms of solicitation at a municipal airport would be content neutral, yet it would restrict more speech than a narrow ban on religious solicitation at the same airport. The explanation for this seeming anomaly goes to the heart of the First Amendment. Content-based restrictions are problematic because, as Cass Sunstein (1993) has noted, they are often based on illegitimate reasons. This contrasts with content-neutral restrictions, which are usually justified by appeals to broader societal interests. So, for example, the ban on all forms of solicitation in airports might be justified based on security grounds. A ban on religious solicitation would nominally improve security, but such a ban would be problematic because the government seems more interested in singling out religious solicitors than in protecting travelers.

Finally, while the neutrality principle may seem intuitive, it is important to note that it is not absolute, as the Supreme Court has in fact upheld some content-based regulation of speech. An oft-cited example is *Burson v. Freeman* (1992), a case involving a Tennessee law that banned political speech within 100 feet of polling places on Election Day. At face value, this law seems problematic on

two counts: first, it restricted high-value political speech, and second, it restricted speech on public streets and sidewalks, forums traditionally open for discussion and debate. Despite these concerns, the Supreme Court upheld the law, reasoning that it was a commonsense measure intended to prevent voter intimidation and election fraud.

Reasonable Restrictions Are Permitted on the Time, Place, and Manner of Communication

Taken together, the first three principles suggest that the government can exercise little control over expression. Prior restraints are generally unconstitutional, the advocacy of abstract ideas is protected, and restrictions on speech must be content neutral. This does not mean, however, that government has no power to regulate speech, as can be demonstrated by government restrictions on the time, the place, and the manner of communication. A restriction on time, for example, might prohibit parades on city streets during the evening rush hour when traffic is heavy. A restriction on place might ban demonstrations inside prisons or on military bases. Finally, a restriction on the manner of communication might limit how speakers communicate. Many municipalities prohibit the use of loud speakers in residential neighborhoods.

One of the great champions of political speech, Alexander Meiklejohn (1948), invoked the image of a New England town meeting to justify freedom of speech. The town meeting provides a place for neighbors to gather, to debate matters of common concern, and to vote on issues affecting the community. For this sort of deliberate democracy to work, freedom of expression must be guaranteed. At the same time, Meiklejohn also recognized that a town meeting would be a disaster without some limits on speech. That is why a moderator is selected, an agenda is negotiated, and all speakers must adhere to rules governing the order and length of speeches. Time, place, and manner restrictions can be analogized to the rules that govern a town meeting. If anyone were allowed to speak anytime, anywhere, and using any medium of communication, the result would be chaos. Much like the rules governing a town meeting, it is often argued that restrictions on the time, place, and manner of communication actually increase the freedom of speech.

As might be expected, government bodies have used their authority to impose a broad range of time, place, and manner restrictions, and many of these restrictions have been challenged in court. While a thorough review of these cases is beyond the scope of this chapter, several simple generalizations are possible. A time, place, or manner restriction that is content based would likely fail as the court would apply a strict scrutiny test. On the other hand, content-neutral restrictions on the time, place, or manner of communication would be subjected to intermediate

scrutiny. To satisfy this standard, the government must show that the law serves an important interest, that the law is narrowly tailored, and that other means of communication are available. So, for example, the courts have consistently upheld content-neutral ordinances that require permits for holding parades on public streets or rallies in public parks, so long as the municipality has a clear policy that is consistently and equitably enforced.

A decision in a recent Supreme Court case involving time, place, and manner restrictions is instructive. *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York v. Village of Stratton* (2002) came about when Stratton, a village in Ohio, adopted an ordinance regulating canvassing and soliciting in residential neighborhoods. Under the ordinance, would-be canvassers had to request a free permit available from the mayor's office. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society—more commonly known as the Jehovah's Witnesses—challenged the law on First Amendment grounds. While village officials claimed that the ordinance was intended to prevent fraud and protect privacy, the Supreme Court found that the measure was overboard and unconstitutional. Not only did the ordinance restrict Jehovah's Witnesses and door-to-door salesmen, but it also barred political candidates, Girl Scouts selling cookies, Halloween trick-or-treaters, and even neighbors from going from door to door without a permit.

Speech Rights Must Sometimes Be Balanced

The previous discussion treats freedom of expression in isolation. In many situations, however, the courts are required to balance competing constitutional rights. Anthony Lewis (2007), for example, has written about the tension between the constitutional guarantees of a free press and the right to a fair trial. A case in point is *Nebraska Press Association v. Stuart* (1976), in which a local judge issued a gag order against the press before a murder trial as a way of preventing pretrial publicity that might prejudice the jury pool. In this instance, the First Amendment rights of the free press came into direct conflict with the Sixth Amendment right of the accused to a trial by an impartial jury. The Supreme Court refused to “establish a priority applicable in all circumstances” and balanced the two competing rights, both guaranteed by the Constitution. While acknowledging that the Sixth Amendment is important, the Court came down on the side of the free press and overturned the gag order.

It would be misleading, however, to suggest that the only circumstances in which speech might be limited is when another constitutional right is involved. Concerned legislators sometimes adopt measures that limit speech to address societal problems. In recent years, for example, the Supreme Court has been asked to consider a wide variety of measures restricting commercial speech. To handle such cases, the Supreme Court created an ad hoc balancing test that was first articulated in *Central Hudson Gas and*

Electric v. Public Services Commission (1980). Under the *Central Hudson* test, courts must determine (a) whether the expression to be limited promotes legal products, services, or activities; (b) whether the government has a substantial interest in prohibiting or limiting the commercial speech; (c) whether the restriction directly advances the government interest; and (d) whether the restriction is only as broad as necessary to advance the government's interest. Application of the *Central Hudson* test, in most instances, requires the court to balance the benefit of the proposed restriction (the second factor discounted by the third factor) against the burden imposed on the freedom of speech (the fourth factor). The results of ad hoc balancing using the *Central Hudson* test are case specific and cannot be generalized.

At first glance, balancing offers an easy way to resolve conflicts between free speech and other rights or interests. By assigning appropriate weights to both the right of a free press and the right of a fair trial, the Supreme Court was able to strike the appropriate balance in the *Richmond Newspaper* case. While the result in this instance makes intuitive sense, the balancing approach is not without its critics. The very flexibility that makes balancing so intellectually appealing means that it may threaten freedom of speech. For that reason, absolutists such as Justice Hugo Black (1960) rejected the idea of balancing First Amendment rights against asserted state interests.

Conclusion

Rodney Smolla (1992) cautions against simple answers to all questions related to the freedom of expression. It is difficult to find organizing principles and impossible to neatly reduce the freedom of expression to a single book chapter. While the language of the Free Speech Clause is unambiguous, academics and jurists have struggled to find bright lines for distinguishing between protected and unprotected expression. Even when it is possible to assign speech into discrete categories, transcendent legal principles remain elusive. Depending on the type of speech at issue and the circumstances, different rules apply. The Supreme Court has admitted as much, noting that “each method of communicating ideas is a ‘law unto itself’ and that law must reflect the ‘differing natures, values, abuses and dangers’ of each method” (*Metromedia v. City of San Diego*, 1981, p. 501). For every principle, the Supreme Court seems to have acknowledged one or more exceptions.

This does not diminish the importance of freedom of expression. On the contrary, Thomas Emerson (1963) suggests that the difficulty in developing a coherent theory and transcendent principles reflects the importance of the task. No single formula or rationale is sufficient. Rather, each controversy must be considered on its own merits. The Free Speech Clause expresses an ideal, but this ideal is challenged by speech that is hateful, prurient, and threatening. Thomas Jefferson recognized as much when he warned that

the free and open discussion required for true democracy is not for the fainthearted, who might prefer the calm of despotism to sailing on the “boisterous sea of liberty.”

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GLOBALIZATION

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Globalization—the integration and global interdependence of national economic and political systems—is the result in large part of the worldwide spread of communications. The resulting integration and interdependence is having a significant impact on existing communication systems and creating new uncertain trends in all communications and telecommunications systems in the 21st century.

Globalization, according to *The Economist* magazine, is one of the 10 most overused words of this decade. Phrases such as *global corporations*, *global media*, and *global economy* clearly reflect the term's popularity, but often its true meaning and implications become lost or obscured.

Nayan Chanda, editor of the online newsletter *Yale Global*, says that globalization means “reconnecting the human community, an effort that began some 50,000 years ago when the earliest forms of man began to travel out of Africa to North and South America and accelerated after Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492.” Tribal conquest and the search for better life, or in Columbus's case the search for oils and spices, were the reasons for the earliest forms of globalization. Faith-based pursuits by religious groups and, more recently, pure curiosity have propelled the worldwide migration of people across the globe.

Transatlantic cables and satellites, however, greatly accelerated the interdependence of nations during the past 100 years. In the past decade, it has been the worldwide spread of the Internet, with its progeny the World Wide Web (WWW), that has caused what *The New York Times* columnist and author Thomas Friedman has called a “flat world.”

In the space of just a few years, the Internet has blossomed from an arcane tool used primarily by academics

and government researchers into a worldwide mass communications medium that has rapidly become the backbone of all communications and financial transactions within society and the new global economy. The World Wide Web, invented by Tim Berners-Lee in the early 1990s, provides the geographically based subsystem that ensures even more spectacular growth. The Internet has over a billion users and has been doubling every year over the past 10 years. At its current rate, everyone on the planet will have access to the Internet within approximately 5 years or less. No previous telecommunications advance—not the telephone, television, cable television, the VCR, the fax, or even the cellular telephone—has more cultural and political impact on the global media landscape than the Internet.

As nations around the world awaken to the importance of creating a robust communications infrastructure, they will be less dependent and less willing to accept what has been considered a one-way flow of information and communication goods and services from the United States. This flow undoubtedly places a greater burden on U.S. policymakers to pursue the basic idea of a free, unregulated, unrestricted flow of news, entertainment, and information. Clearly, trade in information goods and services and the future of journalism itself face new challenges.

Background

In his biography *Cicero: The Life and Times of Rome's Greatest Politician*, Anthony Everitt writes, “Even the largest empire the world had seen was created slowly because communications were slow and unreliable” (p. 10). He points out that although a network of “well engineered

roads were constructed, travel was limited,” and since Rome had no public postal service,

letters (which were scratched tablets or written on pieces of papyrus) were sent at considerable cost by messenger. . . . The trick by a private correspondent was to persuade a traveler going in the right direction to take his or her post with him and deliver it. (p. 10)

It wasn't until the wealthy French financiers, the Rothschilds, deployed racing pigeons around 1813 that the value of timely communications accelerated the concept of multinational business and finance. The family established a European-wide network of carrier pigeons to capitalize, among other historical events, on Napoleon's loss at Waterloo, which they knew about first.

Within a decade, the telegraph reduced the reliance on pigeons, but it wasn't until the introduction of undersea cables, originally laid for the telegraph and subsequently used for telephony, that multinational trade and commerce began to accelerate. In 1927, with cooperation between American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T; “the Bell system”) and the British Post Office, a program of transatlantic communications between New York and London was begun, and a new undersea cable communications infrastructure was created that still exists today.

The next great leap forward occurred in 1957, with the Russian launch of the *Sputnik* satellite. “About the size of a basketball, but weighing 184 pounds, Sputnik whipped around the globe,” according to the space writer Leonard David (2002). “Every 98 minutes and with every orbit, Sputnik I thumbed its nose at America's technological prowess, political esteem in the community of nations, as well as its military strength” (para. 3).

Sputnik I started the so-called space race. President John F. Kennedy declared that the United States would put a man on the moon within a decade, and his administration formed the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). NASA created today's communications-satellite-based system. In 1962, the administration formed the Communications Satellite Corporation with the passage of the Communications Satellite Act. This legislation enabled the government, as 50% owner, to create a vehicle for the start-up of a new domestic carrier in competition with the existing AT&T monopoly, a global organization called INTELSAT (the International Consortium of Satellites). INTELSAT was the predicate for the first worldwide communications system available to every country in the world based on their individual use and investment.

Within 10 years, more than 80 countries had joined the INTELSAT system, further shrinking the globe and enabling broadcasting as well as telephony to expand exponentially. This innovative effort created yet another communications wave, encouraging the growth of multinational and transnational enterprises of all kinds. The global presence of these new multinational corporations accelerated the deregulation and demonopolization of

so-called PTTs (Postal, Telephone, and Telegraph) or government-owned and -run telephone monopolies. As a great deal of new capital was needed to launch competing services, only private companies could afford such expensive enterprises.

Broadcast and related media monopolies, which the government also owned or controlled, were also privatized for the same reasons; new capital was needed to build new media outlets and to satisfy the corporate demand for advertising. The result was striking. In 1980, according to a report by Christina Holtz-Bacha and Pippa Norris (2001), there were only a few commercial television systems in Europe. In slightly over 15 years, however, the balance was reversed, with only a few countries—Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland—with government monopolies in broadcasting.

The sudden expansion of private TV produced a huge surge in the import of U.S. programming, leading to new fears that commercialization of the media was akin to the Americanization, or “electronic colonialism,” of Europe. The same refrain followed in Latin America, Canada, and Asian markets, which like Europe soon opened their markets to private broadcasting and the deregulation of their public telephone systems.

As advertiser-supported media has grown, the future of public service broadcasting has been threatened. While there have been several studies that in general have suggested that commercial television produces less news and information, and therefore tends to erode the cultural and political fabric of individual nations, this concern has not been proved. In fact, there is a tendency, Holtz-Bacha and Norris argue, toward a sort of “self-selection strategy” that is always in operation. In other words, people who prefer news or information tend to watch and prefer noncommercial broadcasting, and there is an expectation that commercial television is more for entertainment. Moreover, their research suggests that when commercial channels did provide informational news content, there was a kind of “dummying down” of the news, or, as they called it, “infotainment.” The result is a “tabloidization” of the news, with an increase in sensationalism and an emphasis on negativity and personalization.

Governments, nonetheless, responding to public demand for more television options but not having the budgets to subsidize such expansion, favored noncommercial, advertiser-supported alternatives. As a consequence, the past 20 years have resulted in a significant increase in advertising to support such initiatives. Indeed, the 2007 worldwide budget for advertising now exceeds \$600 billion, twice what it was 20 years ago.

While U.S. media and program suppliers are criticized for preventing the development of a critical perspective on society, most nations around the world have successfully established their own—however embryonic—production outlets to feed the ever-growing media distribution channels. This component, related to the development of a robust communications infrastructure, is now widely seen

as important to national wealth and well-being and essential to participation in the global knowledge society and economy. As a consequence, so-called national information systems, economic plans that encourage and support new communications initiatives and infrastructure, are everywhere.

Computers and the Digital Age

While there is no doubt that the development of satellites contributed greatly to the expansion of commercial broadcasting throughout Europe in the 1980s and had a similar effect worldwide, it also created an avenue for the global expansion of trade and commerce.

The development of direct broadcasting by satellite (DBS) was also a threat to national hegemony. For example, the mere idea that tiny Luxembourg, with a population under 500,000 people living in an area of less than a 1,000 square miles, could launch a satellite with a “footprint” covering most of Europe was threatening to television executives and government policymakers throughout the European Union. Luxembourg, because of its multilingual heritage, was already a commercial broadcaster with international leanings. Its over-the-air signal covered all of Luxembourg and portions of France, Germany, and Belgium. Moreover, the tiny country decided almost from the beginning to broadcast programs with advertising in several languages. In the 1980s, CLT (Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Télédiffusion), the largest commercial broadcaster in Luxembourg, launched a medium-power satellite service called SES ASTRA, which operates a fleet of satellites covering Europe, North America, and Africa.

The real threat to national hegemony was the development of the computer. The computer enabled creation of the Internet, and with the Internet came “media convergence,” a vehicle for the distribution of voice, video, and data over a single system.

Currently, there are in excess of 1.1 billion Internet users in the world. Depending on the growth of the mobile Internet, with the cell phone industry quickly embracing Internet-based protocols, it is likely that the world will be “connected” within the next few years.

The Period of Internet Boom and Bust

As mentioned earlier, it was the creation of the World Wide Web, the graphical user interface superimposed on the Internet, in 1990, that presaged the tremendous growth of the modern-day Internet. The Web, as it came to be called, revolutionized business and industry. The Web has also transformed education, health care, government, and other leisure and entertainment industries.

Creation of the Web, along with passage of the Communications Act of 1996, the first major rewrite of the law governing ownership and use of the telecommunications

infrastructure since 1934, led to the widespread perception that almost any business plan that proposed using the Internet was going to be an instant success. The 1996 Communications Act, while allowing cross-investments between existing players, clearly invited new players to the field of telecommunications. It has often been said that once the regulatory gates were opened in Washington, the capital markets in New York were quick to follow with financing.

Millions and millions of investment dollars poured into Internet start-ups as business, government, organizations, and institutions scrambled to increase their presence on the “national information highway.” Paradoxically, however, although the world’s information infrastructure was built in record time, as *The Wall Street Journal* reported, only about 3% of the new infrastructure was actually being used due to federal regulatory barriers.

This period of Internet investment in the United States and elsewhere in the world is referred to as the “dot-com boom.” Sadly, the “dot-com bust” followed soon after. Many of the business plans were built on the hopes and dreams of those proposing a new way of doing business. They lacked, however, real-world applications or were based on applications whose time had not yet arrived. The net result of these investments—by one estimate, hundreds of billions of dollars or close to the cost of building the entire U.S. national highway system—was that they had to be written off. Many of the fledgling companies had to file for bankruptcy or simply go out of business altogether. The good news is that the “dot-com bust” set the stage for yet another telecommunications revolution as many of these facilities and systems, expensive to build, were resold for “pennies on the dollar.” Now, literally thousands of new communications links have been established at a fraction of the original cost.

Beginning of the End of the Monopoly System of Communications

Given the worldwide spread of the Internet and the establishment or creation of the World Wide Web, there was a growing belief among policymakers and regulators everywhere that the monopoly concept was dead. In the United States, in any event, AT&T was given monopoly status at the turn of the century because of the belief that having basic phone service was a public necessity; a public good, and every American ought to have access to it. By the early 1980s, 97% of Americans had at least one phone and often more. In Western Europe, where the monopoly form of government enterprise was preferred, probably for both efficiency and control, this form of organization had run its course too. Privatization and deregulation of communication systems were common government responses as new telecommunications and information technologies were developed and competitive alternatives emerged.

More important, the development of the computer, the onset of digitization, and the creation of the Internet or

Network of Networks, clearly signaled the end of monopoly. In fact, this was evident worldwide. In the United States, the Federal Communications Commission was looking for ways to inject competition through the use of interconnection initiatives and the creation of the so-called specialized-carrier status. The Anti-Trust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice had already filed its massive lawsuit against AT&T for monopoly abuse. Other countries, particularly in Europe, were already making plans to privatize and deregulate their national telecommunications service in part to prepare for the changes the computer revolution was ushering in.

The New Geography of the Global Economy

In the wake of the rapid spread of computers and telecommunications, and the development of global corporations, yet another demand on nation states, and especially cities and regions across the world, was created. That demand was, and is today, to create the 21st-century information infrastructure so vital to the wealth and well-being of all cities and communities in a new global, knowledge economy and society. As the economies of the world become more integrated, one of the realities is that political power devolves to cities and regions worldwide. Information or knowledge becomes the new wealth, replacing gold as the monetary standard. As the former Citibank chairman Walter Wriston (1997) put it, "Information technology [becomes] the tools of wealth creation."

Even before the dot-com boom and bust era of the late 1990s, President Clinton and Vice President Gore were sounding the alarm. Gore particularly was promoting not only increased commercialization of the Internet but also the development of the broadband, high-speed Internet. He called it simply Internet II and was seeking federal funding from Congress to develop such a high-speed broadband system.

Both Clinton and Gore were keenly aware that we were entering a new uncertain era in which information or knowledge would become the most important indicator of national wealth. They knew that it was important for America to awaken to this basic shift in the structure of the global economy and that as a country we should begin to change institutions, both public and private, to respond to the challenges presented by the new global information economy.

Although the Clinton-Gore initiative, called the National Information Infrastructure (NII), clearly involved reforming the law to allow existing players to invest in the future and allowing new players to participate in that information age as well, the administration was aware that real growth had to take place within communities across America and that all sectors of our economy and society needed to be involved. Toward that end, billions of federal research and development dollars were targeted toward public projects across the country in health care, education,

business, and electronic (or "e") government. The Clinton administration tried to put the spotlight on community development.

The tiny country of Singapore in many ways created the model for what is occurring, indeed what must occur, worldwide to succeed and survive in the new global economy. As the technology of telecommunications and computers converges with the forces of the new global economy, political, social, and economic power is devolving rapidly to smaller and smaller entities. Probably, the best geopolitical entity for a rebirth or reinvention of a governing system that encourages knowledge-based production and activity is the city. Not surprisingly, the city in many ways has always been the center of commerce and the crucible of civilization. Today, in the new economy, where ideas themselves are the basis for the new wealth, the city becomes the most likely incubator of creative and innovative products and services.

More than 25 years ago, Singapore created a National Computer Board whose goal was to create "an intelligent island." By that, government leaders and policymakers meant not only the infrastructure of the new age but a mind-set that used technology as a tool of social, political, and economic transformation. As Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong stated in announcing the formation of a community-wide, government-created Intranet called Singapore One, the network "will empower Singaporeans to work efficiently in a smart environment to facilitate the use and access of information to enhance their business, personal, and family lives." The government saw the use and deployment of technology as crucial to the "next great leap forward." Although Singapore is only a small nation of less than 3 million people, the government aggressively began wiring the country and targeting key industry sectors for transformation. Eventually, every sector of the Singapore economy and society was automated.

Today, Singapore has launched what is called Infocomm 21, a broad strategic plan to take the country to the next level of the digital future. Singapore's stated goal is "to develop Singapore into a vibrant and dynamic global infocomm capital with a thriving and prosperous e-economy and a pervasive and infocomm savvy e-society."

Next door to Singapore, Malaysia, a far bigger country primarily dependent on agriculture, launched the Multi-media SuperCorridor Project. An area of approximately 10 by 20 miles and including the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, it is, in effect, a free-trade zone for IT and telecommunications research, development, and manufacturing. Like Singapore's government, Malaysian officials are appealing to global corporations to make the Multi-media SuperCorridor their Pacific regional headquarters and have offered a package of incentives to companies in the IT and telecom fields. For example, the SuperCorridor guarantees IT and software developers duty-free importation of all related equipment and a 100% investment tax allowance. These kinds of incentives are obviously attractive to IT companies such as IBM, Microsoft, or Google.

Like Singapore, Malaysia also promises world-class physical and IT infrastructures within the Corridor; no censorship of the Internet, and no taxes for the first 5 years of operation for those earning the so-called Pioneer status. Malaysia garnered major attention in the United States by inviting companies to its Corridor and reportedly had several billion dollars in investments promised when they first launched the initiative. By providing globally competitive tariffs, freedom of ownership, exemption from state and local ownership requirements and other permits and ensuring intellectual property protection and a series of legal innovations, such as digital signatures and the so-called new cyber laws, and ensuring and enhancing online security, Malaysia sought to position the Corridor as an attractive location to invest and operate.

Unfortunately, the SuperCorridor has not thrived as initially hoped due to the repressive, by Western standards, actions of the government, including limitations on press and political freedoms.

In the Middle East, the Gulf state of Dubai was taking out full-page ads in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and other major publications proclaiming itself a “city of the future.” In October 2000, Dubai opened its “Internet City” in a technology and media “free zone.” Like Malaysia’s Multi-media SuperCorridor, Internet City provides tax-free locations for further development of knowledge-based industries and duty-free import and export of media and information products and services.

Through an arrangement with the U.S.-based company, Cisco Systems, which provided technological vision and expertise, Dubai built what has been labeled the world’s largest Internet facility in the world, allowing the highest technically practical transmission speeds throughout the Internet City. These amenities and others have attracted Microsoft, IBM, Dell, Siemens, Sony, Ericsson, and other global corporations. Dubai’s strategy is comprehensive. In addition to its telecommunications facilities, it also boasts a first-rate transport and shipping infrastructure, free health care for all its citizens, and virtually no crime, along with countless modern shopping malls. Despite its roots in Islam, Dubai has very few cultural and religious restrictions and serves a diverse population of 150 different nationalities, factors that make Dubai a truly cosmopolitan world city.

There are other cities all over the world attempting to replicate the successes of Dubai, Singapore, and Malaysia in one respect or another. Canada has launched a “Smart Communities” program, and Europe has an aggressive “digital cities” project. In the United States, despite the Clinton-Gore NII, which funded billions of dollars of innovative digital cities projects, significant progress has not been made. Sadly, in the second half of 2006, the United States had fallen to 25th in the world in household penetration of broadband technology.

However, the effort of Silicon Valley to create a private-public regional consortium is noteworthy. Kenichi Ohmae (1995) and social science writer Neil Pierce (1993), author

of *City-States*, both say we must acknowledge the emergence of a global economy; that national economies do not count as major factors in measuring innovations in governance. The city-state or region state is perhaps a more important way of looking at economic and social developments across the world. This national ability to encourage regional infrastructure development, and indeed an economy based on the use and production of media and information products and services, is the key to success for those regions and nations most likely to succeed in this new global economy. Silicon Valley succeeded without the kind of government support offered in other countries. Perhaps the lesson here is that the concept of devolution really works if communities can organize themselves to take advantage of the power they actually have.

The World Is Flat

Thomas Friedman (2005), *The New York Times* foreign affairs columnist and author of *The World Is Flat: The Globalized World in the 21st Century*, says, “Globalization . . . is shrinking the world from a size small to a size tiny and flattening the playing field at the same time.” It is

a force that gives it its unique character—is a newfound power for individuals to collaborate and compete globally. And the phenomenon that is enabling, empowering and enjoining individuals and small groups to go global so easily and so seamlessly is what I call the flat world platform. (p. 10)

Friedman points out that this platform is the byproduct of the convergence of personal computers and a new information infrastructure, the Internet, which suddenly allowed individuals worldwide to collaborate regardless of the distances between them.

No one anticipated this convergence. It just happened—right around the year 2000. And when it did, people started waking up all over the world and realized that they had more power than ever to go global as individuals, they needed more than ever to think of themselves as individuals competing against other individuals all over the planet, and they had more opportunities to work with those other individuals, not just compete with them (pp. 10–11). Friedman cited a number of applications such as accounting, radiology, and banking that are done out of Bangalore (now known as Bengalooru) for a price that is considerably lower than if they were done in the United States. For example, in the evening in the United States, a radiologist in Bengalooru, who makes less than \$15,000 a year, can read an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) or other radiological report and have it back to the attending physician in the United States to read the next morning. Perhaps most important, he or she can do it for a fraction of what it would cost in the United States. This outsourcing of jobs, what has been called offshoring—shifting more work, including the relocation of business processes, to achieve a

labor cost advantage—is on the rise among global corporations around the world.

This worldwide competition for jobs is multiplied by a number of cities and regions around the world positioning themselves to capitalize on the new global information economy. Singapore's Intelligent Island project, Dubai's Internet City, or Canada's Smart Communities—whatever they're called, these new enterprise zones have both the broadband technology of the new age and aggressive plans to use technology to transform their regional economy and society. The best ones are those looking to play a leadership role in this new age. Recognizing that it is creativity and innovation that will be the hallmarks of the new global economy, they also have strategies to attract, retain, and nurture the most entrepreneurial, creative, and innovative workforce.

The Future of News and Information

It is clear that as the world becomes increasingly global and out of necessity every nation needs to develop robust communications infrastructures, the concern with American imports of television, music, films, and software of all kinds becomes a more acute problem when developing a domestic or national communications infrastructure. For many years, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) has complained that governments worldwide are seeking ways to block the free flow of information, particularly theatrical films.

MPAA has been a leading proponent of free trade in part because many countries are opposed to the importation of American films. At the same time, American filmmakers have concerns about piracy, which is rampant in many countries. Clearly, while governments want to do one thing, the worldwide consuming public wants another. Television, which produces all forms of audiovisual materials, has run into the same nagging import restrictions, tariffs, and administrative barriers to the free trade of information goods and services.

More recently, the UNESCO (United Nations Educational and Scientific and Cultural Organization) adopted a treaty promoting or recognizing cultural identity. The MPAA, among others in the industry, opposed U.S. support of the resolution. The United States stood alone, along with Israel, in opposing the cultural treaty on the grounds that it would be used for trade purposes to block the importation of American information and entertainment products, which constitute a major percentage of U.S. exports.

This concern about the “free flow” of information across borders is certainly not new. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the term *The New World Information Order* was introduced into the debate by the McBride Commission (named after the Nobel Prize winner Shawn McBride), which was concerned that the flow of information and communications heavily favored the United States. The developing countries were expressing their

frustration with what they called a form of electronic colonialism, with the United States and the West dominating media flow. In protest, the United States and the United Kingdom, among other countries, withdrew from the UNESCO in the 1980s and rejoined only a few years ago.

The concerns expressed by the McBride Commission with regard to the concentration and commercialization of and unequal access to information and communications still persist. The commission's call for a “strengthening of national media to avoid dependence on external sources” has seen some success, with many countries developing robust communications media unique to their national economies and cultures.

The concern with U.S. dominance of media flow does not extend to the developing nations alone. Indeed, in the mid-1970s, France published a treatise called “The Computerization of Society,” written by the then Secretary of the Treasury, Simon Nora, and coauthored by his assistant Alain Minc, which called for a way of taxing information flows as well as information assets. As early as 1976, the French government realized that there was a basic change in the structure of their economy and it was going to be increasingly difficult to tax or control information products and services. They were also concerned with the collection of information for subsequent data processing that was being done in the United States by multinational corporations located in France. To keep the data from being transmitted and processed elsewhere—and in turn to create a robust data-processing industry in France, the French devised the concept of “data protection” and argued that nations such as France had a duty to control “the transborder flow of data” in order to preserve and enhance the communications and information technology infrastructure so essential to the economy of the future. For the first time, it was clear that data flow and media flow were one and the same and that the loss of information could hurt domestic economic development.

France and much of Europe subsequently developed privacy laws to control the flow of all data—they called it “name-linked data”—under the guise of protecting privacy. Such laws applied to both persons and corporations and severely threatened the free flow of trade and commerce. Multinational corporations doing business in France and elsewhere in Europe were concerned about the new data protection laws and vigorously expressed their reservations. Consequently, government authorities backed off of strict enforcement as it applied to corporations. Yet the die was cast. It was clear for many reasons that, if possible, information processing should be done locally and that these nations would assume greater responsibility for developing the industries important to their future in the coming, yet-to-be-defined knowledge economy.

In 2005, at the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis, the European Union (EU) joined most developing nations in expressing their concern over the widespread development of the Internet and U.S. control. With support

from the UNESCO and other UN agencies, including the Office of the Secretary General, the ITU appears to have launched a new forum for resolving many of the problems UNESCO identified through the WSIS. These problems, or issues, are diverse. They include Internet governance and helping close the digital divide by providing more Internet-based tools and access to Third World countries.

Concentration of the Media

A related concern expressed by the McBride Commission, and now the object of growing consumer interest, is media concentration. Large media companies dominate the flow of all kinds of information in the United States and worldwide. This issue is of concern to governments and consumers alike. The key issue is that increased media concentration limits localism—diversity and pluralism at the local level. The business of commercial media is to attract large audiences in order to sell advertising. Quite understandably, when sports and entertainment attract larger audiences, then news and public affairs do not have the same profit potential.

More and more nations are deregulating and privatizing their existing national monopolies in both telephony and broadcasting. To pave the way for foreign investment in media development, commercial or advertising-supported initiatives are dominating growth worldwide. While some argue that this is, in itself, a healthy development because these new commercial initiatives are replacing the old monopoly organizations, this trend is troubling to all who believe in localism as a central component of a vibrant democracy. If one believes that democracy depends on a relatively informed electorate, and that diversity and pluralism facilitate such informed citizenry, the opposite is occurring. People are less informed while becoming more entertained. The consequence may in fact be a step backward for the worldwide growth of democracy.

Many media companies, particularly those fully invested in broadcasting, cable, or newspaper ownership, argue that there's more diversity and competition in the media now than at any other time in history thanks to the Internet, satellite TV, and other innovations such as the cellular revolution with its advertiser-supported video and mobile Internet services. However, according to filings with the Federal Communications Commissions (FCC) by the Consumer Federation of America, among others,

most people still rely on their local newspapers and local television stations as the most important sources of local news and information. Those sources thus have disproportionate impact on public opinion . . . and further consolidation would be highly problematic.

University of Washington Professor Lance Bennett (2000) agrees that while “the proliferation of media channels in more open markets has made for intense competition for

audiences . . . the diversity of content in both news and entertainment forms did not increase” (para. 3).

Lack of diverse content in local news and information is a global phenomenon. At a Harvard University conference in 2002, David Gergen, the former advisor to four presidents and Director for the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard, expressed “concern that international news coverage nearly reached a vanishing point in the mainstream press before 9/11 2001.”

The reasons for this phenomenon appear to be (a) the U.S. public's continuing decrease in interest in international news, (b) the transition of networks from being family owned to being part of conglomerates, (c) the loss of influence of newspapers' editorial pages, and (d) a reluctance on the part of news organizations to take responsibility for the lack of international coverage. In general, participants at that conference, and others in universities and think tanks across the country, are expressing concern about Americans' ignorance of world affairs and the state of journalism and journalism education, and asking what can and should be done to remedy the declining interest in international matters.

James Hoge Jr., the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, writing 10 years ago in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, asked the question, “Foreign news, who gives a damn?” Hoge further wrote, “A world less threatening to America is less newswy.” But in 2007, at least, one cannot make the argument that matters elsewhere in the world threaten America less.

This is precisely what concerns the retired CBS foreign correspondent Tom Fenton (2005) in his book *Bad News: The Decline of Reporting, the Business of News, and the Dangers to Us All*. “Corporate greed and indifference have all but killed the kind of news gathering ethos that produces results,” Fenton complained. He, for one, clearly has lost “the sense of duty and urgency” that motivated and drove him. “The mega-corporations that have taken over the major American television news companies squeeze the life out of foreign news reporting” (pp. 11–12).

Fenton (2005) explained how after the Tischs, the New York investment family that also owned Lowe's Hotels and other properties, took control of CBS from its founder William Paley in the mid-1960s, they began looking for ways to cut costs. Because foreign news gathering was so expensive, CBS was told to cut many of the foreign correspondents. The other networks have done the same and today essentially buy stories and pictures from a third-party news gatherer and do their own “voice-overs.” In light of what is happening to international news, Fenton and others have asked how Americans can really express their will about what is happening in the world if they remain uninformed and ignorant of world affairs. Fenton believed that to do so “means letting the government operate beyond our shores without our full knowledge and facing a world that increasingly hates us . . . it means effectively allowing interested lobbies to run areas of foreign policy without our consent” (pp. 68–72). The future of our democracy does not look good, he argued persuasively.

The Promise of the Mobile Internet

What most of us call a “cell phone,” developed from the architecture of the earliest wireless telephones in the early 1990s, has revolutionized communications. There are now close to 2 billion mobile phone users worldwide. Mobile phone penetration has crossed that of telephones connected to landlines. Perhaps more important, cell phone use in even the world’s poorest nations is experiencing double-digit growth. “In Bangladeshi villages, cell phones are widely shared and rented out by ‘telephone ladies’ found throughout the village. Farmers and fishermen use the phones to call markets to work out where they can get the best price for their products. Small businesses use them to shop around for supplies. Mobile phones are used to make cashless payments in Zambia and several other African countries” (*The Economist*, 2005, p. 11). They can have, says *The Economist*, a dramatic impact, “reducing transaction costs, broadening trade networks and reducing the need to travel.”

A recent report by the Aspen Institute on the Fifteenth Annual Roundtable on Information Technology (Adler, 2007) concluded

that innovative mobile technologies are causing disruptive tectonic changes that will shape unalterably the way the next generation will live, work, play and interact with the world. . . . In India, worshippers send text prayers to the temple of a Hindu god. In China, coupons received on cell phones are redeemable at MacDonal’d’s. In Singapore, drivers can pay tolls and buy tickets with a mobile device. In South Korea, an online dating service sends a text message when a person matching another’s profile is nearby. In Los Angeles, high school students flirt, make dates and carry on courtship rituals in electronic forums. People in 22 countries cast 680 million text message votes for contestants during the most recent season of American Idol. (p. 3)

It has been reported that it took over 10 years to achieve the first billion mobile users but it will take less than 3 years to reach the second billion and for the third billion, less than that. Now that advertising is finding its way to the mobile Internet, allowing users to watch video clips of their favorite shows and receive regular reports of sporting events and other items of interest, cell phone costs are expected to drop. Declining costs will make it possible for essentially everyone in the world to have a personal mobile phone and, importantly, access to the Internet.

Democracy Reborn

The potential for a rebirth of democracy and citizen participation in global governance issues is enormous. Rick Stengel, editor of *Time* magazine, believes that we have indeed reached a critical juncture in the history of the world where technology is changing the very nature of the information age and empowering citizen participation in

world affairs as never before. In the United States, the former senator George Allen, a candidate for reelection from Virginia, was defeated in 2006 because of an ethnic slur captured by a cell phone and recorded on the Web site YouTube. Europe’s “mobile democracy” came of age, it is said, with a Spanish election. In March 2004, after a terrorist attack in Madrid, the Socialists rode to power on a wave of text messages expressing anger at the conservative government. In elections in the Congo and the Philippines, the same technique was used to rouse the faithful, and in the presidential election in South Korea, the current President Roh Moo-Hyun is said to owe his office to a surge of support from young people using their cell phones to connect with like-minded supporters.

Avazz.org, an online activist community for social justice, founded in part by MoveOn.org, has plans to operate in 10 languages targeting citizens in eight countries and four regions to reach 70% of the global online population of 900 million people. Their aim is to end global poverty, create an alliance for regulations and policies that stem global warming and climate change, and, among other issues, identify and promote candidates for UN leadership.

This new wave of democratization sweeping the world is more than just a fad limited to young people alone. It is more than simply a protest or indication of one unique demographic’s opposition to what is happening worldwide. It portends a framework for a new method of exercising the will of the people. Yet it is reactive. The technology invites such participation. Taken together, such initiatives may fall short of the new digital governance that Rick Stinger of *Time* Magazine envisions.

Conclusion and Observations

It is clear that communications will continue to play a comprehensive and critical role in the expansion of the global economy and the world community. The integration and interdependence of the economic, social, and political systems of nation-states, which began more than 50,000 years ago and is now accelerating through the Internet, will continue at an even faster pace.

Government and governance—how we relate to those who are elected and appointed to serve us—must change too. We are already seeing the development on a global scale of mechanisms for ensuring that the global corporation has some checks and balances on its far-flung activities and influence worldwide. By retooling many of these existing organizations and creating new ones, the rights of privacy and intellectual property, piracy, terrorism, the free flow of communication, and democracy itself must be addressed. Through new international/global agreements, the framework for global policy and some form of regulation is inevitable.

The interdependency of nations that is driving globalization is unquestionably economic, but the social and

political integration and interdependence are also very real. Interdisciplinary understanding of the connections between social and political needs and concerns, and mechanisms for harmonizing such differences must be a priority for governments and institutions. Doing so will require a new global awareness of world affairs by citizens everywhere.

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PART VIII

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNICATION

ETHICAL AND UNETHICAL COMMUNICATION

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This chapter explores the relationship of communication to ethics. Introductions to general guidelines for ethical communication, related dialogic virtues and skills, and additional tools for recognizing and addressing ethical issues are included. The principles, guidelines, and tools outlined below reflect insights from numerous disciplines and are applicable within and across diverse 21st-century contexts.

Communication—the use of available resources to convey information, to move, to inspire, to persuade, to enlighten, to connect—is an inherently ethical undertaking. Regardless of context, communication involves choice, reflects values, and has consequences. These three key elements of communication form the basis of its ethical makeup.

Ethics is the study of values, of what is more or less important, of the “good,” of behavioral guidelines and norms. Ethics provides frameworks and tools for recognizing and assessing available options and for differentiating between more or less morally justified pathways in any given situation.

Scholars have identified numerous approaches to the study of communication ethics (Arneson, 2007; Boss, 2004; Bracci & Christians, 2002; Jaksá & Pritchard, 1994; Johannesen, 2002; Makau & Arnett, 1997). Some approaches focus on intentions, others on means, and still others on consequences. Some approaches to communication ethics focus primarily on duties, obligations, rights, and responsibilities, while others emphasize the importance of dispositional traits and related abilities, referred to

by many as virtues. Some communication ethics scholars derive guidelines from community, others stress the importance of authority, while still others turn primarily to the individual for ethical insight. Some perspectives on communication ethics focus on narrative, while others feature reason and argument, and still others integrate both approaches to understanding and decision making. Some communication ethicists stress situational factors more than others, but all approaches to the study recognize the importance of context. This chapter explores shared elements of diverse ethical frameworks and introduces resources for recognizing and responsibly addressing ethical issues across contexts.

Historical Links Between Communication and Ethics

Throughout history, unethical communication has been one of humanity’s most potentially harmful weapons. In interpersonal contexts, communication has the power to wound deeply, to undermine connection, and to thwart healthy human development. Within institutional contexts, unethical communication has been used to support greed and corruption, to bolster tyranny, and otherwise to foster oppression. Historically, communication has been instrumental in sparking and justifying economic injustice, violence, war, genocide, and tribal conflicts.

At the same time, the art of communication has been instrumental to the pursuits of truth, wisdom, justice, and

peace. Historically, responsible and effective communication has fostered loving connection, compassion, and understanding.

Communication's powers to hurt and to heal, to repress and to inspire, to betray and to uplift, to oppress and to comfort, to deceive and to enlighten, to wound and to mend are among the direct links between communication and ethics. The pages to follow will reveal the importance of ethics to fulfilling communication's constructive potential while addressing the myriad challenges associated with such efforts.

Key Elements of Ethical Communication

All communication—interpersonal, organizational, small group, mass mediated, political, informational, technical, or commercial, whether delivered orally, electronically, verbally or nonverbally, visually, or through a print medium—occurs within a context, including goals, means, and occasion. Ethical communication requires understanding of and responsiveness to each of these three key elements. *What* one hopes to achieve through the communication (the *ends*), *how* one chooses to communicate (the *means*), and the “real-world” *outcomes* (the *consequences*) of communication are particularly important features of ethical communication.

Choice, Moral Agency, and Responsibility

Communication ethics is, first and foremost, about choice. To the extent an individual or group has options available in any given situation, moral agency is at play. With moral agency—the relative freedom to choose one's pathway in any given situation—comes responsibility.

Although circumstances often limit individuals' options, adults interacting with others usually have at least some moral agency. When interacting with a friend or a close acquaintance, for example, people in diverse circumstances are often relatively free to choose how attentively they will listen to the Other. How will they respond to the Other's questions, concerns, insights, charges, and so on? Will they seek to manipulate the Other to their personal advantage? Seek to gain the “upper hand”? Will they listen defensively? Or will they seek to understand the Other? To connect with the Other? To foster the mutual pursuit of truth, insight, wisdom, informed and just decision making with the Other?

In encounters with strangers, the decision of whether to recoil or to express hostility, on the one hand, or to smile or otherwise express a sense of human connection, on the other, reflects elements of choice and hence of responsibility to the Other as well. Numerous factors—from cultural norms, customs, and traditions to individual preferences, abilities, genetic makeup, neurophysiology, and

many other variables within and outside the individual's control—influence how each person responds to the circumstances he or she confronts. Central to the deliberative process across contexts, however, is the overall state of one's heart and mind.

In interpersonal communication settings, for example, each individual's approach is shaped by goals, values, emotions, and perceptions. What does each party hope to achieve? How does each perceive the Other? What are their perceptions of stakeholders' interests? What about their own values, beliefs, and vested interests? How thoroughly has each considered the likely consequences of the interaction to the self, to others, and to the relationship? Responses to these questions all involve elements of choice and reflect values, influenced significantly by each participant's overall state of heart and mind.

Structural factors are relevant as well. People often find themselves in circumstances defined, at least in part, by power structures beyond their control. Institutional structures are especially relevant. Consider, for example, those situated at the “bottom” of a clearly defined corporate hierarchy. Even in such seemingly constrained circumstances, the state of one's heart and mind is instrumental to the quality, efficacy, and ethics of one's interactions. Individuals in such positions often have a much broader range of communicative options than appears evident on the surface. Often, for example, even those with limited institutionally sanctioned power have opportunities to facilitate transparency, to engender acts of loving-kindness, and to foster elements of just and caring communion. How these individuals choose to respond to their circumstances often profoundly affects the quality of the organizational environment.

This sense of quality relates directly to a second key feature of moral agency across communication contexts. While the communicator's goals (the intentions or ends of communication) are important, so too are the means communicators elect to use. Consider, for example, a situation in which one must decide how to respond when a friend asks questions regarding her performance at a concert the previous evening. Suppose that a fully truthful response could prove painful to the friend. There are many means available to avoid hurting the Other in such circumstances. Among these means are lies or other more subtle forms of deception. For reasons to be outlined later, however, these means are inherently ethically suspect. In contrast, pursuing compassionate and caring means to sharing the information truthfully in such circumstances promises to foster connection, mutual trust, respect, and understanding, thereby facilitating fulfillment of communication's constructive potential.

The centrality of means to ethical communication is especially evident in studies of social movements. Historically, pursuits of social justice in the face of tyranny and oppression have taken many forms. Some means—such as “random” violence, demonizing the Other, and

hate speech—have been shown to be inherently ethically suspect. Addressing this issue, prominent global leaders in the pursuit of social justice such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, César Chavez, and Martin Luther King have noted that the means are the ends in the making (Boss, 2003; Makau & Marty, 2001).

This discussion of means and ends leads to exploration of a third, related element of ethical communication: The consequences of one's choices matter deeply. Thus far, the focus has been on "good" intentions and ethical means. However, even the most noble intentions and ethical means have the potential to cause harm. Consider, for example, the case of a journalist seeking to uncover abuses of power and using truthful means to convey the information. In such a case, the journalist can be said to be using ethical means (conveying information truthfully) in an effort to pursue noble ends (transparency, accountability, and justice). At the same time, however, innocent people could be gravely imperiled as a result of the journalist's revelations, particularly if the abuses uncovered by the story take place in an environment of "unchecked" power. Before publishing the story, the journalist has the responsibility to consider the likely consequences of the publication, especially to the most vulnerable members of the community.

Given the complexity of life's circumstances, predicting such consequences with certainty is impossible. The responsibilities associated with moral agency do not require the ability to prophesize in this way. However, responsible exercise of moral agency does require thoughtful consideration of the circumstances, particularly from the standpoints of all relevant stakeholders; moral agents have a responsibility to anticipate likely consequences as a part of their deliberations.

In sum, then, ethical communication across contexts requires attentiveness to at least the following: one's intention, the means used to fulfill these ends, and the likely consequences of one's choices. Even within these parameters, however, differentiating more or less ethical communication pathways is often difficult. Each set of circumstances is unique, and often the most ethical choice is not readily apparent. A number of resources are available to address these complexities.

General Guidelines for Ethical Communication

No set of rules or norms can provide certainty regarding the most ethical pathway in specific cases. Usually, some measure of uncertainty is inevitable. However, people unable to make absolute decisions nevertheless have the potential to make well-informed, ethical choices. General guidelines for ethical communication provide tools for discerning more or less ethical pathways, assisting decision makers in their efforts to make responsible choices.

The Principle of Veracity is illustrative. This principle provides resources for discerning whether, and how, to lie or use other forms of deception in any given set of circumstances. Although the Principle cannot provide certainty regarding this often difficult ethical choice, applying this general guideline to specific cases facilitates responsible and wise discernment regarding available options.

Truth and Truthfulness

To understand the Principle of Veracity and its role in guiding communicative acts, it is important to distinguish the pursuit of truth on the one hand and truthfulness on the other. The former is an important, but complex, undertaking. The quest for truth takes many forms, from the pursuit of verifiable empirical knowledge regarding the material world, on the one hand, to the search for deep transcendent insights and wisdom, on the other. Beliefs of either kind that are held to be "true" by most people in a community during one era and in one domain are often found to be "false" during another. The once widely held "flat earth" belief illustrates this phenomenon. For many years, people throughout many regions of the world believed that the earth was flat. Over time, however, evidence revealing the unreliability of that earlier view was widely disseminated. Most of the world's population today rejects the idea that the earth is flat.

Truthfulness is closely related to such pursuits of truth. Among other things, the quest for truth depends on peoples' truthfulness. Imagine, for example, if scientists and ruling authorities (including governmental agents) around the world had chosen to deceive the public about scientific research revealing compelling evidence against the "flat earth" thesis. Under these circumstances, humanity would not have benefited from the scientific community's evolving insights regarding the earth's dimensions and shape.

Within today's globally interdependent world, the relationship of truthfulness to truth is especially critical. For example, understanding of complex environmental issues—such as those associated with evidence of global warming, land use and ownership policy issues, resource allocation issues, sustainability, energy policies, and so on—requires access to scientifically verifiable information. Truthful representation of this information will be instrumental to responsible and reasoned decision making.

At the same time, however, truthfulness in this and other contexts does not depend on humans' abilities to arrive at definitive truths. It is possible, indeed critical, for people to be truthful even when they are confronted with the possibility that their beliefs will one day be shown to be false. Truthfulness is not so much about the capacity to know or to disseminate definitive truths but is rather a reflection of one's integrity. Communicators who make every effort possible—relying on all available resources—to confirm the truth of their statements before sharing their insights, who remain open to the possibility that they are

wrong, and who convey only information and insights they sincerely believe to be true at the time of their representations can be said to be speaking truthfully, even if future inquiries reveal that their beliefs were mistaken.

The case of perjury illustrates the point further. Witnesses can be convicted of perjury only if it can be shown that their false testimony was intentionally deceptive. The oath to “tell the truth” during a trial relates exclusively to expressing what one believes to be true and not on what turns out to be verifiably the case. District attorneys are especially aware of this distinction. The adage “eye witness accounts are both the most compelling and the least reliable” sources of evidence at a trial underscores differences between truth on the one hand and truthfulness on the other. Truthfulness is a necessary condition for judicial pursuits of truth and justice. However, given the frailty of human perceptions, truthfulness by itself is not sufficient.

The Principle of Veracity

With this distinction in mind, the Principle of Veracity relates not so much to truth *per se* but rather to truthfulness. According to this general guideline, although the use of deception is morally justified in some special circumstances, truthfulness has moral presumption in its favor (Bok, 1999). The Principle provides four discrete but related steps for discerning whether deception is morally justified in any given case.

Among the reasons why truthfulness has presumption in its favor across communication contexts are the inherent risks associated with lying and other forms of deception. For example, the decision to deceive another inevitably risks compromising the trust so critical to enduring relationships. Once undermined, trust is difficult to restore. Similarly, deceiving another—either by lying or through more subtle forms of deception—threatens the shared experience of respect at the heart of meaningful interpersonal connection. The use of deception, even for the most noble of purposes, also risks undermining informed and reasoned decision making. From the perspectives of the person being perceived and members of the broader community, these are potentially significant harms. Additionally, when communicators choose to deceive, they risk compromising their own personal integrity. Such compromises are potentially devastating, particularly over time. These inherent risks—threats to trust, respect, sound decision making, the broader community’s well-being, and personal integrity—are but a few of the inevitable dangers associated with deception within and across communication contexts.

Yet those who choose to deceive others often overestimate the benefits and underestimate the harms of their decision. Focusing primarily on their “good intentions,” deceivers often persuade themselves that their actions are morally justified. Taking thoughtful account of the inherent risks associated with deception—with particular attention to the long-term consequences to the deceived, to the relationship,

to one’s integrity, and to the broader community—helps mitigate this tendency. The Principle of Veracity provides resources to assist with this process.

Four Steps for Moral Discernment

The first step of the Principle calls for consultation with one’s conscience. Does the conscience—a particularly valuable resource for ethical communication—provide a clear sense of moral direction in the case at hand? Does the use of deception feel warranted by the circumstances? What are the “true” intentions underlying the decision to deceive in this case? For example, is the primary goal pursuit of justice, fairness, care, or loving-kindness? Or is the “true” intention to seek revenge, power over vulnerable others, or self-aggrandizement? Above all, what is the overall state of heart and mind governing the deliberative process?

Following consultation with one’s conscience, the Principle of Veracity calls for careful consideration of one’s available options. Are there viable truthful means available to fulfill the communicator’s goals? Is it possible to pursue the ends without using deception?

These first two steps are important and necessary to fulfillment of the Principle of Veracity. However, they are not sufficient to justify the use of deception. The third required step is consultation with peers. When available, people who share one’s interests, values, and beliefs offer potentially valuable insights for ethical deliberation. Consultations with people who are honest, thoughtful, forthright, and caring are especially helpful. If such peers are not available, imagining their likely counsel will meet the third step of the Principle. More specifically, if one’s peers were made aware of all the relevant facts in the case, would they be likely to view the use of deception in this case as ethically justified?

At this point, having checked in with one’s conscience, assessed one’s motives, sought truthful alternatives, and consulted with one’s peers, significant “checks” have been placed on the decision to deceive. Though fruitful, however, these preliminary steps are not sufficient to overcome the burden of proof against deception. One’s conscience and peers, for example, often privilege one’s own values and interests, leaving out critical insights regarding the needs and interests of all stakeholders, as well as the likely long-term consequences to the deceived and broader community. To attend thoughtfully to these important final features of ethical communication, the Principle of Veracity provides a Test of Publicity.

This fourth, and final, step calls for exploration of the circumstances through a “shifting of perspective.” In particular, the Test of Publicity requires exploration of how the deceived, those who share his or her values and interests, and members of the broader community would be likely to view the case. If these parties had access to all the available information, would they be likely to view the deception as morally justified? Would they view deception in this case as potentially helpful to the individual, the relationship, and the community, both short- and long-term?

Would they find compelling evidence that no viable alternatives are available? If fully informed of the circumstances, would they be likely to support the decision to deceive? Would they deem the act of deception as morally justified?

The classic “placebo” case in medical practice serves to illustrate. Medical practitioners have long recognized the powerful “healing” effect of “placebos.” Informing patients that they are receiving medicinal drugs has been shown to benefit many patients, even when the “drug” is merely an inactive placebo without chemical healing properties. In the past, many physicians have viewed the goal of providing patients a “placebo effect” as justification for this form of deception. As a result, paternalistic deception—deceiving someone for their own benefit—was once an accepted medical practice by many practitioners in the United States.

Applying the first three steps of the Principle of Veracity, physicians might well have concluded that this form of paternalistic deception is morally justified. Good intentions, the lack of viable alternatives to achieve the “placebo” healing effects, and counsel with peers (especially fellow physicians) would likely lead to such a conclusion. Application of the fourth step, however, offers moral insights previously unavailable to these decision makers.

During the past several decades, challenges by patients’ rights groups have served this purpose. Patients’ advocates have raised issues such as the right to make informed choices regarding one’s treatment. They have noted further that when asked, most (though certainly not all) patients indicate that they would prefer not to be lied to, even if they might experience “healing” benefits through the deception. Patients’ rights groups have spoken eloquently as well of the dangers “paternalistic lies” pose to the trust and respect so central to doctor-patient relationships. Through their testimonies, these advocates have helped physicians consider the communication context from the standpoint of the deceived.

The resulting revelations have led to changes in the professional association’s code of conduct. Today, physicians are admonished to avoid deception in most cases, even when the use of a paternalistic lie may serve beneficent ends.

This approach to moral discernment—checking in with one’s conscience, exploring available alternatives, consulting one’s peers, and applying the Test of Publicity—provides the foundation for the application of general guidelines for ethical communication across contexts.

Moral Development and Ethical Communication

There is direct alignment between this foundation on the one hand and findings in moral development theory on the other. For more than four decades, researchers exploring human moral development across cultural boundaries have uncovered three different phases, each with their own

discrete stages (Boss, 2004; Gilligan 1987; Jaksa & Pritchard, 1994; Kohlberg, 1987). In particular, they have found that during early development, young children tend to view the world through an “egocentric” lens. As a rule, most toddlers demonstrate the capacity for empathy. Most respond earnestly to others’ apparent suffering and appear responsive to others’ demonstrated pleasures. However, they also tend to assume that everyone shares their perceptions and experience and that it is their (and others’) “responsibility” to privilege their interests.

Following this egocentric phase (often referred to as “preconventional”), children evolve to develop more pressing concern for the well-being of others, particularly those within their own inner circle. Young people at this phase also tend to share a desire to be a part of a group. They tend to seek connections, to pursue meaningful relationships with others. They also tend to seek approval, especially from peers. At the same time, they find value in communal rules, conventions, and guidelines. They embrace the concept of loyalty and understand the importance of duty, especially to members of one’s group. Their moral community—those whose needs and interests they include in their moral deliberations—expands beyond just themselves to include family members, friends, others within their village, tribe, or immediate group, as well as peers. During this phase—often called “conventional”—young people also develop pronounced capacities for compassion and empathy.

The third phase of moral development generally begins in early adulthood and continues throughout the remaining span of a person’s life. Features of “postconventional development,” as this phase is called, include the expansion of the moral community to include all members of the human family (and, for some, all sentient beings) and a willingness and capacity to think critically about the short- and long-term consequences of one’s actions to all humanity. In this phase, pursuits of justice, fairness, and sound and reasoned decisions become routine. Other qualities marking “postconventional” moral development include responsiveness to others and to diverse circumstances with compassion, care, love, humility, moral courage, generosity, kindness, integrity, and truthfulness. The concepts of loyalty and duty remain important but tend to be associated with transcendent commitments (beyond narrow understandings of moral community). Although “authority” has a place during this phase, postconventional moral reasoning takes on a more heteronomous character. Decision making is based on thoughtful, careful, independent assessment of available information rather than on the appraisals of “authoritative” others.

This last feature of postconventional reasoning is often associated with development of what are called “intellectual virtues.” Among these are the willingness and ability to think critically; to avoid fallacies; to pursue reasoned and just decision making; to embrace diversity of perspective, intellectual humility, love of learning, and, in general, an openness of heart and mind.

Reversibility, Ethical Communication, and the “Golden Rule”

The resources explored thus far rest on several assumptions shared widely by students of communication ethics. The underlying assumption that “reversibility” is a prerequisite for moral justification is one such assumption. This concept derives from the related belief, reflected throughout this chapter, that communicating ethically requires attentiveness and regard for the needs and interests of others as well as one’s own.

This precept provides a foundation for most approaches to communication ethics. There are a number of sources for this shared assumption. Perhaps the most widely known across diverse religious, spiritual, and secular philosophical traditions is a principle often referred to as the “Golden Rule.”

Among the iterations of this ancient guideline, perhaps the most well-known among secularists in the West is “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Within the Christian faith tradition, the guideline is articulated in the *New Testament* Gospel of Matthew as follows: “In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you: for this is the law of the prophets.” The Prophet Mohammed of the Islamic faith tradition is cited as saying, “Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.” The Buddha is recorded as having admonished followers to “treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.” Within the Hindu faith tradition, the guideline appears as follows: “This is the sum of duty: Do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.” Confucius is said to have told his followers, “One word which sums up the basis for all good conduct . . . loving-kindness. Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself.” Within the Zoroastrianism faith tradition, the guideline is shared as follows: “Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.” Judaism’s Talmud teaches the following: “What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary. Go learn it.” In the Baha’i faith, followers are admonished to “lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.”

These iterations of the Golden Rule reflect strong, shared, cross-cultural commitment to reversibility as a key element of moral justification. At the same time, however, application of the guideline is not without difficulty. The discussion below will highlight both common ground and the special challenges associated with its application in specific contexts.

Common Ground

Most people, regardless of their backgrounds, experiences, or beliefs, share a need to be loved. Most wish to avoid suffering and want to be happy. Most prefer the experience of

loving kindness to meanness, and most want to experience peace in their daily lives. Most wish peace for their loved ones and for the broader community. And most relish the prospect of mutual respect and understanding.

Apart from these generally shared traits, much of the human family shares a set of values across cultural boundaries as well. Several of these beliefs about right and wrong, good and bad, what is more or less important can be found in the International Declaration for Human Rights. This document was first adopted by the international community in December 1948. In a celebration 50 years later, the United Nations General Assembly reaffirmed the Declaration. Among the core values expressed in this document are the “inherent dignity” and the “equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family.” The document’s Preamble identifies these values as the foundations of “freedom, justice, and peace in the world.” Article 1 adds that all “are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

Scholars (Bok, 1995; Boss, 2004; Christians & Traber, 1997; Johannesen, 2002; West, 1994) have identified related shared values and traits. Among these are commitments to empathy, compassion, truthfulness, human dignity, loving kindness, solidarity with others—particularly those who are vulnerable, love, justice, fairness, respect, moral courage, humility, and care.

For deliberative purposes, ethical communication takes these values as starting points. Authentic appeals to love, justice, fairness, respect, dignity and care, for example, hold the status of presumption, comparable with the role of truthfulness in ethical communication explored earlier in this chapter. In contrast, appeals to prejudice, intolerance, hatred, injustice, and fear of the Other require compelling justification through the use of the four steps outlined in the earlier discussion of the Principle of Veracity. Similarly, the use of communication to manipulate (especially to pursue ethically suspect ends) requires compelling justification. Application of all four steps, including the Test of Publicity, is required to justify strategic manipulation.

In these ways, general guidelines such as the Principle of Veracity and the Golden Rule provide valuable resources for those seeking to communicate ethically. At the same time, however, beyond such broad, generally shared common grounds, people cannot assume that others share their particular interests, values, beliefs, or dreams. This realization of difference is one of the most compelling challenges to the concept of reversibility at the heart of such general guidelines. As Seyla Benhabib (1992), Anthony Appiah (2006), Amin Maalouf (2000), and other scholars have noted, difference is one of humanity’s defining qualities.

Reversibility and Difference

Despite much common ground, diverse cultures have differences from one another. Some of these differences are deep, for example, potentially competing conceptions of

the “good.” While one group may privilege the individual’s interests, needs, and rights, another privileges the needs and interests of the community. While one group embraces a particular spiritual text as authoritative, another rejects the same text. While one group privileges rights to property ownership, another finds the concept of land ownership mystifying.

World religions are especially illustrative. On the one hand, monotheistic faith traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam share many beliefs and values. On the other, however, differences between these groups have been associated with violence and warfare.

Even groups sharing common religious affiliation often disagree sharply. Within the Christian faith tradition, for example, conflicts between Catholics and Protestants have led to violence and warfare and continue to pose significant challenges for the faithful. Similarly, conflicts between different Muslim sects have led to violence and warfare throughout regions in which large numbers of people embrace the faith tradition.

Apart from divisions both within and across cultural groups, individuals within each group have unique sets of characteristics and experiences. Even people who appear to share close bonds—such as genetic or familial links, socioeconomic ties, shared religious affiliation, similar age, shared ethnicity, race, gender, affectional orientation, physical abilities and limitations, intellectual skills, or other important features of personal identity—are nevertheless “different” from one another. Each individual is distinctive, with a particular constellation of material and philosophical characteristics shaping his or her personal identity. These distinctions help inform each person’s life’s experiences, which in turn help shape the individual’s unique perceptual lens and associated values, beliefs, interests, and needs.

Given such differences among “concrete” others, the admonition to “do unto others what you would have them do unto you” encumbers special responsibilities. Most important, ethical communication requires insight into the particular needs, interests, values, and beliefs of the Other; the ethical call to reversibility requires understanding of and responsiveness to the Other on his or her own terms. This is an essential underlying mandate of the reversibility requirement, when understood contextually.

A related theme is recognition of and responsiveness to the role of standpoint in communication. This concept combines features of identity with relevant power dynamics. Consider, for example, a university classroom context. The professor is vested with the hierarchical authority to “manage” the classroom, facilitate learning, assess and grade student performance, assign tasks, and so on. Within the classroom “hierarchy,” the professor’s institutionally vested power is manifest. Yet outside the context of the classroom, there are a number of officials whose hierarchical authority takes precedence over the professor’s. Among these are the college dean, the vice president of Academic Affairs, the university president, the system chancellor, the

board of trustees, and so on. In this sense, the professor’s hierarchical status shifts from context to context.

At the same time, however, the professor’s identity also plays an evolving role in the power dynamic. Race, ethnicity, gender, age, physical traits, and other defining features of personal identity help shape the relations of power between professor and student in the classroom, as well as between “ruling” authorities throughout the university hierarchy.

A further key factor shaping the context is how power is negotiated in diverse settings. For example, some professors adopt pedagogical strategies designed to enhance students’ authority over their own educations. Learning-centered instructional paradigms feature such shifting power dynamics. Similarly, some college administrators reject the “sovereign power” paradigm in which authorities routinely (and sometimes arbitrarily) exercise “power over” others and embrace instead a “mutual power” paradigm, in which people are provided opportunities and resources to share “power with” one another. Given these diverse understandings and exercises of power dynamics, simply identifying a person’s “official” status within an organizational structure does not fully account for the individual’s “standpoint” in a particular context. Ethical communication requires mindfulness of these evolving elements of standpoint and their role within particular communication contexts. Dialogic virtues and skills provide resources for attending thoughtfully to these and other dynamic features of communication across contexts.

Dialogic Virtues and Skills

Dialogue differs from other forms of communication in its responsiveness to the Other. Rather than communicating at, to, or for another, dialogue is characterized by communicating with others.

Ethical and effective dialogue requires several skills. Among the most important are attentive listening abilities. Communication is often thwarted by human tendencies to judge, to blame, or to defend in response to others. Whether in communication within intimate relationships or in interactions with strangers, this narrow pattern of response fosters defensiveness and inhibits the possibility of mutual understanding.

In contrast, the art of listening nondefensively opens possibilities for dialogic connection. Developing the habit of listening to understand fosters conditions for learning from and with others, for deliberating well together, and for building community.

There are at least three other dialogic virtues and related skills required to meet the Other on his or her own terms: keeping an open mind and heart, balanced partiality, and critical self-awareness.

Often, the willingness and ability to approach communication with an open mind and heart is confused with a kind of passivity, pursuit of “pure objectivity,” or lack of

passion for one's point of view. Importantly, however, these characteristics are neither required nor even helpful to ethical and effective dialogue. Without passion and personal commitment, for example, exchanges have little meaning. Without mutual recognition of the values and interests inevitably underlying each participant's point of view, interactions are unlikely to foster mutual understanding and informed decision making. Balanced partiality—the dedicated and caring commitment to fairness—helps participants acknowledge their own and others' partiality without compromising their receptiveness to others' perspectives.

Similarly, critical self-awareness—the process of acknowledging and recognizing how our standpoints influence our perspectives, as well as how others see us—is vital to ethical and effective dialogue.

Finally, the capacity to imagine the experiences and sensibilities of others is critical to ethical decision making. Seyla Benhabib (1991) and Martha Nussbaum (1997) are among the many scholars whose work has revealed the importance of developing the habit of representing to oneself the many perspectives, layers of meaning, and viewpoints constituting any particular set of circumstances. Development of one's moral imagination, as this capacity is often called, requires both willingness and an ability to challenge one's "self-centered perspective." Receptiveness of and responsiveness to the diversity and multiplicity of perspectives characteristic of the human family are especially helpful. As noted earlier, the Test of Publicity provides a particularly fruitful resource for attending thoughtfully to this facet of ethical decision making.

In summary, ethical communication requires a diversity of dispositional traits, intellectual virtues, and related dialogic virtues and skills. These resources have always been important. However, special challenges and opportunities unique to 21st-century contexts make them all the more compelling.

21st-Century Challenges and Opportunities

Never before have people from such richly diverse backgrounds, representing different interests, potentially competing values and beliefs, and distinctive ways of knowing, encountered one another so routinely. People around the world today cross cultural boundaries as a matter of course. More than 200 million people live and work away from their ancestral homes, in close proximity to people from culturally diverse backgrounds. Through the Internet and other communication technologies, vast reserves of information and widely divergent perspectives are delivered to people from richly diverse backgrounds across the globe each day as well.

These circumstances hold unparalleled promise for mutual growth and enlightenment. Sharing ideas and experiences with one another enables people to question their assumptions and achieve heightened awareness of issues from multiple standpoints, facilitates the "shifting of perspective" at the heart of ethical communication, and otherwise enriches possibilities for reasoned and just decision making. In these ways, communication in today's world holds great promise for fulfilling its creative and constructive potential.

At the same time, however, numerous challenges confront humanity at the dawn of this new era. As Ellul (1964), Jonas (1984), Christians (2007), and others have shown, technologies tend to create their own imperatives. People using communication technologies, for example, often succumb to a kind of instrumentalism, in which "efficiency" is privileged at the expense of relationships, connection, dignity, freedom, and other core values. Surveillance and control, manipulation, and power over others often take precedence when people using technologies acquiesce to this tendency. As machines become more and more sophisticated, it is likely that these risks will become increasingly manifest.

Similarly, although the power and ubiquity of mass communication creates valuable opportunities to foster shared understanding, to facilitate peace, to achieve justice, and to otherwise serve humanity, their ubiquity creates vulnerability to abuse as well. As control of news sources becomes increasingly driven by commercial interests in service to the few at the expense of the many, for example, access to reliable information may prove increasingly difficult. Similarly, speed of information transmission prevents the kind of scrutiny and reflection once considered hallmarks of sound reporting. Enhanced tools for manipulating messages pose additional challenges, undermining the ability to discern differences between "truthful" dissemination of information on the one hand and propaganda on the other. At the same time, sharp (and growing) disparities between the "haves" and "have-nots," characteristic of today's global economy, will likely exacerbate these and related risks.

Given these circumstances, explorations of how communications technologies and other forms of media are used—the interests they serve, the messages they convey, the consequences of these messages, and their underlying values—will prove critical to humanity's long-term well-being.

In sum, communication in today's globally interdependent world has both extraordinarily creative and devastatingly harmful potential. In such an environment, the relationship of communication to ethics takes on special importance. Discerning more or less ethical pathways for communication in any given context will prove key to meaningful relationships, to responsible participation in the global economy, to the understanding and resolution of complex social and political issues, and to

responsive civic engagement. The core values, virtues, skills, and related resources explored in this chapter are designed to equip individuals and groups for this dynamic and vital undertaking.

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COMPETENT AND INCOMPETENT COMMUNICATION

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For as long as human beings have been communicating, they have tried to figure out how to communicate well, that is, with competence. In modern times, communication scholars and teachers have worked hard to understand and describe what it means to be a competent communicator. These attempts to better understand competent communication are in part a result of a large body of research indicating that the ability to communicate competently is critical to a person's personal and professional success in life. A 2008 analysis of 93 journal and newspaper articles, reports, and surveys provides evidence of the centrality of communication and the importance of communication instruction to developing as a whole person; improving the educational enterprise; being a responsible social and cultural participant in the world; succeeding in one's career and in business; enhancing organizational processes and organizational life; and even addressing emerging concerns in the 21st century such as health communication, crisis communication, and crime and policing.

Given the importance of competent communication in contemporary society, this chapter first describes the historical development of the most significant theories and models of communication competence over time. An illustrative list of advanced communication competencies for college graduates and several popular definitions of competence are included. Then, both effective communication and appropriate communication are described, and competent communication is compared with incompetent communication. Thinking about incompetent communication suggests the need to discuss the role of ethics in communication

competence. This chapter concludes by exploring the consequences of communication competence in specific communication situations and across time and relationships.

Theories and Models of Communication Competence

The history of competent communication dates back many centuries. Early Greek and Roman philosophers, such as Aristotle, Plato, and Cicero, were some of the first writers to attempt to describe what competent communication looks like and how it works. In fact, communicative competence (or the outward appearance thereof) was held in such high regard among the aristocracy of both Greece and Rome that an entire industry, sophistry, arose out of a need for communication instruction, particularly in public speaking, dialectics, and public debate. As this discussion of communicative competence unfolds, we will see how the centuries-old concepts about communication have reached fruition in some of the theoretical models of what now is referred to as competent communication. We begin our discussion, however, with a popular model of learning that did beget other models of communication competence.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning

At times, people around us exude an outward appearance of innate communicative competence; they have the "gift of the gab," so to speak. Others have to work at it. While there

may be some component to people's personalities that makes them more effective communicators, most scholars agree that communication behaviors and skills are learned. Therefore, any discussion of communication competence first should consider how people learn to communicate. Some of the popular models of communication competence appear to have their roots in a widely used and oft-cited model of learning developed by Benjamin Bloom in 1956.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning holds that human learning occurs as a result of three activities. The three types of learning or domains are psychomotor, affective, and cognitive.

Psychomotor learning is probably the most basic component of Bloom's taxonomy and also the most basic level at which a human learns to communicate. The psychomotor domain includes physical movement, coordination, and use of the motor-skill capacities. For example, infants as young as 7 months can learn to use gestures such as pointing and waving to greet others or indicate recognition of a parent or other relative. Many parents even choose to teach their children sign language as a stopgap method of communicating until their infants and toddlers can communicate verbally. Later on, many people effectively (or ineffectively, in some cases) accentuate their verbal communication with nonverbal gestures.

Affective learning refers to what has now come to be called "emotional intelligence," or the ability to not only express one's emotions and opinions but to effectively gauge those of others. The affective domain includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasm, motivation, and attitudes. Bloom divided the affective domain into five categories: receiving, responding, valuing, organizing, and characterizing. When we work to actively receive, interpret, and respond to communicative messages from others, we are taking our first steps toward communicative competence.

The third type of learning in Bloom's taxonomy occurs in the cognitive domain, which involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills. This includes the ability to recall or recognize specific facts, procedural patterns, and concepts that serve in the development of intellectual abilities and skills. Bloom's cognitive domain is divided into six categories, starting from the simplest behavior to the most complex. Learning is based on a graduated six-step process, where more basic abilities beget new, more advanced abilities: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

For the purposes of this chapter, all three domains in Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning are relevant to the discussion of communicative competence. Through psychomotor development, communication skills and behaviors are learned over the years. In a cognitive sense, communication is a learned behavior, something that comes about with the reception, retention, recall, and utilization of information about the communication process.

Equally important is the affective ability to appreciate the impact of our words and actions and the need to respect what others have to say and how they feel. As we now will see, Bloom's taxonomy provided the foundation for other researchers to develop their models of what it means to communicate competently.

Early Models of Communication Competence

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many scholars sought to empirically examine communicative competence. An early study of competent and incompetent communication behavior found that people who are judged as more competent demonstrated significantly more of the following behaviors than their incompetent counterparts: affiliation/support and empathy, social relaxation, and smooth management of their interactions through the use of more management cues. Later on, researchers advanced the idea that competence not only relates to possessing the necessary skills for effectively creating and sharing meaning with others, it also is about doing so "responsibly." Thus, communication scholars introduced a previously absent "ethical" element to the discussion of competence. These researchers, notably Stephen Littlejohn and David Jabusch in 1982, proposed a theoretical model of competence with four principal components: process understanding, interpersonal sensitivity, communication skills, and ethical responsibility. The relationship to Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning is apparent. Process understanding is similar to the cognitive domain of learning, interpersonal sensitivity to the affective domain, and communication skills to the psychomotor domain.

Process Understanding

Process understanding is the extent to which one comprehends the elements of a given communicative event and reacts to them appropriately. Proper comprehension of an interaction's dynamics, according to the researchers, allows us to effectively reflect on our ability and/or willingness to participate in that interaction. Effective comprehension and reflection on an interaction in turn lead to greater behavioral flexibility, which in turn allows us to recognize and select socially appropriate behavior for the communication interaction at hand as well as for future communication events. In other words, effective understanding and evaluation of a communication situation not only provide participants with the tools they need to successfully navigate a given interaction, they also provide a template that one may call on the next time a similar situation presents itself.

Interpersonal Sensitivity

Interpersonal sensitivity refers to our ability to effectively gauge the impact of our views, opinions, feelings,

and meanings on a given communicative interaction; it also includes our sensitivity to and awareness of the views and feelings of others. Some studies have discovered that the more cognitively complex the participants of an interaction are, the more interpersonally sensitive they are likely to be. Studies also point to a relationship between interpersonal sensitivity and the ability to empathize with others, to relax in a given communication situation, to manage interactions effectively, and to choose appropriate responses to the communication behaviors of others.

Communication Skills

Communication skill is the ability to use our physical and mental faculties and previously learned conceptual frameworks about communication to move toward the accomplishment of a given objective or goal. Communication skills fall into two categories: initiating and consuming. Initiating communication skills include asking and answering questions, adapting language, and speaking in public, to name a few. Consuming skills, on the other hand, consist of activities such as active listening, reading, or overall critical evaluation skills. At the request of numerous future employers, many communication researchers and university administrators have compiled lists of communication skills and worked to develop reliable and valid methods of evaluating the presence or absence of these skills. One such illustrative list of communication competencies for all college

graduates, developed by Rubin and Morreale (1996), is presented in Table 49.1.

Ethical Responsibility

As stated earlier, this model of communicative competence was among the first to include a discussion of ethics and responsible communication. Ethical responsibility means that communicators effectively balance their goals, interests, and desires with those of others for the maximum benefit of all involved in a given interaction. Three factors determine whether a communication interaction is ethical: (1) all participants receive positive outcomes as a result of the interaction (caring), (2) enough information sharing occurs among the participants of the interaction to allow all involved to equally share “responsibility for the outcome of the transaction” (openness), and (3) the situation in which the interaction occurs has a positive impact on how one chooses to interact with others in the future (generalizability).

Using the four components just outlined, Stephen Littlejohn and David Jabusch (1982) generally defined communication competence as the ability and willingness of an individual to participate responsibly in a transaction in such a way as to maximize the outcome of shared meaning. This early model of competence played an important role in opening up a crucial dialogue about ethics and communication competence. But the discussion was far from over, with several other researchers building on and expanding understanding of what these communication scholars had begun.

<i>General Skills</i>	<i>Speaking in Public</i>	<i>Relating to Others</i>
Identify and adapt to changes in audience characteristics. Incorporate language that captures and maintains audience interest in message. Identify and manage misunderstandings. Demonstrate credibility. Demonstrate competence and comfort with information. Recognize time constraints. Manage multiple communication goals. Demonstrate attentiveness through nonverbal and verbal behaviors. Adapt messages to the demands of the situation or context.	Incorporate information from multiple sources. Use appropriate statistics. Use motivational appeals appropriate for the audience. Develop messages that influence attitudes, beliefs, and actions.	Manage and resolve group conflicts effectively. Approach and engage in conversation with new people in new settings confidently. Negotiate effectively. Be open-minded and allow for and understand different views (often referred to as perspective taking). Assert self while respecting others. Convey empathy. Understand and value differences in communication styles. Motivate others and work effectively in a team. Use methods of building group consensus. Set and manage realistic agendas. Lead meetings effectively. Understand and adapt to people from other cultures, organizations, or groups. Identify important issues/problems, draw conclusions, and understand other group members.

Table 49.1 Advanced Communication Competencies and Expectations for College Graduates

SOURCE: Rubin and Morreale (1996).

A Relational Competence Model

Early research into communicative competence viewed it as a quantifiable, measurable, and observable characteristic of specific human behaviors. However, another theoretical perspective eventually emerged that viewed competence as situational or state specific instead of a static characteristic or trait that an individual possesses and that can be measured. This relational perspective advanced five new assumptions about communication competence.

First and foremost, competence is contextual; you may be perceived as competent in one context but not in another. Levels of context include the type of communication that is occurring and the number of participants in the interaction (dyad, group, public speech, etc.). You may be fairly competent in a dyadic discussion with one other person but not as effective giving a public speech. Other types of context that may affect communication competence include the time, physical space, or other circumstances of the situation in which a communication event occurs. Culture and cultural differences and the degree to which we feel an affiliation with others in the setting also affect perceptions of competence, as does the status relationship of the communicators in the event.

The second assumption is that competence can be viewed in terms of the effectiveness and appropriateness of a given communication act. In other words, communication can be effective but not appropriate; or it can be appropriate but not effective. Worse yet, it can be inappropriate and ineffective. Truly competent communication is both effective and appropriate. This assumption is discussed in further detail later in this chapter, but the third assumption is that effectiveness and appropriateness exist on a continuum and are not absolute. This concept harkens back to the idea of context and that what may be appropriate or effective in one context may not be so in another.

Functionality is the basis of the fourth assumption; communication does not exist or take place for no reason. Rather, it occurs to accomplish some relational function or a desired outcome. The responses of the other participants help determine whether or not that outcome is achieved at the end of the interaction. If a communicator is unable to effectively accomplish a desired function or outcome or if the response provided bears no relation to what was communicated, then neither communicator in the interaction is considered competent.

The fifth and last assumption is that competence is an interpersonal impression based on participants' perceptions of the outcomes of a communication interaction. Different people will reach different impressions about communication, but it is the participants themselves in any relational interaction who need to decide if the interaction was competent or not. Competence cannot be ascribed to a specific communicator or communicators by a third party who had no part in the interaction.

In sum, the focus of the relational competence model is on context and outcomes as a method of evaluating

communicative competence. A communicator is relationally competent if he or she is perceived as communicating in the given context in a way that accomplishes the desired outcome, function, or purpose of communicating.

Motivation, Knowledge, Skills Model of Competence

The assumptions of the relational competence model led to the development by Brian Spitzberg (1983) of another highly respected framework for understanding communication competence. Specifically, this model holds that communication competence is constituted of three basic factors that bear direct resemblance to Littlejohn and Jabusch's components of competence and Bloom's earlier Taxonomy of Learning. Spitzberg (1983) describes competence as constituted of motivation (affect), knowledge (cognition), and skills (psychomotor abilities).

Motivation

Motivation is concerned with the reasons we choose to communicate, or not, with others. Motivation may be thought of as positive and negative. A person who possesses a positive motivation to communicate (a) makes an active effort to communicate with others and (b) engages in communication that results in positive outcomes and perceptions of the interaction for all the communicators involved. For example, naturally extroverted people have a tendency to seek others with whom to communicate and share experiences and are thus positively motivated. Someone in a sales position who completes a transaction that is mutually beneficial to all parties involved (e.g., needs/wants met and commissions paid) is positively motivated to communicate. Conversely, a person who possesses negative motivation to communicate (a) finds every reason to avoid communication with others and (b) does not communicate for the mutual benefit of others. Negative motivation typically arises from communication apprehension, poor self-esteem, a negative self-image, or negative self-talk (e.g., "No one at this party is interested in talking to me" or "I'm not good-looking enough to walk up and talk to that person"). Additionally, if someone is inclined to communicate to achieve some sort of self-serving or socially unacceptable goal, he or she is negatively motivated. Using the sales example, if someone in a sales position completes a transaction that only benefits the salesperson but offers little or no benefit to the client or customer, this person is negatively motivated to communicate.

Knowledge

Knowledge in communication guides us about what to say and do and tells us the procedures by which we can do it. We have to learn how to form and interpret cultural signs, symbols, and cues in order to effectively share meaning with others. Therefore, communication competence is partially

determined by our knowledge of not only how to communicate but also the steps necessary to communicate well in a given context. Knowledge about communication may be thought of as content or procedural. Content knowledge is what we know about communication; how to form words by speaking or writing, how to gesture, vocal control, physical proximity, and so on. Procedural knowledge comes into play the moment we find ourselves in a communication situation. If we use the correct language and gestures, maintain proper volume and pitch of our voice, and remain conscious of appropriate physical distance, we have displayed procedural knowledge of how to communicate in that situation. When viewed in terms of Bloom's taxonomy, it can be argued that content knowledge and procedural knowledge lie in the realm of psychomotor and cognitive learning. From a psychomotor perspective, we learn from our parents, teachers, and peers how to physically form words, symbols, signs, and gestures. Cognitively, we have to remember what certain words, symbols, signs, and gestures mean. Furthermore, from a cognitive perspective, procedural knowledge of how and when to use words, symbols, signs, and gestures in a particular context must be stored away for later use. Without the benefit of our content and procedural knowledge of communication, we would simply plod through life repeating the same communicative mishaps and social blunders again and again.

Skills

Skills are deliberate, repeatable, goal-oriented behaviors that manifest both one's knowledge of how to communicate and the motivation to do so. Deliberateness and repeatability are important characteristics of skill; for an action or behavior to be considered a skill, it must be performed with intent, and the communicator must be able to duplicate the action and, hopefully, its outcomes. A chef who haphazardly mixes ingredients together to create a bad-tasting confection and who cannot concoct that culinary atrocity a second or even third time would not be considered skilled in his craft. However, the gourmet who takes care to select, measure, and mix ingredients as well as arrange them in such a manner as to appeal to both the eye and the palate would indeed be considered skilled in his art.

Based on the three factors just described, Spitzberg (1983) generally defines communication competence as the use of verbal and/or nonverbal behavior to accomplish preferred outcomes in a way that is appropriate to the context, situation, and the communicators. The motivation, knowledge, skills model played and is playing an important role in contemporary discussions of communication competence, particularly because it achieves two things: (1) it seamlessly includes ethics in the discussion instead of assigning it to a separate category as did the Littlejohn and Jabusch model and (2) it shows us how to evaluate communicative competence by considering what factors constitute appropriateness and effectiveness in a particular situation.

Effective and Appropriate Communication

Spitzberg (1983) and other researchers agree that judgments about communication competence are based on perceptions of effectiveness, the extent to which communication accomplishes valued outcomes, and on appropriateness, the extent to which communication fits the given context. It is important to discuss these characteristics of competence in detail.

Effective Communication

We enter many interactions with goals in mind. Salespeople do so with the intent of generating a commission. Job hunters do so with the goal of obtaining employment. Whatever the case, an important consideration in judging the effectiveness of communication is to determine whether or not a specific goal or outcome is achieved. Did the salesperson close the sale? Did the job candidate secure employment? If the answer is yes, then we can reasonably assume that the communication probably was effective. That said, there are other considerations when evaluating the outcomes of a communicative event.

While a goal may be achieved, some outcomes may occur by complete accident rather than as a result of effective communication. The car may have been purchased simply because it was the best bargain available. The candidate may have gotten the job because all other applicants were unacceptable. So we cannot assume that effective communication is always responsible for achievement of desired outcomes. Also, while we tend to view effective communication in terms of "valued outcomes," the means through which we achieve these outcomes may not always be to our liking. A salesperson with a high level of communication apprehension may find it arduous to call people on the phone or approach them at their doorsteps. However, if the salesperson closes a sale or two and gets paid, the salesperson has created a valued outcome for himself or herself and hopefully his or her client. At the end of the day, making a judgment about communicative effectiveness is a subjective judgment that relates directly to whether the communication acts or events also are appropriate.

Appropriate Communication

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, how we evaluate communicative competence has to do with the situation or context in which the communication occurs. To say that communication is appropriate is to say that it did not violate the rules and norms of the given context. Rules are prescribed behaviors for what should or should not be done in the particular situation. Some examples of rules would be "Don't yell fire in a movie theater" or "Don't raise your voice and speak disrespectfully to the professor in class." Norms, by comparison, are recurring patterns of behavior and sets of expectations in the particular situation. The norm at a rock concert dictates that attendees will show up

in their Saturday rags instead of their Sunday best. One could elicit quite a few odd stares from other attendees by showing up in a business suit or fancy dress when everyone else is in a T-shirt and jeans. We easily can determine if we have broken a rule or violated a norm. If we have violated a norm, the worst consequence is the perplexed stares from others because of our inappropriateness. If we have violated a rule, we typically elicit a negative sanction or feedback from others, which lets us know that a rule has been broken. Sanctions can vary in severity from a polite suggestion to lower your voice in class to being asked to leave the classroom. When we encounter sanctions from others as a result of our communicative behaviors, it should be clear that our communication, in some respect, is inappropriate.

A Communication Competence Grid

Communication can be complicated, which makes it difficult to accurately categorize an event as effective and appropriate or ineffective and inappropriate. Recently, Spitzberg and other researchers (Morreale, Spitzberg, & Barge, 2006) developed a grid, which simplifies this concept visually. The grid, depicted in Figure 49.1, describes four possible types of behaviors related to effective and appropriate communication and achieving goals: (1) minimizing, (2) sufficing, (3) maximizing, and (4) optimizing.

Minimizing communication is ineffective and inappropriate; it occurs if an individual fails to attain a goal and elicits a negative sanction from others, which is completely incompetent. For example, a manager who yells at and berates his employees may see a reduction in productivity and may even be reported to upper management for his tirades. He accomplishes little and may evoke sanctions in the form of a reprimand.

Sufficing means that an individual's communication is appropriate but ineffective, so it is partially competent. No rules or norms are violated, but no goals are attained, and the communication serves no function. A businessperson who puts on a nice suit and attends a networking event

with the local chamber of commerce may meet all the expectations for appearance, but if personal reticence prevents the person from making any new contacts, the purpose of attending the event is negated.

Maximizing communication is effective but inappropriate or, again, partially competent. This type of communication occurs when your own goals are accomplished but without concern for the goals, feelings, or beliefs of others. An example would be the salesperson who generates more commissions by going behind coworkers' backs and stealing their clients. The short-term gain is a larger paycheck, but the long-term impact is the loss of friendships, mistrust, and a reputation for deviousness that may have a negative effect on the salesperson's career.

Optimizing communication is effective and appropriate, so it is highly competent. When communication is optimized, an individual's goals are attained in a manner appropriate to the context and not at the expense of others. The salesperson who sells a product or provides a solution to a client with the firm belief that it will benefit the customer is optimizing. The salesperson has met the goal of generating a commission, the customer's needs and wants have been satisfied, and all this was accomplished in the most appropriate manner possible.

This grid is a useful tool in helping us determine a communicator's competence, but it bears noting that this grid is not an end-all method for evaluating competence; rather, it is but one more way to think about the nature of communication competence. It also is important to realize that as much as we might strive to optimize our communication, the context sometimes dictates that we must merely suffice. Ultimately, communication competence comes from a balance of appropriateness and effectiveness, which in turn comes about from honest and accurate self-reflection about our own communication competence or incompetence.

Comparing Competence and Incompetence

Early research into communication competence seemed to suggest that competence is simply possessing and using more of the effective communication skills than a less competent person. However, researchers more recently are thinking about competence and incompetence in other ways. Is incompetence just a lack of competent communication behaviors and skills, or is there a darker side to incompetence? As we think about the competence of ourselves and others, there are several important distinctions to keep in mind, which have ramifications for evaluating communication competence. What follows is a discussion of these comparisons and distinctions.

Competence Versus Proficiency

First and foremost, it is important to draw a clear distinction between communication competence and proficiency. While a proficient communicator possesses critical communication skills and knowledge, by comparison, a

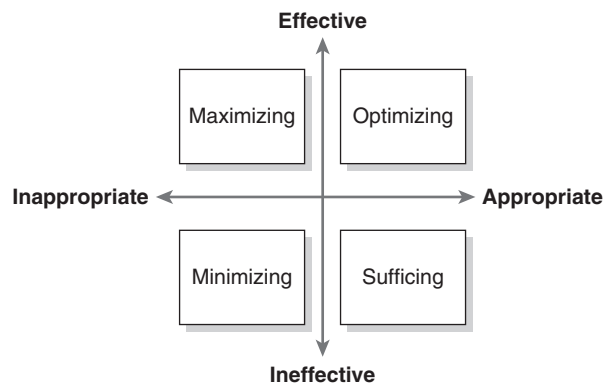


Figure 49.1 A Communication Competence Grid

SOURCE: Morreale, Spitzberg, and Barge (2006).

competent communicator also is motivated to use those skills and knowledge to achieve desired outcomes in an appropriate manner for the situation. This distinction is especially important in terms of evaluating competence in communication. In point of fact, many schools and communication instructors face mounting pressure to provide proof of their students' competence in a variety of given settings including, but not limited to, public speaking, group/team communication, interpersonal communication, and written communication. However, any method or model that purports to effectively evaluate a person's competency based only on communicative skills or knowledge of communication is only assessing proficiency. A comprehensive evaluation of competence should assess knowledge, skills, and motivation. When we also consider an individual's motivation to communicate, we obtain a clear picture of a person's communication competence and potential to optimize communication appropriately and effectively.

Ends Versus Means

When making any attempt to evaluate communicative competence, another good start point is an evaluation of how the ends or goals of the communicative event were achieved. We need to judge our competence and that of others through an examination, at the conclusion of the encounter, of the means through which the ends or goals were reached or achieved. For example, if a salesperson uses deceitful persuasive strategies to entice a customer to buy a product or if a political leader uses biased evidence to promote a new program, we would not categorize these individuals as competent. These individuals are incompetent because they used their motivation, knowledge, and skills effectively but toward a socially undesirable and inappropriate end. If any of the participants walks away from a communication interaction with a negative impression of the event, it is safe to assume that one or more of the participants did not communicate competently and perhaps used inappropriate communicative means or methods to accomplish their goals.

Incompetence Versus the Dark Side of Competence

To clarify further, some researchers do view incompetence simply as a lack of competence, a state of affairs wherein a communicator does not possess the necessary motivation, knowledge, and skills to communicate competently. This mode of thinking also permits us to categorize, as incompetent, those who lack one or more of the three components of competence. In contrast to viewing incompetence as a lack of motivation, knowledge, and skills, more recently, other scholars have identified what they call "the dark side of competence." They point to the use of

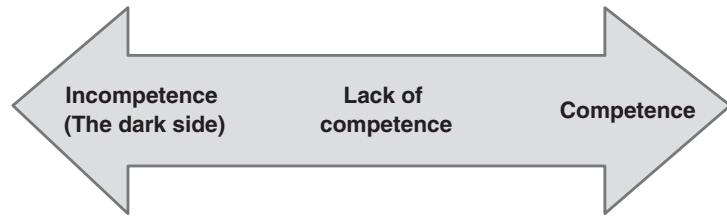


Figure 49.2 A Communication Competence Continuum

communication to achieve dark or undesirable ends, citing examples such as sexual predators or the salesperson or political leader just discussed in the previous section. These individuals possess the necessary motivation, knowledge, and skills to communicate effectively; but they repeatedly use their knowledge and skills to accomplish goals deemed inappropriate or even reprehensible by society.

The continuum of communication competence presented in Figure 49.2 simplifies this notion visually and suggests a need to think more about what ethical communication is and how it works.

Ethics and Communication Competence

Exploration of the dark side of communication suggests a need to more closely examine one of the most important factors in judging true communication competence. As discussed earlier, the concept of ethics entered contemporary discourse regarding competence within the past 20 or so years. Prior to that time, the focus of communication scholars was on whether or not a person possesses the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective abilities to "speak well." But, as Cicero so aptly put it, competent communication must be about a "good man speaking well." To be a good person speaking well suggests that good character is relevant to communication competence. What follows is a discussion of how ethics affects our communication behaviors and our interactions with others.

Self-Interest Versus the Interests of Others

Earlier in the chapter, an imperative of competence was described as the balance of appropriateness and effectiveness. We defined effectiveness as attaining a specified goal or outcome through communication. Competent and ethical communicators accomplish their own goals and serve their own interests while fully respecting the goals, needs, and interests of all those involved in or affected by the communication event. The ability and willingness to balance self-interest and the interests of others is one ethical dimension of competence.

When choosing to engage in communication, it is important to examine our motivation to do so because our motives often affect how we choose to achieve the goals. At times, our motives may cause us to forget to strike a

balance between our own interests and those of others. Recall the earlier discussion of maximizing versus optimizing communication. Those who engage in maximizing communication achieve their goals and desires at the expense of the interests of others and thus are only partially competent. Those who engage in optimizing communication, which is truly competent, achieve their goals as well as those of others. Interestingly, researchers have found that people tend to judge the communicative competence of others not only by how well they communicate but also by whether they are respectful of the other person's goals. This is not to say that we should be completely selfless in our interactions with others, but it is a fair assumption that we should not be completely self-centered either.

Information Sharing Versus Manipulation

As we consider the balance between self-interest and the interests of others, we often find ourselves in a quandary as to what and how much information to share with others. The ability and willingness to share information appropriately with others is another critical ethical dimension of competence. When we maximize and choose to disclose information very selectively with others in an effort to attain only our goals, we are not engaging in ethical or competent communication. When we disclose information to others in an effort to deceive them and lead them to believe that their goals will be met, we are manipulating information. Manipulative communication appears to be optimizing and concerned for the goals of all those involved; in fact, it is actually maximizing and only serves our self-interests. A sexual predator who uses verbal language and nonverbal cues to deceive and lure a child into an inappropriate encounter is a prime example of manipulative communication behavior. While the stated need of the adult and child may be "friendship," the pedophile has only one goal in mind, a goal, that if attained, can only be to the detriment of the child. This is an extreme example but one that serves to drive the point home. A competent communicator must be cognizant of whether or not his or her actions in a communication event in fact are for the benefit of all involved.

To summarize and clarify, ethical communication means sharing sufficient and appropriate information with other people so that they can make fully informed choices about any matters of significance or consequence to themselves.

Consequences of Communication Competence

All participants in any communication interaction must accept responsibility for the consequences (and rewards) that may come about as the result of the interaction. The consequences or effects of any communicative act may be short-term and only affect the specific situation in which

you find yourself. Or the impact may be long-term and have a permanent effect on one or more relationships.

Short-Term Effects in Specific Situations

The outcomes and effects of any communication interaction are often the best indicator of how competently the participants communicated in a specific situation. However, we are not always mindful of the impact of short-term effects of communication competence on our interactions with others. It is said that the spoken word, once spoken, cannot be taken back. Therefore, attention to competence, to both effectiveness and appropriateness, is called for in all communication situations. Communication competence is the primary determinant of whether you optimize positive outcomes and experience positive short-term effects in any interaction or relationship.

That said, in our earlier discussion of appropriate and effective communication, we noted that circumstances sometimes dictate that optimized communication is not always possible. There are times when the situation is so awkward, the people so in disagreement, the context so stifling, that we must settle for an outcome that is short of optimum results. A significant part of competence is recognizing opportunities to optimize but also recognizing when a situation is unworkable. In those situations, thinking in terms of long-term effects and possibilities is better advised.

Long-Term Effects Within and Across Time and Relationships

Relationships are built slowly over time, and each communication interaction makes a positive or negative contribution to the strength of a relationship. Communication competence, or the lack thereof, can have a profound impact on the quality of our relationships over time and on how others perceive us. However, we rarely enter communication situations thinking about the long-term impact of our communication motivation, knowledge, and skills on others and on our relationships, personal or professional. While the old adage "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" holds true for new relationships, incompetence or a lack of communication competence will prove more detrimental to long-term relationships than anything else.

There are many factors that can influence how competently we communicate in relationships and how others perceive our communicative competence. Our levels of relaxation, our ability to empathize, and our ability to adapt quickly to a situation all have an effect. More specifically, researchers recently found that the more complex the messages you convey, the higher your perceived level of competence. This is not to say that employing a thick, multisyllabic vocabulary in all our conversations will ensure that others perceive us as competent; but effectively

relating and discussing complex concepts, problems, and solutions with others is an important relational skill. Additionally, it takes a certain degree of motivation and communicative awareness to be able to consider the other person's point of view and then communicate in the best interest of the relationship. Researchers have found that the more our goals appear to align with the goals of our relational partners, the more competent a communicator others perceive us to be. While these are but a few of the communication behaviors that characterize competent communication, they should serve to illustrate the potential long-term consequences of competent communication on relationships over time.

Conclusion and Future Directions

This chapter calls attention to the various theories and models of communication competence that have evolved over time. The history of the study of competent communication dates back many centuries to the early Greek and Roman philosophers. More recent theoretical models of communication competence appear to have their foundation in Benjamin Bloom's 1956 Taxonomy of Learning, which says that human learning occurs in the psychomotor, affective, and cognitive domains. For example, Stephen Littlejohn and David Jabusch proposed a theoretical model of communication competence with four principal components: process understanding, interpersonal sensitivity, communication skills, and ethical responsibility.

Several years later, other researchers developed lists of communication competencies for college graduates, and a model of relational competence emerged that viewed competence as more situational or state specific. These scholars advanced several new assumptions about communication competence. Competence is contextual, and it should be viewed in terms of effectiveness and appropriateness. Effectiveness and appropriateness exist on a continuum. Functionality is an important aspect of competence because communication does not exist or take place for no reason. Finally, competence is an interpersonal impression based on people's perceptions of the outcomes of a communication interaction. Brian Spitzberg used these assumptions to develop a model of communication competence that is constituted of motivation (affect), knowledge (cognition), and skills (psychomotor abilities).

Spitzberg and other contemporary researchers agree that perceptions of communication competence are based on effectiveness, the extent to which communication accomplishes valued outcomes; and on appropriateness, the extent to which communication fits the given context. Effective and appropriate communication may be understood based on four types of goal-oriented communication behavior. Minimizing communication is ineffective and inappropriate. Sufficing is appropriate but ineffective so it is partially competent.

Maximizing is effective but inappropriate so it also is partially competent. Optimizing communication is effective and appropriate so it is completely competent.

More recently, scholars have begun to compare and draw distinctions between competent and incompetent communication. For example, a proficient communicator possesses the needed communication skills and knowledge but, by comparison, a competent communicator also is motivated to use those skills and knowledge to achieve desired outcomes. Another important distinction, when comparing competence and incompetence, is to examine the means through which the ends are reached. When people use inappropriate means or communication methods to achieve their goals, then that communication is not considered competent. Finally, while incompetence may be viewed simply as a lack of competence, there also is a dark side to competence. When people use their knowledge and skills to accomplish goals deemed inappropriate or undesirable by society, that communication is not considered competent.

Thinking about incompetent communication suggests a need to consider ethics and communication competence. Competent communicators serve their own self-interest while fully respecting the needs and interests of others. They share sufficient and appropriate information with others so that those others can make fully informed choices about matters of significance or consequence to themselves. Communication competence is the primary determinant of whether you optimize positive outcomes and enjoy positive short-term effects in any relationship or interaction. Similarly, communication competence, or the lack thereof, can have a profound impact on the quality of relationships over time and on the way people interact and perceive one another.

Over time, communication scholars and researchers have gained great insight into the nature of communication competence. As these scholars look to the future, the changing nature of communication in the 21st century is taking on greater importance. The impact of technology and of globalization on how people communicate in contemporary society is being taken into account and is informing the development of new communication theories and models. Some scholars, for example, are advancing models of computer-mediated competence. Others are discussing the impact of increased diversity on communication in a global economy.

Indeed, humans are communicating using forms of technology that earlier researchers never imagined. We now need to consider what communication competence means when we are communicating using cell phones, e-mail, blogs, and video conferences. Do the earlier models of communication competence still apply, or do they need to be reconsidered in our technologically driven and highly diverse global communities? Do they satisfactorily explain our capacity to use technology to communicate instantly across countries, around the globe, and with people very unlike ourselves? These and other questions need to be raised and addressed as

we move with greater rapidity than anyone ever imagined into the communication world of the 21st century.

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UNWANTED COMMUNICATION, AGGRESSION, AND ABUSE

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Like many species, humans have an innate need to belong, to feel attached, to feel a sense of intimacy, and to achieve a sense of identification and communion with others. Such a need would have evolved to serve important adaptive survival values, including (a) organizing and acting in groups, (b) selecting and courting potential mates, and (c) maintaining family bonds in the process of raising children. In the larger context within which these processes of human communication evolved, two underlying functions emerged: power and affiliation. All acts of communication implicitly or explicitly seek to influence or respond to attempts to influence and seek affiliation or disaffiliation from others. In the process of influencing and being influenced, affiliating and disaffiliating with others, communication can become abusive. This chapter examines the various ways in which communication distorts or exploits basic human functioning. Specifically, this chapter reviews forms of communication that are typically unwanted in normal relationships, with special attention to processes of relationship communication that become obsessive, harassing, and threatening in their pursuit of intimacy.

Terminology

A few terms need to be clarified before proceeding. The term *communicative aggression* will be used to refer to messages that function to diminish a person's preferred identity. When communicative aggression occurs over an extended period of time, it becomes a form of communicative abuse. Both the act or event of communicative aggression and its more extended pattern of use are typically encompassed by the term *psychological abuse*, which is commonly used in social psychology to refer to many of the communicative processes and messages that are the concern of this chapter.

When communication is employed in a campaign to achieve greater intimacy than the recipient of that attention prefers, it becomes a form of obsessive relational intrusion (ORI), which is a persistent pattern of unwanted harassment and violation of a person's sense of symbolic or physical privacy. When this type of pursuit becomes threatening or elicits fear in the recipient or target of attentions, it becomes stalking. Not all stalking is a form of ORI, and not all ORI is a form of stalking. Some stalkers have no interest in developing an intimate relationship with the person

being pursued, and some ORI is merely bothersome or frustrating rather than fear inducing. Nevertheless, research indicates that most stalking emerges from prior relationships, the majority of which were romantic in nature, and that most ORI is at least moderately threatening (see Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007b).

Some time ago, Noam Chomsky demonstrated that although there are a finite number of words in a given language, there are an infinite number of sentences that can be created from those words. Consider the following sequence of creative additions: “You are crazy!” “You are crazy as a loon!” “You are crazy as a loon on drugs!” “You are crazy as a loon on drugs after a long migration!” “You are crazy as a loon on drugs after a long migration and constant pecking by siblings!” And the possibilities continue ad infinitum. So it is with communicative aggression and abuse. People may have a limited number of actions and words available in their repertoire of behaviors, but these actions and words permit an infinite number of ways of offending, exploiting, antagonizing, and hurting others. Thus, there is no way to entirely review all the ways in which communication can be used in aggressive, abusive, or unwanted ways, but it should be possible to identify core types of unwanted communication.

Interest in communicative aggression and abuse has spanned millennia, but as a scholarly topic, interest has been quite recent. In the first half of the 20th century, Sigmund Freud and other psychiatrists (e.g., Harry Stack Sullivan, Karen Horney) interested in the neuroses of everyday behavior as well as the deeper motives of human evil pursued such topics from primarily psychological perspectives. Émile Durkheim and other more sociologically minded scholars were more interested in how contemporary societal structures and processes could communicate alienation and create a sense of personal meaninglessness for the individual. By the second half of the 20th century, the scholarly landscape had broadened, with scholars such as Erich Fromm (1992) attempting to explain *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* and Erving Goffman (1963) describing the social processes by which people created conditions of stigma for others. Scholars in the emerging field of social psychology were studying processes of coercion (Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, 1983; Philip Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect*, 2007), whereas clinical psychologists were beginning to view mental illness through the lens of disturbed communication (Jurgen Ruesch, *Disturbed Communication*, 1972; Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, Don Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes*, 1967). It was out of this nexus that scholars in the field of communication began studying *communication competence*, which naturally requires attention to distortions and failures of communication.

In the latter decades of the 20th century, and now in the beginning of the 21st century, interest in the various ways in which communication can be aggressive and abusive is interdisciplinary, multimethodological, and vibrant. Active scholarly research programs have emerged in the study of a host of topics, including anger, bad conversations, betrayal, breaches of propriety, bullying, codependence, complaining and criticizing, cyber stalking, deception, deviance, disaffinity and distancing, discouragements, disrespect, double binds, embarrassment induction, gossiping, guilt induction, hurtful messages, incivility, indirect aggression, infidelity, Internet pathology, intimate violence, irritations, jealousy expression, jealousy induction, narcissism, negative affect expression, paradox, privacy violations, profanity, social hassles, social rejection and ostracism, revenge, secrecy, sexual aggression, sexual harassment, social stressors, strategic ambiguity, teasing, threats, unrequited love, and a host of other forms of interpersonal unpleasantness. Such work has been investigated under the terms of the dark side, aversive interpersonal behaviors, counterproductive behavior, inappropriate relationships, difficult relationships, problematic relationships, and just plain behaving badly (see Fox & Spector, 2005; Fritz & Omdahl, 2006; Goodwin & Cramer, 2002; Griffin & O’Leary-Kelly, 2004; Kirkpatrick, Duck, & Foley, 2006; Kowalski, 1997, 2001; Rancer & Avtgis, 2006; Spitzberg & Cupach, 1998, 2007a). The work and topics have been far too diverse, and the research still too much in its infancy, to identify organizing theories. There are, however, a number of theoretical themes that run through most of these lines of research.

Importance

The old saying that “sticks and stones may break my bones, but names can never hurt me” appears to be in error. Research is beginning to reveal that when physical violence in intimate contexts is nonlethal, it tends to have less damaging effects on victims’ quality of life than communicative aggression (Dailey, Lee, & Spitzberg, 2007). The need to belong, to establish a satisfactory identity, and the basic need for self-esteem are all strong psychological drives, but they are also almost entirely subjective and social in nature. That is, almost everything people value about their lives is defined by social interactions rather than objective achievements. Status, attractiveness, intimacy, family, power, freedom, and so forth are all deeply embedded in sociocultural conceptions of value. Achieving a well-paying executive job is important to one person, whereas working for a non-profit organization helping people in need is important to another person. Achieving fame is important for one person, whereas working behind the scenes in relative obscurity better suits other persons. Such values are developed

through a lifetime of interactions with others, through which the views and values of others are taken into account in establishing a personal sense of achievement. In this context, therefore, when someone is neglected, ignored, insulted, criticized, yelled at, or the target of another person's communicative aggressions, the hurt can be more encompassing, more durable, and harder to ignore than a slap, push, shove, kick, or hit. People learn that bruises heal, but they have no first-aid kit for injuries to their egos. Society has never equipped people with simple treatments for being unloved, loved too much, or despised.

Just because communicative aggression and abuse may generally be more hurtful than physical violence, it is important not to diminish the importance of understanding both. Physical violence is a type of communication, and research indicates that when physical aggression occurs, verbal aggression almost always occurs with it (Dailey et al., 2007). The potential harms of physical violence are too often severe, including injuries and homicide. Substantial percentages of people in general, and college students in particular, experience both violence and communicative aggression in their relationships, and the effects of both are clearly harmful to many of those experiencing these forms of aggression (Coker, Smith, McKeown, & King, 2000; Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004). Communicative aggression may be a process that escalates to physical violence; reinforces physical violence; or in some relationships, substitutes for physical violence. If these processes of aggression, abuse, and unwanted communication are to be understood, an understanding of theory is in order.

Theory

Many theories of human communication began with an interest in describing, explaining, and prescribing ideal forms of communication. Since the 1920s, there has been interest in developing models and measures of human communication competence that would parallel theories and methods in intelligence. That is, if the intelligence quotient (IQ) can be conceptualized and reliably measured, then perhaps there is a similar form of social intelligence or traitlike ability to manage interpersonal relations satisfactorily. Models of emotional intelligence and multiple intelligences continue to interest scholars, educators, and organizational consultants alike. Throughout a century of attempting to conceptualize social and interpersonal competence, however, there were shades of interest in the darker side of social relations. Abnormal psychology, the sociology of deviance and conflict, and the study of failed rhetorical events and campaigns revealed an ongoing interest in the failures and fallibilities of competence. Theorists eventually began to change their questions from "Why does communication fail?" to "Is there something fundamental to human nature about the darker sides of communication in social relations?" By

shifting the question from thinking of aggression and abuse as failures of a normally functional process to thinking of them as serving some form of essential functions in social relations, scholars began to ponder the role of the darker sides of human nature (e.g., Miller, 1999).

At least two theoretical premises emerge as the study of communicative aggression and abuse has progressed. First, aggression, abuse, and unwanted communication tend to reflect a disjunctive goal structure. All communicators have goals for their behavior, even though these goals may be more or less conscious, more or less important, more or less prioritized, and so on. Goals are the objectives or ends that are sought through behavior. When communicators interact with one another, they may have conjunctive (i.e., compatible) or disjunctive (i.e., incompatible) goals. In a situation of unrequited love, for example, a would-be lover seeks the reciprocal affection of another person. But the fact that the love is unrequited (i.e., unreciprocated) means that these two people are seeking incompatible ends of their interaction—one seeks love, the other seeks something else (e.g., to be left alone by the pursuer, to "just be friends," etc.). When these communicators pattern their behavior toward these goals, it can be considered a type of structure. Thus, the pursuer will engage in patterns of behavior devoted to gaining the other person's attention and affection (e.g., sending notes, gifts, e-mails, instant messages, etc.), and when the other person devotes behavior to avoiding or rejecting such attentions, these behavior patterns reveal a disjunctive structure. Although most theories of competent communication have emphasized the achievement of compatible goal states through communication, the study of conflict, aggression, and abuse have had to develop theories of incompatible goal structures and processes.

In examining the disjunctive nature of communicative aggression and unwanted communication, two somewhat distinct goal structures emerge. Communicative aggression often takes on the disjunctive goal of one person seeking to harm the other against the other's preferences, whereas unwanted communication often takes on the disjunctive goal of one person seeking to elicit affection from the other person against the other person's preferences. Yet aggressive communication can end up serving both goal situations. A rejected lover may use aggressive communication to try and motivate the other person to pay attention, to reconsider, to reevaluate the costs and benefits of returning to the relationship, and so on. In other cases, however, aggressive communication is primarily used to exact retribution, for revenge, or to displace the aggressor's sense of frustration, anger, or rage.

A second premise to emerge from the study of aggression, abuse, and unwanted communication is that aggression is multiply determined. The traditional theoretical divide has been between nature and nurture. Theoretical approaches that explain aggression as a product of nature tend to attribute it to (a) evolution and genetics or (b) general personality disorders or traits.

Socio-evolutionary theories argue that across thousands of generations of human interaction, aggression became a type of behavior that in certain contexts provided some survival or mating advantage over competitors. Over time, those who could competently engage in forms of aggression would experience a differential advantage in passing their genes onto the next generation, and these behaviors and traits would become more “hardwired” in the subsequent generations. From this perspective, aggression is simply one of many tactics and dispositions that collectively comprise a repertoire of resources that humans may select and use as circumstances dictate. Those with broader repertoires, and with repertoires that included aggressive tactics, would have a survival advantage over those with smaller nonaggressive repertoires, and over time these repertoires would become part of the inherited predispositions of offspring.

Personality traits are dispositions or tendencies to perceive and behave in certain characteristic ways. Personality disorders represent maladjusted traits or dysfunctional organizations of a person’s development and perception. There are many approaches to personality, but most accept that there are certain traits that tend more toward aggressive or dependent tendencies, either one of which could be the source of communicative aggression or unwanted communication. Some people are simply more easily angered, more contentious or ill-tempered, more unstable in their mood, more insecure about how others view them, more desperate in their need for others’ approval, or more grandiose in their opinion of their own superiority to others. Such people are more sensitive to implicit or explicit criticism and more likely to strike out at others who they perceive as insulting, or persistently pursue relationships with people they perceive as important to their identity.

Nurture approaches tend to locate the source of aggression and unwanted communication in (a) childhood attachment experiences or (b) specific contexts that people experience. Aggression and unwanted communication are viewed as products of ongoing social experiences rather than the dispositions with which someone is born.

Attachment theories claim that the innate need for affection in infants can be responded to in various ways by caregivers. A caregiver who is consistent, generally available, and positively responsive to an infant will tend to reinforce a healthy expectation in the infant that social relations are sources of positive experience. In contrast, caregivers who are inconsistent, often unavailable, and sometimes negative or punishing in their reactions to an infant will tend to reinforce expectations that attachment figures cannot be relied on or may be unpleasant. These expectations form mental models, or schemas, which over time organize the developing child’s assumptions about social relations. Securely attached children tend to develop healthy and competent perspectives toward personal relationships, whereas insecurely attached children tend to

become dismissive of relationships (i.e., liking oneself but not others and thus not being particularly interested in developing intimacy with others), fearful (i.e., liking neither oneself nor others and thus experiencing anxiety in social relations), or preoccupied (i.e., liking others but not oneself and thus desperately seeking intimacy with others). Insecurely attached persons are most likely to develop personal dispositions that devalue or aggress against others or that result in patterns of pursuit that may be unwanted by the other person.

Contextual theories tend to locate aggression and unwanted communication in the particular intersections of recent experiences. For example, interpersonal aggression is often a reaction to situational stresses or provocations, an outgrowth of escalating conflict with another person, or exaggerated by the consumption of alcohol or drugs. Celebrities receive more unwanted attention from fans in part because they are in more contexts in which others may fixate on or develop a sense of attachment to them. Counselors, doctors, nurses, and teachers may face a greater risk of being the target of unwanted affections by the nature of their work contexts, in which they are in a helping and high-status role in relation to large numbers of diverse people. Thus, aggression and unwanted communication may not reflect personal dispositions per se but merely greater exposure to factors and opportunities that increase the likelihood of experiencing these communicative processes.

Almost all theorists understand that communicative aggression, abuse, and unwanted communication are determined by many of these sources of nature and nurture. For example, communicative aggression is likely to emerge from a combination of personal dispositions and contextual factors. A dismissive attached person, with a genetic disposition to be more aggressive, and who is under a lot of stress at work or school, is more likely to respond to a conflict encounter with a partner with aggressive behavior than a securely attached person with more affiliative genetic dispositions and whose work and social life are going smoothly.

An example of a theory that incorporates multiple determinants of unwanted communication is the relational goal pursuit theory proposed by Cupach and Spitzberg (2004). In general, the effort one exerts in pursuing any particular goal is a function of how much one sees the goal as desirable and attainable. Goals that lack worth, require inordinate effort, or seem unachievable are usually abandoned in favor of alternative goals. According to relational goal pursuit theory, desired relationships represent one type of goal. Thus, people pursue particular relationships insofar as they are perceived to be valuable and attainable. If the cost or effort to obtain a relationship exceeds its value or if the relationship is perceived to be out of reach, then it is no longer pursued. Obsessive relational pursuers, however, persist in their pursuit of an unrealistic relational goal. This occurs because the relationship pursuer links the

goal of having a particular relationship with other, more abstract and supremely important goals, such as self-worth and life satisfaction. In other words, the obsessive pursuer comes to believe that attainment of the relational goal is absolutely essential to the fulfillment of higher-order goals that cannot be abandoned or substituted. Statements such as “I can’t imagine life without you,” “I have to have you,” “You are the only one for me,” and “We were fated to be together” illustrate the linkage of a particular relational goal with higher-order goals. The obsessive pursuer thus exaggerates the value of the desired relationship and rationalizes that it is obtainable, even in the face of repeated rejection. This leads to persistent and excessive pursuit of the relational goal (i.e., escalated activities of flirtation, courtship, and attempts at establishing intimacy). When the desired person rejects such pursuit, it creates frustration and arousal, which fuel a process of uncontrollable obsessive thinking called rumination. The rejected would-be lover ruminates about the desired partner, the importance of the sought-after relationship, and the dire consequences of failing to achieve the relational goal. Paradoxically, these obsessive thoughts reinforce the importance of the relational goal and further motivate persistence in its pursuit. The ongoing frustration of the goal also develops complex pathways to ironic feelings of love and hate, desire and anger. Out of this ambivalent mix of emotions, would-be lovers often lose sight of normal boundaries of appropriate behavior and engage in a campaign of obsessive relational intrusion, in which both messages of abuse and messages of affection commingle.

Theories of communicative aggression tend to emphasize nature or nurture, individual or context. Scholars are recognizing increasingly that a full account of such unwanted forms of communication will have to draw from multiple theoretical perspectives and causes (Stith, Smith, Penn, Ward, & Tritt, 2004). There is nothing fundamentally incompatible between attachment theory and relational goal pursuit theory or socioevolutionary theory and personality theory. How communicative aggression is conceptualized, however, determines the methods selected for testing such theories.

Methods

Ethical concerns with communication and research prohibit efforts to study aggressive and unwanted communication by exposing people extensively to such harmful activities or by experimentally inducing them to engage in such activities toward others. Research consequently has tended to use less direct research methods. Most methods fall broadly into one of four categories: (1) qualitative/interview, (2) records/artifact review, (3) quantitative self-report, and (4) meta-analysis.

Qualitative and interview methods engage in a process of asking relatively open-ended questions of people and permitting those people to construct their answers as they

see fit. When applied to the study of aggression, these methods are often employed with people who are already understood as experienced in the process of aggression. For example, interviews with women at battered women’s shelters, with women seeking a protective order, with couples seeking marital counseling, or with men convicted of domestic violence would all exemplify these types of research methods. Given the broad-ranging types of responses resulting from such interviews, researchers have to engage in extensive processes of interpretation in order to bring coherence to the information. In this interpretive process, researchers may bring their own personal experiences to bear and may rely on any or all prior theories and research to identify the most relevant themes in the responses of the interviewees.

People often leave or provide information about themselves in various forms in their natural everyday activities. These artifacts often take the form of records of their information collected for another purpose. Studies of case records make use of information gathered for different reasons than the study at hand. For example, hospital records may be studied to see what kinds of injuries patients present when they enter emergency rooms, or police records might be studied to see what complainants report about their partner’s behavior. Such records offer valuable insights in part because they are recorded by trained professionals, but they often are also challenging because they tend not to record information in precisely the way the researcher would most prefer.

Quantitative self-report methods by far represent the most common social scientific approach to studying communicative aggression and abuse. In this method, a set of statements, or items, is developed, usually based on prior research, both quantitative and qualitative. These statements are presented to people who make judgments such as how often they have experienced or engaged in various behaviors (e.g., “I called my partner a dirty name,” “My partner criticized me for no reason,” etc.) or the extent to which they agree or disagree with a statement (e.g., “I am intolerant of criticism,” “My partner doesn’t respect me”). Because the response scales correspond to numbers (e.g., 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *mildly disagree*, 3 = *undecided*, 4 = *mildly agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*), these items can be analyzed quantitatively, and the entire toolbox of statistical analyses can be used to identify which sets of items combine in ways that inform the researcher about the process being studied. Self-report methods permit not only the study of personality and personal characteristics but also perceptions of behavioral processes. Such reports, however, are subject to perceptual biases of the informant (e.g., downplaying one’s own antisocial behavior) and distortions that attend the retrospective recall of events.

After years of social scientific research has been conducted in a given topic area, it is often possible to conduct a meta-analysis, which is simply a way of combining research results across multiple studies. These multiple

studies are typically conducted by many different researchers, investigating somewhat different research questions, using somewhat different questions or methods and different populations of people. For example, one researcher may ask respondents how often they “have been called persistently” by an ex-partner, whereas another researcher may ask how often respondents “were called and faxed constantly” by an ex-partner. The wording of these items in these two studies is different, but clearly they are getting at much the same type of persistent pursuit, so a meta-analysis might categorize the percentages of respondents who answered both as “persistent phoning/faxing” and be able to generate a more reliable estimate because the results of multiple studies were combined.

Applications

The applications of methods such as these have yielded valuable information about the processes of communicative aggression, abuse, and unwanted communication. Research has largely examined four types of questions: (1) What types of aggression occur, (2) to whom and to what extent, (3) with what effects, and (4) with what responses by those aggressed against?

What Types of Aggression Occur?

There have been hundreds of studies on the topic, but research has begun to develop more comprehensive approaches that stand a chance to address what types of communicative aggression occur. For example, using a combination of methods, psychologists have identified 17 microlevel types of psychological abuse: threats/intimidation, destabilizing the person’s perception of reality, isolation/monopolization, treatment as inferior, establishing power through refusals, verbal abuse/criticism, jealousy/suspicion, monitoring/checking, rigid gender roles, control over personal behavior, withholding emotionally/physically, public embarrassment/humiliation, emotionally wounding behavior regarding infidelity, lying/deception, guilt induction/blaming, manipulation, and attacking a person’s looks/sexuality (Follingstad, Coyne, & Gambone, 2005). These types of aggression, in turn, were found to represent five more macrolevel types of abuse: threats to physical health (e.g., intimidate, harass), control of freedom (e.g., isolate, restrict movement), general destabilization (e.g., humiliate, criticism), domination/control (e.g., economic restriction, jealousy/suspicion), and ineptitude (e.g., blackmail, role failure).

A second program of research by communication scholars (Dailey et al., 2007) developed an extensive list of potentially microlevel aggressive forms of communication, which they found clustered into 11 more macrolevel forms: verbal aggression (e.g., screams for no reason, offensive tone of voice), freedom restriction (e.g., checks up on me, invades my privacy), risk taking (e.g., openly flirts with others, engages in offensive or illegal acts),

degrading dominance (e.g., forces me to do things, treats me like a personal servant), threatening valued resources (e.g., denies me money, threatens family or friends), isolation (e.g., isolates me from friends or family, turns my social network against me), humiliation (e.g., spreads stories about me, insults me in front of others), insecurity induction (e.g., threatens to have an affair, threatens to leave me), withdrawal (e.g., does not respond to my statements, withholds affection), name calling (e.g., uses profanity when referring to me, calls me negative names), and dominance (e.g., dominates decisions, controls who I see or talk to). These programs of research, from different disciplines and using somewhat different methodologies, have revealed both complexity and some coherence in the study of verbal aggression. There clearly is considerable overlap across the two programs. It is also clear that there is a broad array of tactics and strategies available for aggressing against a person.

Sometimes, however, the goal *per se* is not to aggress or harm another person but to gain that person’s attentions or affections. Using meta-analytic methods of combining results across studies representing all four types of methods discussed above, Cupach and Spitzberg (2004; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007b) have identified eight macrolevel clusters of behaviors that individuals employ to obsessively pursue a relationship that is unwanted by the object of pursuit. Hyperintimacy tactics represent excessive forms of flirtation and courtship, including forms of expressing affection (e.g., notes disclosing love or attraction), ingratiation (e.g., constant compliments), escalation or relationship repair bids (e.g., promising to reform), and hypersexual messages (e.g., talking “dirty” to the person). Mediated contacts represent efforts to contact a person through various communication media, including landline telephones, cellular telephones, instant messaging, faxes, e-mail, and so forth. Interactional contacts are either direct or indirect tactics directed toward establishing opportunities for interaction or conversation. Direct interactional contacts involve face-to-face conversation, approaching the person in public or private places, showing up at a place the other person is at, intruding into ongoing conversations, invading personal space, and joining activities the other person is engaged in. Indirect interactional contacts involve friends, family, coworkers, or even professional third parties to assist in pursuing contact with or harassment of the other person.

Surveillance involves a variety of behaviors directed toward keeping tabs on someone, including synchronizing activities (e.g., coordinating schedules or group activities to be in the same place as the person being pursued), loitering (e.g., hanging out at a place the other person tends to occupy), surveillance or watching (e.g., voyeurism), following (e.g., keeping an eye on the person while moving about), and drive-bys (e.g., driving or parking by the person’s home). Invasion tactics involve violations of the person’s property or privacy boundaries, including information theft (e.g., stealing a diary or a cellular telephone

directory), property theft (e.g., stealing possessions such as underwear or pictures), property invasion (e.g., breaking and entering the other person's home), and exotic forms of surveillance (e.g., surreptitiously placing a GPS [global positioning system] device in the person's car). Harassment and intimidation reflect efforts to introduce challenge and difficulty into the other person's life, including nonverbal intimidation (e.g., leaving potentially threatening objects on the person's car), verbal or written harassment (e.g., derogatory notes), reputational harassment (e.g., spreading rumors), network harassment (e.g., derogatory graffiti or group e-mails), regulatory harassment (e.g., taking out a restraining order on the person), economic harassment (e.g., tying up the person's economic resources through nuisance suits), unrelenting persistence (e.g., saturation of communication media with notes, calls), bizarre behavior or leavings (e.g., leaving odd objects where the person will find them), isolation and network alienation (e.g., disenfranchising the person's social network).

Coercion and threats communicate some prospective punishment that will occur contingent on a person's behavior. Threats can be based on almost any value, but common ones include threats to reputation, property, economic livelihood, victim, friends, family, colleagues, or third parties. Threats can also imply forms of sexual or physical violence, sexual exploitation or coercion, and even self-destruction (i.e., suicide). Finally, physical violence is also used sometimes in an effort to gain another's compliance, attention, and, ironically, affection. The types of violence are varied but common forms include vandalism, assault, endangerment, kidnapping, sexual assault or rape, assault with a weapon, or suicide attempts. Violence may result in injury or even death.

Communicative aggression and unwanted communication reveal various areas of overlap. Messages that isolate, neglect, or limit another person, symbolically or physically, represent one common form of aggression. Messages that insult, criticize, or complain about a person also clearly reflect aggressive aspects (Cupach, 2007). Messages that challenge, frustrate, or otherwise erect obstacles to a person's life represent a form of aggressive harassment. Clearly, directing physically violent actions toward self or others represents a form of aggression. The study of unwanted communication, however, suggests that excessive efforts to pursue intimacy can also take on an aggressive function. To a large extent, these various forms of aggression are reminiscent of Karen Horney's classic tripartite distinction. In social life, people can move toward, against, or away from one another. Likewise, it appears that people can communicate aggressively by moving toward someone (e.g., hyperintimacy), moving against someone (e.g., verbal aggression, threat), or moving (the person) away (e.g., neglecting a person, alienating the person's social network, reputational harassment).

Prevalence of Communicative Aggression

A second common question addressed in the research on psychological abuse is to whom it happens and how often. Despite the elementary nature of this question, there are few data on the actual prevalence of psychological abuse, although there is extensive evidence on the prevalence of stalking. Summarizing research on the prevalence of psychological abuse, Dailey and colleagues (2007) estimate that between 77% and 97% of people have experienced at least one of the types of communicative aggression behaviors noted above in their current or past dating relationship. When the question is considered in terms of an ongoing or persistent pattern (i.e., abuse), the prevalence rate would be closer to between 10% and 50% of the population. In general, there are not very clear sex differences between men and women in their reported use of or victimization by psychological abuse.

Research on stalking indicates that in the general population and college population, approximately a fifth (18%–21%) have been stalked, although large-scale population surveys using rigorous definitions of stalking estimate far lower prevalence, ranging between 2% of men and 8% of women (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). It should be noted that approximately 75% of stalking victims are female and about 75% of stalkers are male, but when milder forms of obsessive relational intrusion are studied among college students, there are few apparent sex differences (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007b). The average case of stalking appears to last about 1.8 years. About 75% of stalking cases emerge from preexisting relationships, the majority of which are previously romantic relationships (Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007b).

Effects of Communicative Aggression

The evidence is overwhelming that experiencing communicative aggression or obsessive relational intrusion has generally negative effects on people's quality of life (Coker et al., 2000; Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007b). People victimized by such behaviors are more likely to experience a number of unpleasant outcomes, including emotional (e.g., depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder), cognitive (e.g., distrust, distraction), behavioral (e.g., interference in daily routines), physiological (e.g., sleep or appetite disturbance), social (e.g., diminished social network), resource (e.g., lost job or income), and spiritual (e.g., loss of faith) health effects. There is some evidence, however, that most exposure to and most effects of psychological abuse are relatively mild (Follingstad, 2007). There is also some evidence that many victims of stalking either experience some degree of resilience or feel somewhat ambivalent about their experience (Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004). Some victims feel harassed and anxious by excessive pursuit, but they also feel somewhat flattered and desired. Some victims despise the experience of harassment, but they become motivated to "take charge" of their lives through self-improvement.

Coping With Communicative Aggression

The final typical question addressed by research applications studying communicative aggression and unwanted communication concerns how people cope with or respond to the experience of such activities. Given the variety of ways of enacting communicative aggression and abuse, it is no surprise that there are many ways in which people attempt to cope with unwanted communication. There is surprisingly little research on how people respond to communicative aggression per se, but there has been extensive research on how people respond to unwanted pursuit of intimacy. Studies indicate that people attempt to cope with unwanted pursuit in any or all of five possible ways: moving against, moving with, moving away, moving inward, or moving outward (Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004). Specifically, moving against involves attempts to cause or threaten harm to the pursuer. Moving with involves trying to negotiate or talk with the pursuer to attempt to redefine the relationship or get the pursuer to alter the pursuit behaviors. Moving away encompasses behaviors intended to avoid interacting with or encountering the pursuer. This strategy includes tactics such as changing routine behaviors to make them less predictable, “hardening the target” by improving home security, and ignoring the person in interactions. Moving inward activities represent efforts to “work on oneself,” perhaps through meditation, exercise, denial, drug use, or mental preparation. Finally, moving outward consists of contacting third parties who might be able to assist, such as counselors, friends, family, or the police.

Research indicates that victims of unwanted pursuit tend to try several of these tactics and strategies (Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004), and the fact that the average case lasts more than one and a half years is mute testimony to the relative ineffectiveness of such coping actions. Experts generally recommend two of these coping strategies over the others: moving away and moving outward. The remaining tactics involve contact with the pursuer (i.e., moving against, moving with), which may simply reinforce the unwanted activity or involve an overly passive approach (i.e., moving inward) that does little to deter the pursuer’s behavior.

Future Directions

The 21st century has already seen rapid advancements in communications technologies that permit greater interpersonal access across time and space than ever before. As access increases, however, so do opportunities for the abuse of such technologies. The activity of stalking was not explicitly made illegal until 1990. It is not surprising that not long after the activity was recognized, the term *cyber stalking* emerged, representing the experiences and possibilities of unwanted pursuit through communication technologies and in virtual domains.

To some extent, this “new world” is “brave” only in the sense that venturing forth into cyberspace requires placing one’s identity at great risk. The public access satellites of Google Earth are being used to spy on everyday people doing things they assume are private. GPS devices are being planted surreptitiously in people’s cars to keep track of people at a distance, and Trojan horse and zombie programs are being used to take covert control or provide unlimited access to people’s computers. Identities are stolen electronically on a daily basis. People log into various virtual spaces pretending to be a sex, race, age, or person they are not, and predators surf the Internet looking for potential prey, sometimes younger than the age of 10. Internet and online harassment can now extend an insult, phone message, photograph, or embarrassing moment from a momentary interpersonal exchange to the truly World Wide Web. Obsessive intrusion is almost a metaphor for the modern communications world, and this world is increasingly accepting the fact that these new media will be a primary means through which relationships will be found, initiated, maintained, and ended. In such a brave new world, there will be more opportunities for establishing relationships, but the cost will be less privacy and expanded opportunities for the abuse of such technologies by those who will find the media compatible with their aggressive or intimate designs.

Despite extensive research on aggressive and unwanted forms of communication, little is known about the more relational aspects of such behavior. For example, the research reveals the behaviors used to aggress and pursue intimacy in unwanted ways, and some research indicates how the receivers of such actions respond, but such findings occur in a contextual vacuum. Do people give off signals that they are capable of such forms of aggression and unwanted pursuit, and if so, how is it that these signs are so easily overlooked in the development of everyday relationships? To what extent can certain responses, or certain combinations of responses, used earlier in the initial experience of such unwanted activities, provide better protections against such activities? There are several theoretical approaches to conceptualizing why people engage in aggression or unwanted pursuit, but there are few theories that could inform ongoing processes of coping. Finally, can communicative aggression and unwanted pursuit be treated in such ways that couples may be able to reestablish healthy relationships out of the ashes of their former relationships? Future research and scholarship will need to pursue such lines of inquiry if progress is to be made in improving relationships in the 21st century.

Conclusion

Unwanted communication is an unfortunately common experience in everyday interaction (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007b). It tends to take one or both of two basic goals: to establish greater intimacy with another or to harm the other person. Communication can serve both goals, and ironically,

those who seek intimacy often use aggressive forms of communication in an often failed attempt to achieve that intimacy. The study of aggressive and unwanted forms of communication has revealed a vast array of strategies and tactics by which intimacy and harm may be pursued. Furthermore, research reveals that these forms of communication tend to diminish the recipients' quality of life. There are several obvious ways in which recipients can attempt to cope with such aggressive and unwanted forms of communication, including moving inward, moving outward, moving away, moving with, or moving against the aggressor. Despite the availability and use of these coping strategies, the evidence indicates that there are few "tried and true" ways of competently stopping such aggressions and unwanted attentions. Advancing communications technologies will tend to make people more rather than less accessible and vulnerable to the aggressions and approaches of others. Given the limitations of existing coping strategies and the increased vulnerabilities implied by new technologies, the study of how unwanted communication can be managed becomes a major priority for the future.

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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Sexual harassment, a predatory form of sexual behavior in the workplace, has been a persistent problem for women—and for some men—in the workplace for centuries. Targets of the behavior have always known, and researchers have confirmed, that sexual harassment is a highly destructive workplace process. It creates stress, severe depression, and other health problems for the target and anxiety for all members of the workplace and costs millions, possibly billions, to organizations in terms of increased health care costs, lost productivity, legal fees, training, and replacing targets of sexual harassment who leave the workplace to escape the predatory sexual behavior by colleagues. Sexual harassment, even less aggressive forms, is never a good thing.

Despite the negative consequences of predatory sexual behavior in the workplace, it was not until recent times that sexual harassment was named and described as an illegal workplace behavior. Despite the fact that sexual harassment is illegal, it continues to exist in the contemporary workplace in diverse contexts such as higher education, the military, health care, corporate businesses, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations. For many years, only women were legally recognized as targets of sexual harassment. However, more recent rulings acknowledge that men can also be targets of sexual harassment. While some believe that only “weak” or “meek” people are victims of sexual harassment, the truth is that targets can be young and old, rich and poor, undereducated or highly educated, managers, secretaries, or even volunteers to an organization. Targets do not seem to share personality traits and common sex-role expectations. In fact, it often seems that the only similarity between targets is that they are so very diverse. Researchers, especially feminist researchers, have extensively examined

sexual harassment in the workplace since the 1970s. While researchers from a diverse array of fields study sexual harassment in the workplace, the field of communication provides a distinctive approach to this topic.

Early research viewed communication as ancillary to sexual harassment. It was typically conceptualized in very simplistic terms. For example, harassers use communication to harass; targets use communication to respond; organizations use communication to prevent sexual harassment from occurring. This early body of research tended to focus on the individual level. For example, some researchers focused on the victim, suggesting ways by which victims could have higher self-esteem so they would be less likely to be targeted in the first place. Other researchers focused on variables that could predict who would be a victim or who was more likely to be a harasser. Finally, some researchers provided prescriptive advice for organizations on how to manage sexual harassment. This advice was typically predicated on the misplaced notion that sexual harassment is an interpersonal problem and therefore needs to be dealt with at the microlevel.

As research on this topic became more sophisticated, researchers began to realize that sexual harassment and resistance to it are themselves acts of communication. Sexual harassment communicates social roles, norms, and expectations. It is a means by which gender integration in the workplace is resisted and differentiated gender roles are highlighted. Resistance to sexual harassment communicates dissatisfaction with the status quo. It signals at least a partial rejection of highly sexualized gendered expectations. Unfortunately, resistance also communicates an unwillingness to work within the status quo. For example, women who protest against predatory sexual behavior “can’t take a

joke,” “must be lesbians,” and are overly sensitive. Men who resist sexual harassment are called gay and are perceived as feminine. To better understand the dynamic interplay between sexual harassment and communication, sexual harassment will first be defined, a discursive approach to sexual harassment will be described, and several discursive contexts for sexual harassment will be presented.

Definition

Because it is an illegal behavior, the federal government and the court system have provided a consistent definition of sexual harassment. In contrast, lay definitions, that is, definitions provided by working men and women, tend to vary widely and may or may not match the legal definition of sexual harassment. In this section, a discussion of the legal definition of sexual harassment will first be provided. The legal definition and lay definitions of the term will then be compared.

According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC, 2007),

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. (Paragraph 2)

Essentially, two types of sexual harassment are represented within this definition. *Quid pro quo* sexual harassment is literally translated as “this for that.” This is the most recognized form of sexual harassment and occurs when a person in a hierarchically superior position makes employment or promotion contingent on the receipt of sexual favors. The second type of sexual harassment is called “hostile environment.” Here, the unwanted sexual attention is so prevalent or so severe that the workplace becomes destructive or damaging to the target of the unwanted behavior. A third type of sexual harassment is becoming increasingly recognized by the court system. Third-person sexual harassment occurs when the victim was not the person harassed but was negatively affected by the harassment.

Despite the seeming clarity of the EEOC's definition of sexual harassment and the fact that most organizations have formal policies regarding sexual harassment, this behavior continues to be a persistent problem in the workplace. Cases of sexual harassment that seem fairly obvious and straightforward are denied by the harassers. Targets are often reluctant to label these behaviors as sexual harassment, even when they acknowledge that the behaviors have a strong negative impact on their working conditions. How is it possible for so much confusion to occur over a term with such a clear definition? The answer is that

lay definitions of sexual harassment are not nearly as clear or as consistent as the one offered by the EEOC.

While the definition above is used by legal institutions in determining sexual harassment, scholars have discovered that lay definitions are less uniform. In fact, the way sexual harassment is defined in everyday life appears to be highly interpretive and subjective. For example, men and women tend to define different behaviors as sexual harassment, with women consistently viewing more behaviors as sexual harassment than do men. These definitions are moderated by position in the hierarchy, organizational culture, and personal experience with sexual harassment. The strong differences in operational definitions of sexual harassment have prompted communication scholars to shift away from researching sexual harassment as a legal issue to conceptualizing it as a discursive phenomenon. In other words, we now think about communication as central to understanding and managing sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment as Discourse

So what does it mean when scholars claim that sexual harassment is a discursive process? “A discursive focus places communication at the core of sexual harassment” (Dougherty, 1999, p. 437). Consequently, instead of viewing communication in simple terms—such as reception or interpretation of messages, “a discursive framework understands communication as creating and shaping social reality rather than just being influenced by it” (Bingham, 1994, p. 9). When viewed from a discursive perspective, sexual harassment could no longer be considered an interpersonal problem between two people. Instead, sexual harassment must be viewed as a communication phenomenon. In other words, sexual harassment allows us to observe macro forces at play in a micro context. Sexual harassers and their targets are enacting social expectations, and in so doing, they recreate and reinforce the presence of those social expectations at the macrolevel. Those social expectations tell us who men and women should be and how they should behave and define their “proper” roles in society. After reviewing volumes of literature on sexual harassment, prominent communication scholars shifted to studying communication as discourse because it held the greatest possibility of achieving change at the social and organizational levels (Bingham, 1994).

Language as a constitutive force lies at the center of discourse. Words do not simply name what already exists, they shape the way we understand and talk about any given issue. Language shapes our reality. The constitutive function of sexual harassment can be seen in the language surrounding sexual harassment. Probably, the cleanest example of sexual harassment as discourse lies in the very label “sexual harassment.” According to Julia Wood (1994), at one point in the fairly recent past, there was no word available to describe or make sense of unwanted sexual

attention in the workplace. Consequently, targets of these behaviors were unable to adequately describe the horror and humiliation of their experiences. In fact, this predatory sexual behavior was viewed as normal and acceptable by many people in organizations. Women who complained were viewed negatively. However, once the label “sexual harassment” was coined, women’s concerns and issues were legitimized, and predatory sexual behavior in the workplace was deemed abnormal and unacceptable (Wood, 1994). Simply by creating a new discourse of sexual harassment, women were able to problematize predatory sexual behavior in the workplace.

The single most significant consequence in the shift toward a discursive understanding of sexual harassment is the increased complexity and fluidity involved in the process. No longer is sexual harassment simply about the harasser-target dyad. No longer is communication simply how the harassment is communicated and responded to. Instead, scholars now tend to see sexual harassment as a socially complex phenomenon. This complexity has been explored by research on targets of sexual harassment, sexual harassment as a part of the organizational culture, and sexual harassment as a function of power. Each of these areas will be discussed.

Targets of Sexual Harassment

One mark of a discursive approach to sexual harassment is to view the phenomenon as more than a simple interpersonal problem. Even when only a single role in the behavior is targeted by researchers, there is an explicit recognition that other, powerful forces are at play. Many times, the force that inspires sexual harassment is social expectations for men and women. These social expectations inspire certain behaviors and reactions from some men and women in organizations. For example, we know that women in academia are targets of sexual harassment and that these experiences can be devastating. These experiences are not isolated. They are systematic, ongoing, and reinforce the patriarchal structures that make tenured women professors a minority group in the ivory towers. Formal policy and administrative roles often serve to further reinforce the gendered dynamics at play in sexual harassment. This problem is so intense that a special issue of one of the discipline’s top academic journals was dedicated to narratives of sexual harassment in the field of communication (Wood, 1992).

Hegemony is roughly defined as the pressure that non-dominant members of a society experience to conform to the standards and expectations of dominant members of society. This pressure often causes nondominant members to participate in their own oppression by adhering to social expectations. Hegemonic resistance occurs when, in the very act of resisting dominant behavior, nondominant members inadvertently reinforce the structures that oppress them.

Robin Clair’s (1993) work on how victims frame sexual harassment illustrates the interconnection between social structure and sexual harassment. Clair interviewed women who were targets of sexual harassment. She was interested in the ways they responded to predatory sexual behavior in the workplace. The women reported using a number of strategies to respond to the unwanted behavior. For example, some chose silence, while others privatized the interaction by referencing romantic relationships. According to Clair, by resisting sexual harassment in these ways, these women actually reinforced the social structures that allow sexual harassment to exist in the first place. For example, by privatizing sexual harassment, the women decreased the likelihood that the behavior would be scrutinized in the public domain; the behavior is viewed as private and therefore not a universal organizational issue.

Of course, responding to sexual harassment in a way that preserves the identity of the individual, effectively manages the behavior, and allows for continued employment is extraordinarily complicated. This complexity is enhanced when the multiple subjectivities, or roles, each of us plays is considered as a dynamic part of the response. When targets talk about sexual harassment, they often shift their discourse depending on the role (e.g., mother, worker, manager) from which they speak (Townsend & Geist, 2000). Regardless of the role they are speaking from, according to Townsend and Geist, sexual harassment tends to be normalized and therefore hegemonically reinforced through discourse. This normalization is possible because targets are often caught between competing discourses. They need to maintain a sense of professionalism, despite the predatory sexual behavior. They need to effectively respond in an administrative environment, which naturalizes the behavior and minimizes the opportunity to effectively respond. In this way, targets become trapped in a paradox in which no effective response is available.

While we know a considerable amount about women targets of sexual harassment, very little is known about how male victims manage the behavior. Only one scholarly article in the field of communication has documented the experience of a man who was sexually harassed (Clair, 1998). In this instance, it was a male assistant nurse who was the target of predatory sexual behavior from a cadre of female nurses and nursing assistants. The harassment directed toward “Michael” was primarily verbal and seemed to be focused on identifying and determining his proximity to the ideal male in Western society. For example, his female coworkers asked if he was a virgin, had oral sex, and had engaged in sexual activity with a black woman. Furthermore, Michael claimed that these women asked if he was homosexual. Each of these questions appears to be designed to clarify Michael’s masculinity. Not only does Clair illustrate the heterosexism of these comments, but she also analyzes the racism inherent in these questions. The assumption seemed to be that the ideal white male in Western society would have had sexual

relations with a black woman, playing into stereotyped images of black women as highly sexual savages. Clair (1998) writes, “the question now raised by the assistant nurses is whether Michael is ‘man enough’ to have slept with a black woman” (p. 140). As Michael becomes silent, the women ask more and more questions “desperate to label and define him” (p. 140). According to Clair, this man’s heterosexuality was questioned, and the extent of his sexual prowess and fantasies were open areas of speculation for his female colleagues. He was expected to enjoy this type of interaction, and when he didn’t, his masculinity was questioned. When he expressed discomfort to his boss, Michael was told how to acclimate to the harassment—something Michael claimed he could not do. Eventually, Michael was fired. In my experience, male victims are afraid to resist unwanted sexual attention because it brings their masculinity into question. Their entire identity as a man is on trial, making resistance particularly risky for male targets of predatory sexual behavior.

This body of research makes it clear that there is a significant interplay between social processes and individual experiences of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is never simply a private issue between two people. It is a complex discursive problem that is extremely difficult to manage. The complexity of the problem and the difficulty in managing sexual harassment are best understood from an organizational culture perspective.

Sexual Harassment as Organizational Culture

While sexual harassment can certainly occur as an isolated event in an organization, scholars suggest that some cultures are more prone to sexual harassment than others (Dougherty & Smythe, 2004). Consequently, researchers have become increasingly interested in the ways in which discourse shapes the meaning of sexual harassment in a given organization. Of particular interest to this body of research is the way organizational members who are not harassers or targets talk about sexual harassment. The ways organizational members talk about sexual harassment represents a discursive negotiation over how sexual harassment is to be defined, enacted, and resisted in any given organizational milieu (Keyton, Ferguson, & Rhodes, 2001).

Sexual-harassment-prone organizations appear to cross organizational subtypes. For example, military, health care, academic, and correctional facilities have all been found to produce and sustain sexual harassment as part of the culture. But how does communication sustain this behavior, and, conversely, how does communication prevent or resist sexual harassment within an organizational culture? While the answers to these questions have not yet been fully revealed, there are some hints within this emerging body of literature.

While there are some persistent differences between men’s and women’s perceptions of sexual harassment, those differences can be strongly modified by organizational culture. For example, while women typically identify more behaviors as sexual harassment than men, Keyton and colleagues (2001) found that because of unique qualities of one organization’s culture, “men, not women were more sensitive to inappropriate social-sexual behavior” (p. 47) in the workplace. Furthermore, while typically women are the targets of sexual harassment, Zak (1994) found that men and women were targeted equally in one transportation agency. This equal-opportunity harassment was an attempt by some workers to maintain control of a culture that was becoming culturally integrated. It is clear, then, that the unique qualities of an organizational culture have a strong influence on perceptions and enactment of sexual harassment within that organizational context. While no single factor has been identified that characterizes a sexual-harassment-prone organization, one common thread in many of the scholarly works seems to be the presence of a strong authoritarian management structure. Strong authoritarian management structures attempt to impose a single unified meaning system on its workers, often with a disastrous impact on the workplace culture (Zak, 1994). The relationships between sexual harassment and rigid authoritarian structures have been noted in research on military organizations, health care organizations, and blue-collar work environments. Zak made the most direct link between strong authoritarian management structures and harassment-prone cultures. The primary disadvantage of an authoritarian style of management is the inflexibility in adapting to organizational change. Because authoritarian managers tend to have a singular, rigid vision of the organization, there is no way provided for a new discourse community to develop. For example, AVTA, a vehicle maintenance unit of a larger organization had no discursive structure to use when adapting to demographic diversification. As a result, the “bully boys,” those who saw themselves as the guardians of the original culture, began a systematic series of assaults on newcomers that ranged from racial to sexual harassment. While not all sexual-harassment-prone organizations have rigid authoritarian structures, it seems clear that rigid authoritarianism can provide the conditions that nurture sexual harassment in a given culture.

So how does an organizational culture become prone to sexual harassment? Of critical importance to answering this question is recognizing that organizational culture does not develop in a vacuum. Instead, the idiosyncrasies of a given culture develop to meet a functional need of its members. In other words, organizational cultures do something for the workers. Sometimes, such as in the case of sexual harassment, the behavior can be both functional and dysfunctional. According to Dougherty (2001), sexual harassment in harassment-prone organizations tends to be

functional for dominant members of the organization. For example, for men in one health care organization, inappropriate sexual behavior was used as a coping mechanism for stress, as a way of showing care to colleagues and as a means of creating and demonstrating camaraderie. However, for the women in this organization, this same behavior was not functional and for many was actually dysfunctional. Dougherty recommends that to effectively manage sexual harassment, it is necessary to identify how the behavior functions in the organizational culture and then to find an alternative means of managing that function. For example, finding an alternative means of managing stress could reduce the functionality of sexual harassment in a high-stress organization. For example, health care organizations are historically high-stress environments where an error in judgment can have disastrous outcomes. Staffing shortages, problematic scheduling, and notoriously low salaries enhance the stress level in health care settings. Not surprisingly, nurses and other health care workers have consistently told me about the high-stress environments in which they work. One strategy for decreasing stress might be more manageable and equitable scheduling so that health care workers can have an adequate amount of time and space to decompress. Furthermore, exercise has been shown to help workers manage chronic stress. By creating exercise facilities and yoga classes, it would be possible to establish conditions where workers can learn to manage their stress in productive and functional ways. By productively managing stress, it is possible that the function served by sexual harassment would cease to be an issue and this destructive behavior could also be managed productively.

Because sexual harassment tends to function in some important way in sexual-harassment-prone organizations, experiences with predatory sexual behavior in these organizations tend to be particularly intense, profuse, and strange. For example, the bully boys in Zak's (1994) study would simulate sexual intercourse with other men as they bent over an engine for repairs. One man claimed, "I guess after you're humped 40 times, you're accepted as a mechanic" (p. 291). In another instance, a maintenance worker declared that he was "captain of the butt check team" and that a female worker could not leave the room until he "checked her butt" (Dougherty & Atkinson, 2006). In another large sexual-harassment-prone organization, the butt of one woman was grabbed by her African American boss, who asked, "Have you ever made chocolate love?" (Dougherty et al, in press). It is important to understand that sexual harassment is not mundane, ordinary, or typical in any way. The behaviors are contextually weird and outside the scope of the relationship being breeched. This is particularly true in organizations that nurture this type of behavior.

Given the nature of sexual-harassment-prone cultures, it is important to ask how cultures can develop to resist the enactment of these behaviors. While a number of scholars have examined organizational cultures that are infused

with sexual harassment, less is known about those cultures that resist sexual harassment in the environment. One case study of such a culture does provide some insight. Dougherty and Smythe (2004) suggest that to effectively resist cultures of sexual harassment, men and women must be equally committed to treating each other with respect. In one academic organization, when an outsider sexually harassed three members of a department, members responded by listening to the stories told by the women, supporting the women, and rejecting the outsider by ridiculing him. In an organization such as this one, sexual harassment is unlikely to be tolerated. While the outsider's behaviors were likely functional in his own workplace, they were viewed as intolerable and crude in this academic unit.

It is clear that organizational cultures can both encourage and resist sexual harassment. Strong authoritarian structures, widespread predatory sexual behavior, and sexual behavior that functions in some important way for dominant members of the organization, all appear to characterize an organization prone to sexual harassment. Hidden within each of the characteristics is an overlooked but singularly important issue in sexual harassment. Researchers and organizational members generally agree that sexual harassment is not about sex. It is about power.

Sexual Harassment and Power

What is power? This term is used so frequently in Western society that the meaning seems like common sense. However, scholars have repeatedly found multiple types of power operating in organizations, particularly when it comes to sexual harassment. For example, there is power as a resource to use, power as traditional hierarchical control, power as patriarchy, power as social roles, and power as physical strength. If sexual harassment is about power, then how one defines power would very clearly affect the experience with this behavior.

Dougherty (2006) identified some ways in which different definitions of "power" can radically change the way organizational members identify sexual harassment. In a study examining the discourse of members in a health care organization, Dougherty used a complex qualitative research design to identify how men and women talk about sexual harassment. First, three focus groups of men and three focus groups of women from a large health care organization were conducted. Each individual was then interviewed separately and asked to describe what happened in the focus group discussion. This allowed those who were more silent to speak up, and it allowed participants to discuss any unexpressed concerns and reservations. Following these interviews, three mixed-gender focus groups were conducted, again followed by individual interviews. The participants in this study invariably agreed that sexual harassment is about power. However, the ways

women and men defined power were radically different. Men tended to define power in more hierarchically fixed terms. In other words, they believed that people have power as a product of their placement in the organizational hierarchy. The higher in the organizational hierarchy, the more power a person has. Those who define sexual-harassment-related power as hierarchically bound tend to have a very narrow understanding of who can be a sexual harasser. For these people, only those in hierarchically superior positions (such as a boss) can sexually harass because only these people have power.

On the other hand, other people, particularly women, also claimed that sexual harassment is about power. However, they tended to define power in a more fluid manner. Power for these people is a relational construct. This means that we create and enact power with others. These folks believed that we “give” power, “take” power, and relinquish power to others. So for these people, a boss may or may not be more powerful than an employee, depending on the nature of the relationship. Furthermore, because anybody can have power, bosses, coworkers, and even underlings can engage in acts of sexual harassment.

Now, imagine a conversation between “Person A,” who defines sexual-harassment-related power as hierarchical, and “Person B,” who defines sexual-harassment-related power as relational. Person A says that “sexual harassers abuse power at work.” Person B says, “I totally agree.” These two people think that they understand and agree with each other. However, Person A was talking only about bosses because only bosses have power. Person B thought that Person A was talking about all members of an organization who engage in sexually inappropriate behavior. By moving beyond the words used and exploring the underlying meanings, it becomes clear that the agreement reached by Person A and Person B was an illusion.

Because different definitions of power shape what sexual harassment means, who can sexually harass, and how victims should respond, a discursive approach to power is a useful way to understand this phenomenon. If, on the other hand, researchers begin with a preset definition of power, they lose the ability to understand the experiences of sexual harassment by everyday people. For example, Wayne (2000) compared two definitions of power to determine which is most significant during an adjudication process. The organizational definition of power views power as acquired through the organizational hierarchy. On the other hand, the sociocultural model defines power as disparities in privilege based on membership in different social-demographic groups such as sex, race, sexual preference, and age. The author found that neither definition of power adequately explained the findings. Consequently, she had to speculate about the function of a third model—the role-discrepant model of power. Had the author asked study participants to define power or to describe a powerful person at work, her findings would have been richer and more conclusive.

Managing Sexual Harassment

There is no easy answer for how to manage sexual harassment in the workplace. The behavior is strange and irrational. Consequently, simple training is unlikely to resolve the problem. Instead, a more complex and cohesive approach is necessary that addresses sexual harassment at every level of society.

Social Level

Sexual harassment is at its roots, a social phenomenon. The sexism and coercive behavior seen in sexual harassment are infused throughout society. Children, especially boys, are taught from an early age that they are “different” from and better than girls (Grauerholz, 1994). I believe that people are so concerned that their sons might become homosexual that they systematically train boys to be misogynists. Yet it seems unlikely that heterosexuality is that fragile. If playing with a doll “makes” a boy “gay,” then he probably was not heterosexual to begin with.

Boys and girls are carefully and specifically trained to be different from each other. They are praised when they are successful and punished when they fail to achieve and maintain this difference. This is not to suggest that boys and girls are the same. However, society tends to focus on the differences while ignoring the vast array of similarities between boys and girls. As the parent of two young children, a girl and a boy, I have been able to observe this phenomenon firsthand. The sex differentiation in behavior toward children is inescapable. For example, my daughter is constantly praised for her appearance. People in the mall stop her and say, “What a pretty dress, aren’t you a pretty girl?” It is fairly rare for people to admire her for her behavior, intelligence, sense of humor, or sense of compassion. Yet to me, these are her outstanding characteristics. On the other hand, people rarely comment on my son’s appearance, focusing instead on his energy, intelligence, and sense of humor. One of the more odd things people say about my son is that “he is all boy.” I have always found this statement perplexing. What if he isn’t all boy? What does a “part boy” look like? If they knew that my son was caring and compassionate, would people still say he was “all boy”? Or would they say, in that knowing way, “he’s part girl.”

It may surprise some folks to learn that children do not differentiate between male and female behavior in the same way as adults. This does not mean that they are confused about their gender. It simply means that they have not yet been trained to identify themselves in opposition to others. For example, 2-year-old boys like to wear their Mommy’s shoes and carry purses. My children’s day care has a dress-up box, and I have repeatedly observed boys and girls dressing in women’s shoes and toting around purses. I have also seen parents freak out when they see their sons wearing “women’s clothes.” Along the same lines, one of my graduate students told me about a friend of hers who was the mother of a young boy. One day the mother caught her

son playing with Barbie. She told her son, “Do not play with those dolls. Those are yucky girl toys. Boys don’t play with yucky girl toys.” This woman was quite proud that her son stopped playing with girl toys. She did not seem to realize that she has also trained her boy to believe that girls are “yucky” and therefore inferior and to be disdained. This type of attitude toward women is magnified in the enactment of gendered crimes such as rape and sexual harassment. Consequently, this type of differentiating behavior needs to be stopped. Instead, parents need to stop reinforcing stereotypes and accept the array of age-appropriate behavior that enriches the lives of children.

Organizational Level

Because sexual harassment occurs in organizational settings, organizational leaders have a responsibility to create an environment that limits the likelihood that sexual harassment will occur. Organizations have a responsibility to prevent sexual harassment for a number of reasons. First, sexual harassment is toxic to the organizational environment. Employees become unhappy, and turnover increases. Second, sexual harassment is illegal. For that reason alone, organizations should try to prevent sexual harassment from occurring. Finally, organizational leaders should try to prevent sexual harassment simply because it is hurtful to the victims and their families. In other words, they should prevent the behavior because it is the ethically correct thing to do.

While there are many actions that managers can take to minimize the possibility of sexual harassment, three strategies will be highlighted here. First, managers need to emulate the appropriate behavior. If a manager uses sexually inappropriate behavior, it is more likely that other organizational members will follow that person’s lead. Second, organization-wide training is necessary. Having a policy or simply training managers about sexual harassment is inadequate. In my experience, some of the worst cases of sexual harassment come from members at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy. A word of caution is necessary. Many organizational members will strongly resist this type of training. I’ve heard of organizational members who go to the training and sit with their backs to the trainer. Others read books, do other work, or text message friends. Despite this type of resistance, organization-wide training sends a clear message that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Finally, organizational managers need to encourage a culture that rejects harassment of any kind. A culture in which people monitor their own behavior is ideal and needs to be protected at all costs.

Organizational Cohort Level

All members of an organization have a stake in preventing sexual harassment. Just as one bad tooth can cause the entire mouth to hurt, sexual harassment has a diffuse and negative impact on the workplace environment. Of course, the problem that organizational members face is

that it is sometimes hard to tell if a behavior is sexual harassment. What constitutes sexual harassment to some may be flirting to others (Dougherty, Kramer, Klatzke, & Rogers, in press). Nonetheless, coworkers should be alert for potentially unwanted sexual attention and seek advice from their personnel department. A short conversation with either the harasser or the target may also be productive. At the minimum, it may be useful to document the behavior so that future charges can be corroborated.

Men may be particularly important allies in preventing sexual harassment—especially when the sexual harassment targets women. While men tend to be the perpetrators, most men are not sexual harassers. They are caring and concerned citizens of the organization. They also tend to have a powerful voice because of the extra status afforded some men because of their sex. Dougherty and Smythe (2004) made this argument in their case study of sexual harassment in an academic organization:

Instead of treating white men as the enemy, it would be far more productive to attempt to understand how they may be part of the solution to sexual harassment. While acknowledging that it is the dominant white male privilege that often encourages sexual harassment in organizations, it is also important to identify ways that white men can participate in preventing sexual harassment. Scholars and practitioners should start with the assumption that white men want to do what is right. They have a human capacity for love and care and should be given an opportunity to protect their colleagues. White men are privileged as organizational insiders and therefore have an opportunity to confront sexual harassers in unique ways. (p. 314)

Although Dougherty and Smythe’s (2004) conclusions are drawn from a study looking at the reactions of white men to a case of sexual harassment, this argument should be extended to all men regardless of race, age, ethnicity, or sexual preference. There are many productive ways for men to act as agents of change. It is necessary to encourage these actions.

Targets of Sexual Harassment

The shock that sexual harassment could happen to them often prevents targets from responding effectively. Because we associate being a victim with being weak and passive, most people do not want to believe that they could be victims. As a result, when sexual harassment occurs, these people have no real schemas for how to manage the behavior and respond effectively. People are typically perplexed regarding why they were targeted because, after all, they don’t *act* like victims; they are too strong, too assertive, too mature, and so on, to be victims of sexual harassment. Consequently, people rarely have a realistic plan for how they will behave if they are targeted. Because they do not have a realistic victim schema for how to behave, most people freeze, resorting to standard politeness norms instead of effectively confronting the behavior.

While some people have no schema for how to respond to sexual harassment, others have unrealistic schema, such as believing that they should physically attack the perpetrator. This type of simplistic schema is bound to fail because it does not account for the interpersonal and social dynamics in society and in the workplace. For example, most women will not attack a sexual harasser because he is typically physically stronger and because they will likely lose their job. Instead, it is important for people—especially women—to understand that sexual harassment could easily happen to them and to develop complex schemas for how to handle the behavior and manage their feelings if and when it occurs.

Conclusion

Sexual harassment is a destructive workplace process that negatively affects the organization on every level. It is important to understand how to manage this problem, not only to maintain the productivity of the organization but also to create more humanistic and satisfying places to work. People spend a large bulk of their time and emotional energy at work. This experience should be as enjoyable as possible, and at the very minimum, working should not be an ongoing, painful saga. For those in sexual-harassment-prone organizations and for those who face predatory sexual behavior at work, sexual harassment is ongoing and painful.

Sexual harassment is not a simple construct that can be understood simply by measuring the psychological properties of the individuals involved. It is important to understand the discursive properties involved in enacting and resisting this behavior. Sexual harassment is highly complex, involving the dynamic interplay not just of the target and harasser but of all members of the organization. By examining the relationship between communication, larger social structures such as hegemony, sex-role expectations, organizational culture, and organizational power, it is possible to view sexual harassment as a larger social phenomenon.

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DECEPTION

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Deception is one of the sexier topics in communication research, and people seem to have a love-hate relationship with the topic. Being duped is usually undesirable and something to be avoided, as is being labeled a liar. People everywhere teach their children that lying is bad. Yet despite moral and ethical prohibitions against lying, deception is a behavior that most people do at least occasionally. In most cultures, little white lies, polite exaggerations, and other minor forms of deceptions are routine, normative, and mandated by politeness. Furthermore, learning to lie well seems to be a part of normal human development and is an essential part of being socially skilled. In extreme circumstances, lying is necessary for survival. However, deception can also be used for exploitation, manipulation, swindling, fraud, and other antisocial activities. In spite of its unsavory connotation, people have a morbid fascination for the topic, as can be seen in the popularity of books such as *A Treasury of Deception: Liars, Misleaders, Hoodwinkers, and the Extraordinary True Stories of History's Greatest Hoaxes, Fakes and Frauds* (Farquhar, 2005).

The social science of deception is also fascinating. Not only is it a sexy topic but also research on the topic continues to yield surprising and counterintuitive findings. Communication, and other social scientific research, is sometimes criticized as only documenting the obvious. Such a critique does not apply to work on deception, which seems to frequently contradict conventional wisdom and common sense. Simply put, things are often not what they seem in the realm of deception.

This chapter focuses on human-to-human deception, with an emphasis on the communicative aspects of deception. Deception is defined, and the communication research on deception is summarized.

An Introduction to Deception

Defining Deception

Deception is usually defined as intentionally, or at least knowingly, misleading another person. Deception involves purposely getting someone to believe something that the deceiver knows to be false. There are several implications to defining deception in this way.

For a start, truth and deception are not polar opposites, and deception and falsehoods are far from synonymous. For example, a so-called honest mistake, that is, saying something that one incorrectly believes to be true, is not deception. Or saying something known to be false is not deceptive if it is said in such a way that the hearer should know it is false. Sarcasm is an obvious example. None of these cases involves intent to mislead. However, saying something that is literally true in a sarcastic way so that the listener infers something false can be deceptive. In short, what is literally true can be deceptive, and saying something false need not be a lie.

Following this line of thought, useful distinctions can be made between actual deceptions, deceptive attempts, messages perceived as deceptive, and messages that are

functionally deceptive. Actual deception is meant to deceive and achieves this end. The target person is misled by design. In deceptive attempts, someone tries to deceive, and there is deceptive intent, but the target is not actually misled. This situation may be thought of as failed deception. In perceived deception, the target person thinks that someone was trying to deceive him or her even though there may or may not be deceptive intent. Finally, messages that are functionally deceptive mislead others regardless of the intent or perceived intent. Functionally deceptive messages lead to the same outcome as deception without getting into peoples' head to ascertain intent. So honest mistakes can be perceived as deception, functionally deceptive, or both.

A related implication is that message intent, message function or impact, and message features need to be distinguished because these things do not map perfectly onto one another. Someone can say something that is objectively false, omit information, or change the subject in a manner that is likely to, or intended to, deceive. The objective truth or falsity of messages may or may not actually function as deception, and such messages may or may not be perceived as deception. In short, the combination of speaker intent and message consequence defines deception, not the objective qualities of messages or information dimensions such as truth or falsity or degree of omission.

Development of Deception in Childhood

Because deception involves knowingly or intentionally misleading another person, deception requires both the mental ability to think about others' thoughts and the ability to use communication to affect others' thoughts. For example, telling a falsehood will not function as deception if the listener knows the truth. Saying that the sun comes up in the north every morning or that one's best friend is 10 feet tall or some other ludicrous thing is unlikely to fool people. In short, deception requires consciously misleading others, and to do so effectively, one needs some idea of what they already know and do not know. The mental ability to understand that another's thoughts are different from one's own thoughts and to think about what others might be thinking is called theory of mind. Theory of mind develops in most human children between the ages of 3 and 5, and with this cognitive development comes the ability to deceive. Before this age, children can say things that are false, but they do not grasp the concept of deception. By age 5, however, most children can spontaneously lie to achieve goals when the truth is problematic (Peskin, 1992). Learning when to deceive, when not to, and the social ramifications of deception continues to develop throughout childhood, and the ability to deceive well is typically well learned by adolescence.

Types of Deception

While an outright lie (saying something that is false) may be the most obvious way we deceive and the first type of deception to come to mind, it is not the only way people

deceive others, or even the most common. False information can be mixed in with the truth to create deception. Other types of deception besides falsehoods include omission, evasion, and equivocation. Deceiving with omission simply involves selectively withholding information, and this is probably the easiest and most common form of deception. Evasion involves actively steering a conversation away from the withheld information, while equivocation involves ambiguous language open to multiple and erroneous interpretations. While falsification, omission, evasion, and equivocation are not the only ways to deceive, they are the most common.

These four ways to deceive correspond to Grice's (1989) communication maxims of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner. Grice's maxims are reasonable presumptions that people make to make sense of and understand others' communication. Information manipulation theory (IMT; McCornack, 1992) suggests that this correspondence between Grice's maxims and the common types of deception is not mere coincidence. Instead, deception works by exploiting the presumptions that guide everyday nondeceptive discourse. Deception happens when people covertly violate one or more of Grice's four maxims. People are misled because they presume that others are following the maxims that guide communication when they are not. The different presumptions people operate under when making sense of others' messages lead to a useful way to categorize these different types of deceptions, with falsification corresponding to Grice's maxim of quality, omission to quantity, evasion to relevance, and equivocation to manner. Numerous studies have shown that, as specified by IMT, messages that covertly violate Grice's four maxims are perceived as deceptive. Preliminary findings suggest that the conclusions extend across cultures. Successful replications of IMT have been done in Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong.

The four main ways people deceive others is by proving false information, passively omitting or hiding information, actively evading or diverting attention away from the concealed information, and a strategic lack of clarity, which we might call equivocation or obfuscation. None of these are mutually exclusive, and any or all can be used in combination. Also, these are not all-or-nothing categories. People can mix true and false information, disclose all but a small, crucial bit of information, and so on. Considerable shading is possible and perhaps even typical. Also, people do all these things all the time without meaning to be deceptive. These count as deception only when consciously used to mislead.

Prevalence of Deception

Because deception, by definition, involves deceptive intent, many if not most messages that depart from the whole truth and nothing but the truth fall well short of deception. Most communication, for example, is of necessity truncated. If someone asks how you are, a simple "fine" will usually suffice, and a fully disclosive answer is

typically inappropriate. After all, Grice's (1989) maxim of quantity also applies to "too much information" as well as too little. As a consequence, studies assessing the prevalence of "information control" are not necessarily informative about the frequency of deception. Omission, evasion, and inaccuracies are commonplace in conversation, and while this is no doubt true, this is a different issue from deception.

While it is not possible to randomly sample deception, at least two studies provide an idea of how often people lie in everyday life. DePaulo, Kashy, Kirkendol, Wyer, and Epstein (1996) had 70 college students and 70 nonstudents keep a lying diary for 1 week. Over the week, the vast majority of respondents (95%) reported at least one lie, and on average, college students reported two lies per day, while nonstudents reported a single lie per day. For the students, a lie was told in 30% of all interactions, and 20% of conversations for the nonstudents contained a lie. These findings suggest that lying is not only an everyday occurrence but also relatively infrequent compared with nondeceptive communication. If one considers the sheer amount of communication we engage in during the course of a day, one to two deceptive messages is proportionally small.

More recently, Serota and Levine (2008) assessed the prevalence of deception in American life with a different methodology. They asked a nationally representative sample of 1,000 individuals (stratified by age, sex, education, income, and region of the country) if they had lied in the past 24 hours. The mean number of lies per day was 1.65, a value similar to that reported above. The distribution, however, was highly skewed. A total of 60% of respondents reported no lies in the past 24 hours, but a few of those who did lie reported as many as 54 lies. These findings suggest that many people may not lie each and every day, although it is a strong probability that almost everyone lies sometimes. More interestingly, these findings suggest that most lies may be told by a relatively few, very prolific liars. Together with the earlier findings, the conclusion seems to be that lying is prevalent in that we are likely to encounter lies on a daily basis, but it is infrequent in comparison with everyday honest communication. In other words, most people lie sometimes, but most people are more honest than not.

Deception Motives

Despite widespread social and moral prohibitions against deception, deception nevertheless occurs. The question that naturally arises is why do people deceive others?

The answer is that people lie for a reason. Since deception is, by definition, intentional, this must be the case. But knowing what leads people to form deceptive intent tells us something about what happens when people deceive and why they do so. People are prone to deceive others when the truth poses some obstacle to goal attainment. In the absence of some psychopathology, people usually do not deceive when the truth works just

fine. In short, most people follow the maxim "Do not lie if you do not have to" most of the time.

This maxim is consistent with what the noted philosopher and ethicist Sissela Bok (1999) has labeled the "Principle of Veracity." According to Bok, there exists a moral asymmetry between truth and deception. The telling of the truth requires no justification; deceit does. Honesty and trust provide a necessary foundation for human relations and symbolic exchange. Violating these requires ethical justification, whereas adherence does not.

Early work on deception motives worked to classify them in a variety of ways. Categories of deception motives included things such as saving face, maintaining relationships, exploiting others for personal gain or profit, and avoiding conflict. These more specific motives can be grouped according to who benefits from the deception. For some, the motivation for deception can be for self-benefit, for other benefit, or to benefit the relationship. However, none of the goals achieved through deception are unique to deception. That is, the various category systems listing the various motives for deception do not differ from the more general social motivations guiding nondeceptive behavior as well. For example, consider face goals. The goal of a face-maintaining message is not to deceive per se but to manage self and others' face needs, and these ends can be accomplished through both honest and deceptive means. Similarly, virtually all instrumental and relational goals can, depending on the situation, be achieved through both honest and deceptive actions. Thus, deception is best thought of as a possible tactic, strategy, or means for goal attainment rather than a desired end in itself.

The probability of using deceptive rather than honest means for goal attainment is likely conditional on situational features and constraints, not on the nature or type of the goal pursued. According to Bok's (1999) Principle of Veracity, the moral culpability associated with deception creates an initial imbalance in the assessment of deceptive and truthful alternatives, and adopting deceptive means requires justification that is not necessary for truthful means. So while deception is in almost everyone's social repertoire, it is generally employed as a tactical or strategic option of last resort or path of least resistance. People will not be deceptive when the truth is sufficient, efficient, and effective for goal attainment. It is only when the truth poses an obstacle to goal attainment, regardless of what that goal might be, that people entertain the possibility of being deceptive. That is, people are deceptive only when truthful alternatives are more effortful or less efficacious.

Recent research is consistent with the idea that people deceive when the truth makes honest communication difficult. For example, imagine that a friend invites you over for dinner. If you think that the dinner is delicious and delightful, then when asked, providing an honest answer is easy. If, however, you thought that the meal was truly awful, you might lie about how bad it was. DePaulo and Bell (1996) observed people discussing artwork with artists. When they liked a painting that the artist painted, they said so. However,

when they disliked a painting, they tried to downplay that. Similarly, Levine, Kim, and Hammel (2008) conducted a series of studies where people were asked what they would do in situations where either the truth worked just fine or honesty might make goal attainment difficult. People were honest nearly 100% of the time when the situation did not require deception. In situations where the truth was a problem, however, people were deceptive about 60% of the time. So people are not always deceptive when they have a motive, but they are almost never deceptive when they do not have a motive, and the motives that guide both honest and deceptive communication seem to be the same.

Deception Research Methods

The majority of research studies investigating deception seek either to identify behaviors that distinguish truths from lies or to assess people's ability to distinguish truths and lies. The former set is called cue studies, and the latter is called detection studies. Both sets of studies typically use experimental designs, and both require obtaining collections of truths and lies that can either be coded for behavioral differences or be judged for veracity. The important methodological considerations in these types of studies include issues of ground truth, sanctioning, and stakes.

In deception research, ground truth needs to be known with absolute certainty. Ground truth means that the research must know which messages are honest and which are deceptive. Second, unsanctioned lies are usually preferred. Sanctioned lies are made in response to researcher instructions, that is, deceivers are told to lie, whereas unsanctioned lies are ones in which the message sources decide for themselves whether to lie or not. Although most previous deception research has involved sanctioned lies, unsanctioned lies are desirable for reasons of ecological validity and diagnostic utility. For similar reasons, relatively high stakes are usually preferred. The stakes refer to the consequences for the liar if the deception is uncovered. High-stakes lies are presumed to be more arousing, and behavioral differences are more likely to be apparent in high-stakes situations (DePaulo et al., 2003). Whether the study is interactive or mediated on the particular type of scaling used seems to make no difference.

While most deception research involves laboratory experiments, other methods are used as well. Surveys with hypothetical situations, retrospective accounts, and diary studies have all added to the literature.

Theories of Deception

Much of the current thinking about deception has evolved from Paul Ekman's (2001) idea of "leakage." The idea is that (1) there are emotional consequences of deception; (2) emotions are conveyed nonverbally; and (3) emotional

expression is not entirely under conscious control. According to this view, compared with an honest message source, deceivers are likely to experience strong emotions such as guilt and fear of detection. Emotions are largely communicated nonverbally, especially through facial expressions and also through the voice and body language. Deceivers, of course, try to control behavioral displays so as not to give themselves away, but nonverbal cues to deception leak out anyway, often through channels that are thought to be more difficult to control. So leakage refers to inadvertent, unintentional, behaviors that stem from deception and that give away the liar.

According to Ekman (2001), emotional leakage can often be seen in microfacial expressions. Microfacial expressions are momentary signs of emotion that flash briefly on people's faces. The microfacial expressions are hard to see, but according to Ekman, if they can be spotted, they often give away a liar.

The leakage idea was expanded by Zuckerman, DePaulo, and Rosenthal's (1981) four-factor theory. The four-factor framework specifies four internal states that differentiate truths and lies: emotions, arousal, cognitive effort, and overcontrol. Because relative to truth tellers, liars are more likely to experience arousal, emotions such as fear and guilt, cognitive effort, and overcontrol of nonverbal displays, and because each of these internal states is thought to be associated with specific nonverbal behaviors (e.g., increased cognitive effort leads to long response latencies), clues to deception are leaked nonverbally.

The most recent iteration of this thinking is reflected in interpersonal deception theory (IDT; Buller & Burgoon, 1996). Liars strategically present themselves as honest but nonstrategically leak deception cues. Message receivers pick up on these cues and become suspicious. Liars, however, pick up on leaked suspicion and strategically adapt. So do receivers. Net accuracy depends on the liar's encoding skill relative to the receiver's decoding skill and how the interaction progresses over time.

Deception Cues

Nonverbal Cues

Most past and current deception theory holds that, relative to truth, deception provokes arousal, it leads to various emotional responses such as guilt and fear of getting caught; it is cognitively effortful, and liars try harder to monitor their performances than honest people. These factors should lead to systematic differences in nonverbal behavior that distinguish deceivers from their honest counterparts. Behaviors that actually differentiate truth tellers and liars are called authentic deception cues.

These authentic cues can be distinguished from stereotypical deception cues and decoded-as-deception cues. Stereotypical deception cues are those behaviors that

people believe signal deception. So if we did a poll and asked people, “How can you spot a liar?” the answers would reflect stereotypical cues. Now, imagine we had people watch others and we asked them if they thought the people were lying. Then, we could look at what the people who were believed were doing differently than those who were seen as deceptive. Those behaviors that differentiate honest-looking people from those seen as deceptive are labeled decoded-as-deception cues.

Interestingly, research indicates that stereotypical deception cues and decoded-as-deception cues are not always the same. This indicates that people are often not aware of which cues they are using to assess honesty and deceptiveness. Furthermore, research shows that neither stereotypical deception cues nor decoded-as-deception cues map nicely onto authentic deception cues. That is, what people think liars do, what liars actually do, and what people use to infer deception lead to three different lists that lack strong correspondence.

A noteworthy example is the case of eye gaze. Most readers have probably heard the expression that a liar won't look you in the eye. Perhaps the reader has even asked someone to look him or her in the eye to be sure that the person was being honest. Interestingly, this belief is surprisingly widespread. Bond and colleagues (2006b) asked people in 75 different countries about how to spot a liar. The “liars won't look you in the eye” belief was, by far, the most common answer worldwide. People everywhere believe this. But decades of nonverbal cue research has shown this to be absolutely false (DePaulo et al., 2003). There is no link at all between eye gaze and actual deception. Eye gaze is a stereotype that has no basis in reality, and someone looking you in the eye or not has no diagnostic utility.

Research shows that although people believe that deception is signaled by nonverbal behavior and that people use nonverbal behaviors to form opinions about the honesty of others, no surefire nonverbal deception indicator exists. DePaulo and colleagues (2003), in the most extensive review to date, summarized the results of 116 different studies of 158 different deception cues. The vast majority of nonverbal cues were unrelated to deception, and of the few that were different, the differences were small. On average, deceivers did exhibit more vocal tension, a higher pitch, more fidgeting, fewer gestures, and less facial pleasantness than truth tellers. Again, the differences were small. Thus, research to date has failed to find nonverbal behaviors that have much diagnostic utility.

Verbal and Linguistic Cues

Most deception involves the use of words, so there are verbal differences between honest and deceptive messages. Most deception involves some elements of falsehoods, omissions, evasive language, or equivocal language. The telling of deceptive falsehoods and the strategic omission of information, however, are difficult to spot

unless one knows either the speaker's true motivation or what the truth really is. The problem is, when we are being deceived, we know neither.

DePaulo and colleagues' (2003) cue research finds that there are no surefire verbal behaviors that always signal deceit. However, compared with nonverbal behaviors, verbal behaviors are more diagnostic. Lies, relative to truths, tend to provide fewer details; they are less logical, less plausible, and exhibit less verbal immediacy. While the nonverbal differences between truths and lies might be characterized as small effects, these verbal differences are moderate to large. Thus, research suggests that one way to spot a lie is to simply apply common sense. Does what is said make sense? If little information is provided and it does not sound reasonable, maybe it isn't. The catch, of course, is that some lies are quite plausible, well constructed, and compelling. Nevertheless, critically listening to content can help spot poorly crafted lies.

Statement validity analysis and reality monitoring approaches presume that truthful and deceptive accounts will systematically differ because of differences between true memories and fabricated stories. For example, the language used to describe an authentic memory should be higher in imagery, emotional connotation, and contextual information than that describing an imagined event. Consistent with these views, several studies report statistically significant differences in language usage that differentiate truthful and deceptive messages.

More recently, computer-based linguistic software has been used to examine differences between honest and deceptive language. So far, every study has reported that linguistic differences between truths and lies exist, but none of the findings have replicated from one study to the next. So while verbal and linguistic analysis seems more promising than nonverbal cues, research is far from conclusive.

Deception Detection Accuracy

Research finds that people are not very good at detecting deception. In fact, the finding that people are statistically significantly, but only slightly, better than chance at detecting deception is perhaps one of the most reliable and well-documented findings in all of social science. Meta-analysis of more than 200 separate lie detection experiments finds that people are, on average, about 54% accurate when they have a 50-50 chance of being right (Bond & DePaulo, 2006a). The results of most individual studies fall within $\pm 10\%$ of this across-study average (i.e., between 45% and 65%). Not surprisingly, this finding has become very widely accepted among deception researchers.

More recently, Bond and DePaulo (2008) looked at the variance in accuracy judgments rather than just average accuracy levels. This research divided accuracy scores into four components: demeanor, truth bias, transparency, and

ability. Demeanor is the tendency of a person being judged to appear honest (or deceptive), independent of whether or not he or she is lying. Variance in demeanor means that some people are just more believable than are others. Truth bias is the tendency to believe others whether or not they are telling the truth. Individual variance in truth bias means that some people are more gullible than others; others are more skeptical. Transparency refers to people who are good or bad liars. That is, people who are transparent liars tend to leak the fact that they are lying and are therefore relatively easier to detect. Finally, ability is an individual difference in skill at telling if someone is lying or not. Thus, demeanor and transparency reflect sources of sender variance, while truth bias and ability reflect variance in message receivers. Furthermore, demeanor and truth bias reflect different sources of bias; in other words, our tendencies to believe (or not) are independent of actual honesty, whereas transparency and ability reflect variance in the ability to discriminate correctly between honest and deceptive messages.

Bond and DePaulo (2008) found that variance in demeanor is huge, both in an absolute sense and relative to other sources of variation. Some people are just much more believable than are others, and this aura of believability has a large impact on how people perceive them. There are also substantial individual differences in truth bias, with these differences being much smaller than the variance in demeanor but much larger than the other two factors. So some people are more gullible than are others, while others are more suspicious. Research on generalized communicative suspicion (GCS; Levine & McCornack, 1991) assesses this factor as a communication trait. Finally, the variance in transparency is much larger than the variance in ability. Individual differences in ability contribute little (maybe only $\pm 1\%$ or 2% in overall accuracy). Thus, variance in believability and accuracy stems more from the target person (the person being judged who is lying or not) than the person judging the message, and the variance in bias swamps variance in ability. This explains why accuracy values across studies are so stable. The lack of individual differences in ability leads to small standard errors and stable findings.

Factors Affecting Accuracy

The slightly better-than-chance accuracy finding is very consistent, so not surprisingly there are few variables that affect accuracy. Those variables that do affect accuracy tend to have a relatively small impact. For example, nonverbal training improves accuracy only slightly, on average leading only to a 4% improvement in raw accuracy (Frank & Feeley, 2003). Variables that have little consistent impact on accuracy include source expertise/occupation, source-receiver relationship, extent of interaction, question asking, and whether honesty values are scaled or dichotomous. Common sense might suggest that the better

we know someone, the better will we be able to tell when they are lying. This is false. Relationship closeness has little impact on deception detection accuracy (McCornack & Parks, 1986). Or, as another example, if we ask probing questions, one would think that accuracy might improve. Again, research suggests that this is false. Research finds that asking questions, or even hearing another person questioned, compared with a lack of questioning, makes no difference in the ability to distinguish deceptive from honest answers (Levine & McCornack, 2001). Instead, both knowing the other person and hearing probing questions answered makes people more likely to believe the answer, regardless of actual honesty.

Reasons for (In)Accuracy

There are several reasons why people tend to be inaccurate lie catchers. First, there do not appear to be any strong, cross-situation behavioral cues that would make high accuracy possible. Although statistically reliable cues to deception are observed across studies, these are too inconsistent to be of much use in detecting specific instances of deception (Levine, Feeley, McCornack, Harms, & Hughes, 2005). Second, people pay attention to cues that lack diagnostic utility. For example, there is a widely held, cross-cultural belief that liars do not look other people in the eye, yet truth tellers and liars do not differ in eye behavior, and eye gaze has no diagnostic utility. Third, research designs preclude much potentially useful information. Research indicates that when people do detect lies, it is often done well after the fact and on the basis of information gained other than at-the-time verbal and nonverbal behavior (Park, Levine, McCornack, Morrison, & Ferrara, 2002). Instead, detection is often based on inconsistencies with prior knowledge, information from third parties, and physical evidence. Such information is not available in most deception detection experiments. Fourth, people are overconfident of their ability to detect deception. People tend to think that they can detect others' lies, but confidence is not related to actual accuracy (DePaulo, Charlton, Cooper, Lindsay, & Muhlenbruck, 1997). Finally, people are often truth biased and often fail even to consider the possibility of deceit (Levine, Park, & McCornack, 1999).

Truth Bias

Another reliable finding from the accuracy literature is truth bias. Truth bias is the tendency to judge messages as honest, independent of actual message veracity (Levine et al., 1999). Although there are individual differences in truth bias, it also exhibits a strong situational component. Research finds that truth bias tends to be stronger when people are interacting with others they know and trust; it is stronger in face-to-face interaction when the communication is mediated, and it is weakened by situational factors increasing suspicion.

Importantly, however, truth bias is reliably observable and has substantial impact across both individuals and situations. That is, truth bias varies in degree from person to person and situation to situation, but despite these differences, most people are truth biased most of the time.

There are at least three important reasons behind the strength and persistence of truth bias. First, truth bias stems, in part, from innate, hardwired, cognitive systems that govern how we process incoming information (Gilbert, 1991). Belief is a mental default, and while people can reject information as false, doing so requires additional cognitive resources and processes subsequent to comprehension. Doing otherwise would require a less efficient cognitive system, and thus there is likely an evolutionary basis for truth bias. Second, communication requires truth bias. If one questioned the veracity of everything others told us, communication could not operate. Making sense out of what others say requires a presumption that they are cooperating in the communication (Grice, 1989). Finally, humans are social, and getting along with others requires some degree of trust, coordination, and consideration. People give others considerable leeway so that social interaction is not disrupted.

The “veracity effect” (Levine et al., 1999) is an important implication of truth bias. The veracity effect refers to the finding that accuracy for truthful messages is usually higher than accuracy for lies. This follows from truth bias. Because people are truth biased, people are more accurate for truths than for lies, and therefore source veracity affects detection accuracy. Consistent with the veracity effect, when accuracy is calculated separately for truths and lies, truth accuracy tends to be well above 50%, while lie accuracy is often below 50%. This also means that accuracy depends on the number of judgments of truths and lies. The 54% detection accuracy finding only applies to experiments where there are an equal number of truths and lies. As the proportion of messages that are honest increases, so does accuracy, but accuracy declines predictably when most messages are deceptive (Levine, Kim, Park, & Hughes, 2006).

How People Really Detect Lies

According to a study titled “How People Really Detect Lies” (Park, Levine, McCornack, Morrison, & Ferrara, 2002), all judges in most of these experiments have to go on is the at-the-time verbal and nonverbal behavior of the message sources. Outside the research lab, however, people can check the facts, talk to others, and so forth. Consequently, lies outside the deception lab are most often detected well after the fact and by discovery methods other than verbal and nonverbal source behaviors at the time of deception. Park and colleagues (2002) simply asked participants to recall a lie that they had detected, to describe what happened, how they found out that the person was lying, and how much time had elapsed between

the telling of the lie and its detection. Only 2% of the recalled lies were caught at the time of the telling, based on source verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Most were detected after the fact, often much later, and discovery methods often included information from others, physical evidence, and later confessions.

Future Directions

There are several directions for future research on deception. First, almost all research on the topic has been done either in North America or in Europe. Very little comparative or indigenous research exists outside Western cultures. Remedying this is probably the most pressing issue for deception research.

Second, deception research desperately needs new and better theory. Current leakage-based theories have produced limited yield, and alternatives are needed.

Third, deception research needs to study deception from a more interactive perspective. Previous cue research shows little in the way of universal deception cues, and detection research finds meager accuracy. However, there may exist strategies that a questioner can use to prompt deception tells. For example, the behavioral analysis interview is an investigative technique developed and taught by John E. Reid and Associates, Inc. It is a nonaccusatory interview that tries to bait potential suspects into providing incriminating information. Future research should shift the focus from passive observation of cues to strategic veracity assessment.

Finally, recent technologies in brain scanning hold potential for detection deception. Although less than perfect, at present, the polygraph remains the most accurate deception detection device. New technologies such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) will be increasingly the focus of investigation in the future.

Conclusion

A substantial and intriguing literature exists on topics related to deceptive communication. Deception is when someone knowingly misleads another person or persons. Lying is discouraged in every human culture, yet most people lie at least once a week if not daily. Thus, deception is a common occurrence, although it is infrequent in relation to honest communication. People deceive others when the truth proves problematic, and most people learn to do this by age 5.

Research has failed to uncover any reliable, diagnostically useful set of behaviors that can be used to distinguish truths from lies. Deception theory predicts that people unintentionally leak such deception cues, but the findings of research looking for cues fail to replicate from study to study. Deception cue research has focused heavily on nonverbal behavior,

but recent findings suggest that research on verbal behaviors holds more promise.

Research looking at people's ability to detect deception yields much more consistent findings. People are significantly, but only slightly, better than chance at detecting deception. When the chance level is 50%, people average 54% accuracy, with the results of most studies falling within $\pm 10\%$. Despite this poor performance, people believe that they can tell when others lie to them. That is, people are overly confident in their deception detection abilities. Instead, while some people are much better liars than are others, there is less variance in detection ability. Finally, people are almost always truth biased. They tend to believe others independent of whether the person is honest or not. As a result, people are usually correct in believing honest others but tend to mistake lies for truths. This is probably just as well because the tendency to believe what others say allows communication to function and is thus highly adaptive.

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BIAS

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Human communication always takes place in a context, through a medium, and among individuals and groups situated historically, politically, economically, culturally, and socially. This state of affairs is neither bad nor good. It simply is. Bias is a small word that identifies these influences.

All forms of communication are subject to multiple biases—personal biases, psychological biases, political biases, and cultural biases. Bias is generally thought to cause distortion in messages that might otherwise be delivered and received in some pure or true form. The antidote for bias is supposed to be something called objectivity. There are two senses in which to understand objectivity in communication. First, objectivity, similar to the scientific method, is an inductive process of gathering facts and presenting the truth based on those facts. Objectivity may also be understood as the “worthy” but impossible philosophical ideal of observing and describing reality “as it is” instead of how we wish it to be.

If bias exists, if communicators and audiences have social, political, cultural, and economic histories they cannot escape, then a pure or true form of a message cannot exist. As-it-is objectivity cannot exist. That said, human beings can be made aware of their biases and learn to mitigate them in communication. One could argue, however, that the desire to mitigate bias, and the techniques used to do so, simply introduces new biases into the message.

Some communicators speak from positions of political, economic, social, or cultural power. Politicians, for example, speak from positions of political power. They are certainly biased in favor of their ideological positions, and they may even be overtly partisan. They belong to parties and espouse dogmas and policies. And while they may think their individual ideologies are simply common sense,

they understand that they speak from political positions. Citizens expect bias from politicians.

But what about powerful communicators who would have us believe that they speak the truth from a position of objectivity? Academics, for example, conduct research using well-established methods of inquiry that they believe help them develop theories about how the world works. Because academics are people constrained by the same influences as others, bias can be found in their messages.

The problem with bias is not that it exists, nor is it that bias somehow pollutes an otherwise pure message. The problem with bias is that it may distort a message sold to an audience as “objective.” What happens when the form of the message persuades us that the information is truthful yet the bias of the speaker distorts the truth?

This chapter will explore the role of bias in communication, focusing on the news media because it is in the arena of public affairs that the problems of bias seem most acute. Journalists attempt to get the facts and tell the facts without distortion. But this is clearly impossible because every act of communication requires some sort of structuring. Journalism is a heavily structured form. It is within the communicative structures of journalism that we find some interesting biases. At the dawn of the 21st century, the news media play a central role in politics and the so-called culture war, in which the clash of ideologies is often simplistically reduced to left versus right or liberal versus conservative.

Theory

Bias is a tendency, an inclination, or a bent that makes it difficult for us to communicate without prejudice. Bias indicates influences built into human cognitive and communicative abilities.

Theorists in cognitive science, such as Johnson and Lakoff (1999), contend that the human cognitive system is based on a human's unique physical relationship to the world. For example, people walk upright and see the world with bifocal, forward-facing eyes. As a result, and with a few interesting exceptions, people across cultures tend to speak of the "good" as being a state of "up" and the future as a place "ahead" on the path. People have the ability to name and categorize the objects and sensations they encounter and use metaphor to compare objects and sensations. Comparison leads to evaluation—the determination of good or bad. And such evaluations lead to bias.

Bias, then, may play an important role in human evolution. Consider the hypothetical example of an early human tribe encountering a new environment. Their ancestors had long since learned that animals of a particular kind eat people. They learned to identify and categorize these animals by distinct characteristics that separate them from other more useful or less dangerous animals. The dangerous kind hunt and kill prey, with forward-facing eyes, sharp claws, and large teeth. As the tribe explores the new environment, they encounter a strange animal. But they notice that it moves with the same smooth ease as the man-eaters they have left behind. They notice that it has forward-facing eyes, long teeth, and paws that possibly hide retractable claws. It is unlikely that they will approach this animal for a closer look. It is far more likely that they will ready their weapons to defend themselves. And one reason for this will be bias—a prejudice against animals with the characteristics of a man killer.

This process is also known as stereotyping—making an evaluation about a new person, object, or sensation based on comparisons and generalizations following from those comparisons.

In the case of our exploring tribe, bias plays an important role in keeping its members alive by helping them create new knowledge. Bias allows them to compare the new objects they encounter with similar objects from their former home. And these comparisons allow them to evaluate the new objects before actually studying them. So bias and prejudice were important, early defense mechanisms, and the source of rational evaluations of new experiences.

Furthermore, bias plays a role in reproducing culture. Suppose that this tribe believes that the new creature is connected in some important way to powerful gods. Encountering the new animal may certainly create a dangerous situation, but it almost as certainly creates an interesting cultural moment: The powerful gods they fear and worship apparently inhabit this new land, too. And so they are able to impose their culture onto the new environment. They will be able to think and talk about their new surroundings in familiar ways. The things that they know to be good will remain good. The bad will remain bad.

Bias works in similar ways today. For example, suppose you enjoy live theater and prefer such entertainment to the movies. You might argue, in a discussion with friends, that the live performance of a particular work is far superior to the film

version. Your bias in favor of live theater could cause you to overlook fine qualities in the film version. If you tend to speak about theater in consistently positive terms and speak about film in consistently negative terms, then your bias may be the cause. Your bias might even cause you to make sweeping generalizations about the quality of theater versus film.

A simple preference for live theater, however, may not be the only source of your bias. Perhaps you were raised by parents who actively promoted theater and disparaged film as low-brow entertainment. Perhaps they even made rude comments about the cultural norms and morals of people who enjoy the movies. Perhaps, as a result, you grew up believing that theater people are better than film people—associating theater with certain levels of education or a certain social and economic status. As a result of your upbringing, you may believe that movies are harmful to a proper culture.

All these influences—including family, socioeconomic status, and culture—contribute to your worldview or ideology. Ideology is the screen through which people see the world and make sense of it. Ideology is one of the foundations on which biases are built. So in addition to stereotyping, you may also think of bias as partly an outward expression of a worldview.

Bias of nearly any particular sort often appears to be merely common sense to the individual because of the role ideology plays in the formation of bias. Common sense is the feeling that an idea is true simply because it is painfully obvious. What makes it painfully obvious is ideology. Bias occurs in a message when you use common sense as your guide.

But suppose you have a plan. It is your goal to promote live theater and to denigrate film. So you start a weblog and write about how wonderful theater is compared with the swill offered by the movie industry. Furthermore, you make it a point to introduce the topic in discussions with people you meet. And you plan one day to write a book and appear as a guest on television talk shows so that you can further your goal of promoting theater over film. Such an effort may certainly fit your ideology, but it is not the result of bias. Instead, you would be engaged in propaganda—the systematic propagation of a doctrine or belief. In other words, if you are doing it on purpose, it is not bias. Bias is not intentional.

Methods

It is not possible to list all the things that influence a speaker and his or her message. Some influences, however, will be more important than others. And identifying these important influences—making the evaluation of important versus unimportant—will be subject to the biases of the investigator or critic.

The first consideration in evaluating a message for bias is understanding the complexities of the "rhetorical situation." This concept identifies the circumstances under which a speaker chooses to speak. The concept relies on understanding a moment called "exigence," in which something happens, or fails to happen, that compels one to

speak. For example, if the local school board fires a popular principal, a sympathetic parent might then be compelled to take the microphone at the board meeting. Bitzer (1968) defined the rhetorical situation as the

complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence. (p. 6)

The following are eight of the elements of the rhetorical situation:

1. *Exigence*: What happens or fails to happen? Why is one compelled to speak out?
2. *Persons*: Who is involved in the exigence, and what roles do they play?
3. *Relations*: What are the relationships, especially the differences in power, between the persons involved?
4. *Location*: Where is the site of discourse? For example, a podium, newspaper, Web page, or street corner.
5. *Speaker*: Who is compelled to speak or write?
6. *Audience*: Who does the speaker address and why?
7. *Method*: How does the speaker choose to address the audience?
8. *Systems and institutions*: What are the rules of the game surrounding and constraining numbers 1 through 7?

Analyzing the rhetorical situation (which, at its most fundamental, means identifying the elements above) can tell us much about speakers, their situations, their persuasive intentions, and any biases they may have in regard to the situation.

Bias may also be studied beginning with one or more of four broad categories: ethnocentrism, in-group/out-group, stereotypes, and systems. These categories offer investigators a way to understand bias in terms of how the speaker is situated according to circumstances such as culture and racial/ethnic identity and according to direct influences on thinking such as group membership or professional practice.

Ethnocentrism

Everyone is part of a culture. The discipline of anthropology demonstrates that culture consists of the combined ways of being of a group of humans that must be reproduced from generation to generation, including mythology, art, politics, language, and traditions. Cultures generally consist of people of like ethnic background. Culture teaches a people how the world works and why. Cultures, in other words, reproduce ideology.

Cultural ideology appears to the members of the culture to be truth and common sense.

What is the “American way”? That term roughly identifies classical liberalism: representative government, self-determination, free markets, rule of law, and civil liberties. Americans are proud of this cultural tradition. Many Americans believe that the American way is really the only way, assuming that other people in the world would live similarly if only they learned how great the American way is. And Americans often find it surprising when people of other cultures reject the “gifts” of classical liberalism. There is nothing surprising about it. For many other cultures, it is truth and common sense that the fruits of American culture are poisoned.

Ethnocentrism, and the commonsense understanding of culture that drives it, sometimes leads people to assume that the words and deeds of those from other cultures are driven by irrationality at best and evil at worst. Bias based on ethnocentrism may then appear in the way a speaker assigns motive to those of a different culture in comparison with his or her own culture. The speaker may use consistently positive terms to describe the motivations of his or her own culture and consistently negative terms to describe the motivations of another culture.

In-Group/Out-Group

Related to ethnocentrism are the concepts of in-group bias and out-group bias. Humans are social creatures and love to associate with fellow humans in numerous ways. Some groups form by choice—clubs, political parties, professions. The members of other types of groups belong whether they want to or not—age groups, gender, race. In-groups are associations of like members, and out-groups are either an opposing group or the entirety of the population not “in.”

Members of political parties belong by choice—choice driven by a number of historical, cultural, and familial factors. Part of what defines a group such as a political party is its ideology, which will naturally differ slightly or drastically from the ideologies of other parties. In other words, members of Party A are likely to see the world differently from members of Party B. They are likely to believe that their way of seeing the world is the truth and common sense. Members of Party B may be thought of as mistaken or, in extreme cases, as dangerous or evil.

Biases based on in-group and out-group associations work in ways very similar to ethnocentrism. A speaker may use consistently positive terms to describe the motivations of his or her own group and consistently negative terms to describe the motivations of another group.

Stereotypes

One of the smart things humans do is place everything they encounter into categories. It is an important way of

understanding the world. The first reaction to a new object or experience is to compare it with something else already known in order to make sense of it. And if the comparison is close enough, people metaphorically and mentally place it into the box with the appropriate label—a category.

One of the mistakes people make concerning categories is assuming that objects or experiences in a category are similar in other ways or all ways. Consider the category “teenager,” for example. All members of the category belong, if they are aged 13 to 19. Now, further suppose that you shop at the local mall and often encounter teenagers there who disrupt the social scene with obnoxious behavior. You further notice that people outside the category “teenager” do not seem to behave similarly. To assume, then, that all teenagers are obnoxious is to engage in stereotyping. To act with regard to this stereotyping—treating all teenagers you meet with contempt—is to engage in prejudice. If you speak about teenagers in consistently negative terms and assign negative motivations to their actions, then you are biased against teenagers.

As in the example of the early human tribe demonstrated above, however, stereotyping and prejudice are not necessarily always bad. Even the current example—concern about the behavior of teenagers at a mall—might not be entirely ill considered.

Systems

A system is any method or procedure, based on an ordered collection of facts and/or principles, aimed at producing a desired result. A system may also be a collection of coordinated objects that together create a technology aimed at producing a desired result. Systems introduce bias into a message because people use systems to create and deliver messages.

Journalism, for example, is a profession in which its members may feel a strong connection in terms of professional identity. Such identity could lead to various biases based on the individual journalists being part of an in-group. But journalism also has a regular system of procedures that dictate what journalism is and how the would-be journalist should produce it. The system of journalism—the norms of its professional practice—exerts a large measure of control over the kinds of messages a journalist may produce.

For example, journalists structure hard news articles (breaking news about immediate events) using the “inverted-pyramid” concept: The first two or three paragraphs answer the six reporter’s questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how. This also happens to be the rough order in which most journalists use them because people appear to be affected by events happening now in a particular place for a particular reason and by a particular means. The events of the world and the human reactions to those events do not usually unfold in so neat a fashion as this structure. Hard news is biased toward a story of the world in which complex, and often ambiguous, events are presented in a simple hierarchy of importance.

Furthermore, journalists use various technological systems that introduce bias into the message. Television is a visual medium. Good journalism practiced in the medium of television is defined by the quality of pictures and sound. Some news situations are easily covered by television, for example, fires, car wrecks, protests, and mayhem of all sorts. There is an old saying in television news: “If it bleeds, it leads.” This may seem a cynical expression of journalistic pandering to the lowest common denominator. But it also demonstrates that television demands a certain type of content to be good television. The journalist who would hope to work in television is then encouraged to adopt the biases necessary to make it work.

Applications

The study of bias in communication is largely the study of texts by qualitative and quantitative methods. The news media provide an excellent opportunity to study bias. First, the news media produce an ever-expanding textual record of our world. And this record is captured and stored electronically, making it easy to find and study. Second, the charge of bias in the news media plays a role in the politics of the early 21st century. Most Americans experience politics through journalism, whose practitioners assert that they gather and present facts fairly, attempt to speak objectively, and deliver a message necessary to make democracy work.

Journalists, like politicians, speak from political, social, cultural, and economic positions, but usually not overtly, unless they are opinion journalists—columnists and pundits who are expected to interpret what they report. Journalists believe in the ethics of fairness and objectivity. These ethics have a strong influence on the profession. Fairness is understood as “getting both sides of the story.” In other words, journalists try to be fair by making sure that interested parties in a news situation have a say in the story. Journalistic objectivity is not the pristine objectivity of philosophy. Instead, a journalist attempts to be objective by two methods: (1) fairness to those concerned with the news and (2) a professional process of information gathering that seeks fairness, completeness, and accuracy.

It might seem that these journalistic ethics, and the process that supports them, would help reporters avoid bias and charges of bias. It might seem that journalistic practice is set up specifically to avoid bias. But the press today is often thought of as a unified voice with a distinct bias (right or left depending on the critic). This may be simplistic thinking that fits the needs of ideological struggle. Perhaps it is not useful in coming to a better understanding of what is happening in the world. Groups such as Accuracy in Media (AIM) and Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) thrive by critiquing the news media, based on opposite charges of bias—AIM charging liberal bias and FAIR charging conservative bias.

It should surprise no one that some charges of bias are politically motivated. Such motivation, however, does not

explain why 69% of Americans believe that the news media are politically biased (Pew Survey Report, 2000). Instead, the answer is generally quite simple: Bias affects all parties in a communicative situation. Bias affects the messages speakers deliver. An audience's own biases affect what it hears.

For citizens and researchers, it is important to develop the skill of detecting bias. Begin with a set of critical questions as follows:

- What is the speaker's sociopolitical and cultural position? A given speaker may certainly have political or cultural intentions for a message. These intentions are not the source of bias. Instead, bias will arise from commonsense assumptions that spring from the speaker's sociopolitical and cultural position.
- With what professional, social, ethnic, or culture groups is the speaker identified? Group members learn the biases of their group. In an important sense, a group's biases, springing from its structure and worldview, define what the group is and who belongs to it.
- Does the speaker have anything to gain personally, professionally, or politically from delivering the message? Money, power, and prestige also play an important role in bias.
- Who is paying for the message? Where does the message appear? Who stands to gain?
- What sources does the speaker use, and how credible are they? Does the speaker cite statistics? If so, how were the data gathered, who gathered the data, and are the data being presented fully?
- How does the speaker present arguments? Is the message one-sided, or does it include alternative points of view? Does the speaker fairly present alternative arguments? Does the speaker ignore obviously conflicting arguments?
- If the message includes alternative points of view, how are those views characterized? Does the speaker use positive words and images to describe his or her point of view and negative words and images to describe other points of view? Does the speaker ascribe positive motivations to his or her point of view and negative motivations to alternative points of view?

Bias in the News Media

Much recent research demonstrates that simply deciding how to measure bias is difficult to do when dealing with a journalistic piece—a text with a complex rhetorical situation. This difficulty is compounded by audience reactions to the journalistic text. One study demonstrated, for example, that partisans of opposing camps both detect bias against them in the same news coverage (Vallone, Ross, & Lepper, 1985). Another study (Domke, Watts, Shah, & Fan P, 1999) suggests that the liberal-bias argument used during presidential campaigns is partly strategic and occurs most often when coverage of conservatives is favorable or a conservative candidate has a news advantage (i.e., sustained favorable coverage). Furthermore, a recent study found that the perception of bias in the news media was related to the number of charges and amount of coverage of bias but not to actual

bias (D'Alessio, 2003). Another study in the same year, however, showed that personal discussions of political bias among like-minded people led to perceptions of bias in the news media (Eveland & Shah, 2003).

Perhaps more important than charging political bias is studying the inherent, or structural, biases of journalism as a professional practice—especially as mediated through television.

- *Commercial bias*: The news media are money-making businesses. As such, they must deliver a good product to their customers to make a profit. The customers of the news media are advertisers. The most important product the news media delivers to its customers are readers or viewers. The news media are biased toward news that draws readers and viewers.
- *Temporal bias*: The news media are biased toward the immediate and the fresh. To be immediate and fresh, the news must be ever-changing even when there is little news to cover.
- *Visual bias*: Television is biased toward visual depictions of news. Television is nothing without pictures. Legitimate news that has no visual angle is likely to get little attention. Much of what is important in politics—policy—cannot be photographed.
- *Bad news bias*: Good news is considered boring. This bias makes the world look like a more dangerous place than it may actually be. Plus, this bias makes politicians look far more crooked than they may actually be.
- *Narrative bias*: The news media cover the news in terms of “stories” that must have a beginning, a middle, and an end—in other words, a plot with antagonists and protagonists. Much of what happens in our world, however, is ambiguous. The news media apply a narrative structure to events, suggesting that these events are easily understood and have clear cause-and-effect relationships. Good storytelling requires drama, and so this bias often leads journalists to add, or seek out, drama for the sake of drama. Controversy creates drama. Journalists often seek out the opinions of competing experts or officials to present conflict between the two sides of an issue. Last, narrative bias leads many journalists to create, and then hang onto, master narratives—set story lines with set characters who act in set ways. Once a master narrative has been set, it is very difficult to get journalists to see that their narrative is simply one way, and not necessarily the correct or best way, of viewing people and events.
- *Status quo bias*: The news media believe that “the system works.” During the “fiasco in Florida” following the 2000 presidential election, the news media were compelled to remind Americans that the Constitution was safe, the process was working, and all would be well. The mainstream news media never question the structure of the political system. The American way is the only way, politically and socially.
- *Fairness bias*: Ethical journalistic practice demands that reporters and editors be fair. In the news product, this bias manifests as a contention between/among political actors (also see “Narrative bias” above). Whenever one faction or politician does something or says something

newsworthy, the press is compelled by this bias to get a reaction from an opposing camp. This creates the illusion that the game of politics is always contentious and never cooperative. This bias can also create situations in which one faction appears to be attacked by the press. For example, Politician A announces some positive accomplishment, followed by the press seeking a negative comment from Politician B. The point is not to disparage Politician A but to be fair to Politician B. When Politician A is a conservative, this practice appears to be liberal bias.

- *Expediency bias*: Journalism is a competitive, deadline-driven profession. Reporters compete among themselves for prime space or air time. News organizations compete for market share and reader/viewer attention. And the 24-hour news cycle—driven by the immediacy of television and the Internet—creates a situation in which the job of competing never comes to a rest. Add financial pressures to this mix—the general desire of media groups for profit margins that exceed what is “normal” in many other industries, and you create a bias toward information that can be obtained quickly, easily, and inexpensively. Need an expert or official quote (status quo bias) to balance (fairness bias) a story (narrative bias)? Who can you get on the phone fast? Who is always ready with a quote and always willing to speak (i.e., say what you need them to say to balance the story)? Who sent a press release recently? Much of deadline decision making comes down to gathering information that is readily available from sources that are well-known.
- *Glory bias*: Journalists, especially television reporters, often assert themselves into the stories they cover. This happens most often in terms of proximity, that is, to the locus of unfolding events or within the orbit of powerful political and civic actors. This bias helps journalists establish and maintain a cultural identity as knowledgeable insiders (although many journalists reject the notion that follows from this—that they are players in the game and not merely observers). The glory bias shows itself in particularly obnoxious ways in television journalism. News promos with stirring music and heroic pictures of individual reporters create the aura of omnipresence and omnipotence. Consider the use of the satellite phone with regard to glory bias. Note how often it is used in situations in which a normal video feed should be no problem to establish. The jerky pictures and fuzzy sound of the satellite phone create a romantic image of foreign adventure.
- *Class bias*: Journalists used to be working class. Early in the 20th century, the average journalist had a high school education and made a working-class wage. By midcentury, college graduates began showing up in newsrooms at America’s largest newspapers. But the working-class attitude persisted. The class status of journalism turned a corner in the 1970s. Reporters at smaller daily newspapers now have college degrees. And along with these degrees come greater earning power and a white-collar, middle-class lifestyle. Further separating journalists from the working class and poor is the ongoing move by corporate newspaper chains to cut back circulation among the poorest citizens because advertisers do not care to reach people without discretionary income. The result is that journalists, for the most part, have

become socially, economically, politically, and culturally separated from the poor and the working class.

Structural Bias as Theory

Some critics of the press think of it as speaking with a unified voice with a distinct ideological bias. A better understanding requires a theory. A theory offers us a model that tells us why things happen as they do. Furthermore, a theory allows the user to predict outcomes and behavior. Assertions of ideological bias do neither. While the press does demonstrate ideological biases with regard to certain issues or other localized phenomena, these and other behaviors are explained and predicted by the structural biases. Since the press sometimes demonstrates a conservative bias, asserting that the press is liberal neither predicts nor explains. Since the press sometimes demonstrates a liberal bias, asserting that the press is conservative neither predicts nor explains.

Test this for yourself. Choose a situation that is current—preferably breaking right now. For each of the structural biases listed above, write down what you would expect the press to do, based on that bias. Then, complete the exercise with a concluding statement that takes into account as many of the structural biases as possible. Now, follow the situation as the news event plays out. Collect texts from numerous sources—local and national. The Associated Press is an especially useful organization to study because its structural and stylistic norms have been adopted by most news organizations.

Compare the evidence from the texts with the predictions you made. Were your predictions correct?

This exercise can also become the basis for original research in communication generally and the news media specifically. Any professional communication will operate with normative practices that define the communication. Those normative practices are the source of structural biases. Furthermore, the culture of the profession will dictate other structural biases. In the list of structural biases of journalism, note that some (e.g., temporal and narrative) spring from normative practice and others (e.g., expediency and class) spring from the culture of the newsroom.

Future Directions

Among the social sciences, the discipline of psychology pays the closest attention to the concept of bias. Three of the four general categories for studying bias—ethnocentrism, in-group/out-group, and stereotypes—come directly from this field. Bias in communication from a communication perspective offers a wide-open opportunity for the student researcher. Bias is understudied in communication.

Part of the problem, as mentioned above, is that a good metric for determining bias does not exist. Textual analysts may certainly detect, describe, and theorize about various forms of bias in a given text. But as yet no measure exists for determining bias in broad classes of texts such as journalistic writing.

Niven (1999), however, has suggested a technique for comparing the performance of specific news organizations under similar circumstances. His study developed a method of determining bias based on analyzing coverage of specific types of news events by different news organizations. For example, the Niven study looked at 20 years of coverage of Democratic and Republican governors who had achieved similar results in two specific policy areas: murder rates and unemployment. His contention was that differences in coverage must then be attributed to partisan bias if the governors of different parties achieved similar results. He found no support for allegations of bias based on his metric.

Although Niven's results are interesting, they speak to a specific sort of situation. What about other types of coverage? Do his results hold up if the subject of the study is the coverage of state senators, presidents, or city managers? Niven's technique creates interesting opportunities for future research.

Another interesting area of future study is the bias caused by how journalists use language. It is readily apparent that journalism has a language all its own. For example, journalists use specific and regular expressions for attributing quotes and asserting relationships among people and events, such as in location and time. Anyone communicating through a regular system and medium will also be operating with assumptions about language.

Simply communicating by written or spoken words introduces bias into the message. If, as asserted earlier, there is no such thing as an objective point of view, then there cannot be objective or transparent language, that is, a one-to-one correspondence between reality and words such that a person may accurately represent reality so that you experience it as he or she does. Language mediates lived experiences. And evaluations of those experiences are reflected in language use. Rhetoric scholars generally accept that language cannot be socially or politically neutral; language reflects and structures our ideologies and worldviews. To speak at all is to speak politically. The practice of journalism, however, accepts a very different view of language that creates serious consequences for the news consumer. Most journalists do their jobs with little or no thought given to language theory, that is, how language works and how humans use language. Most journalists, consciously or not, accept a theory (metaphor) of language as a transparent conduit along which word-ideas travel to a reader or viewer, who then experiences reality as portrayed by the words.

Lakoff (2002) argues that journalism operates with many false assumptions about language. Journalists apparently believe, for example, that concepts are literal and nonpartisan. The standard six-question rubric of journalism (who, what, when, where, why, and how) cannot, however, capture the complexity of issues as seen through, and expressed by, incompatible ideologies. Journalists treat language use as neutral; the mere use of language cannot put anyone at a disadvantage: Words do not have a political reality. They

are merely "arbitrary labels for literal ideas." Following from this, journalists generally think that news can be reported in neutral terms. But to choose a discourse is to choose a position. To attempt neutrality confuses the political concepts. Is it an "inheritance tax," a "death tax," or an "estate tax"? What could possibly be a neutral term? Journalists believe that a general reader exists, and each shares the same conceptual system. Americans, for example, share the same English language, that is, its grammar. They often do not share dialects or the connotations of concepts, lived experiences, and ideologies. The statement "I am a patriotic American," means something entirely different to liberals as compared with conservatives. This difference is more than a matter of connotation. The differences in connotation spring from different social constructs and ideologies.

For further research, perhaps these false assumptions by journalists, rather than overt politicking, help create some of the political bias the public detects in news reporting. A conservative will quite naturally assert a conservative worldview by using concepts in ways comfortable to conservatives. The same goes for liberals. It is often pointed out that most news reporters are Democrats or vote for Democrats. Party affiliation, however, tells us nothing about political ideology. There are conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans. Be that as it may, the ethics of journalistic practice strongly urge reporters to adopt the assumptions about language and the structural biases listed above. The ethics of journalistic practice encourage journalists to adopt a (nonexistent) neutral language to mitigate any effects of ideological bias. Could it be that there is no concerted or sustained effort to slant the news for political purposes by mainstream news outlets?

Antibias Crusading as an Elitist Practice

For further research: AIM claims that the news media are biased toward liberal politics. FAIR claims that the news media are biased toward conservative politics. Supporters of these views see one group as right and the other as wrong. But the reality is not that simple. Yes, AIM and FAIR each point out coverage that appears to bolster their various claims. At times, the media do seem to be biased one way or the other. What these groups do not say, however, is that their mistrust of the media is also a mistrust of the people. Those who complain the most about media bias would see themselves as able to identify it and resist it. They get upset about it because they question whether the average American is able to do the same. If the average American can identify it and resist it, then there is little need to get upset about bias. The AIM and FAIR Web sites are full of material to help hapless Americans avoid the cognitive ravages of the "evil" conservatives or the "slandering" liberals and their media lackeys. What if the average American is quite capable of identifying problems with news coverage?

Conclusion

Every communicative situation is saturated with bias because communication always involves people who are situated historically, socially, politically, economically, and culturally. If this is so, then bias simply indicates a natural state of affairs. Calling it “natural,” however, should not indicate that bias is an inert substance in the communicative solution. Some powerful communicators assert, overtly or otherwise, that their messages are objective in one sense or another and, therefore, demand your acceptance. Journalists and academics, for example, fall into this category. Bias matters in the messages of those who claim objectivity precisely because they use objectivity as a structuring principle for their messages and as a stance for their claiming of truth. The claim of objectivity, then, can be a powerful means of persuasion. Detecting bias in a message requires critical thinking; one must examine the rhetorical situation and the structuring frames of a given discourse for clues to how bias might affect a speaker and his or her audience.

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PART IX

MEDIA AS COMMUNICATION

TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEDIA

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As each generation enters our media-driven society, the term *new media* becomes very relative to their time and their immediate experience. Those readers born after the early 1980s have little experience in a world that was mostly not digital, and the “new media” around them were not new, just what they became familiar with in their time.

The purpose of this essay is both to create a very contemporary understanding of new media and to provide readers with a somewhat broader context that may help them as their “new media” become traditional and the next set of new media emerges, as it inevitably will.

If you are fortunate enough to survive a few decades, change will inevitably occur, and *new media* will be something else, again and again, no matter what it was when you started paying attention to it.

As a reader, I was, and I am even more today, a bit of a skeptic who wants to know why people know what they say they know. Thus, I will begin with a little of my own personal story, which may help you better understand the reason why a broader context may be valuable to you as you consider new media.

I am the first baby boomer, or one of the first. I was born just after midnight on January 1, 1946. The most common traditional medium of the time was radio, along with the daily paper. Families still actually gathered around the radio and listened to *Sky King*, *Fibber McGee and Molly*, and other shows. While television had been introduced to the public at the 1938 World’s Fair and CATV was just getting its start in Oregon and in the hills of Pennsylvania, *new media* was not much of a public issue just after World War II, nor was computing, though it existed.

By the early 1950s, however, television, the “new media” that was going to ruin radio, had begun to invade living rooms. It was a black-and-white and often fuzzy picture, and programming was limited. It was relatively expensive to own, and it was erratic in service, especially in areas outside cities.

Our neighboring family, an older couple, owned a television set and often invited us to join them for the *Jackie Gleason Show*, *Ed Sullivan Hour*, or wrestling, which had a sizable following long before the version we know today. Television was “new media.” It did not destroy radio, though it changed it, and it was peculiarly American.

As we moved through the late 1950s, television was evolving, with better dramatic programming and news and political content becoming part of the normal fare. Color television was just around the corner.

The Kennedy–Nixon presidential debates were televised in 1960, changing the playing field and the cost of politics forever, and computing continued to grow in larger organizations. Can you imagine in today’s world of political coverage on television and Web sites what those debates were like almost 50 years ago?

President John F. Kennedy proposed that we send a man to the moon, which ultimately broke the boundaries of our imagined tether to this planet. In 1957, satellites were launched, and this began to change the scope and distribution of new media in the 1960s, and color became the big deal as television evolved into three powerful networks that became our primary source of news, entertainment, and advertising.

Although the picture phone had been developed by AT&T’s Bell Labs in the late ’50s and realized some limited use in the 1960s, there were really no new media beyond

network television that were publicly recognized as I finished college and army service and entered law school as the '70s began. The satellite and later CATV were less new media and more new distribution devices for television-based programming in those days. Of course, CATV, or community antenna television, was expected to destroy the broadcast networks, according to some authorities attending the International Radio and Television Society meetings in New York City with me in the mid- to late 1970s. I went on to become a Frank Stanton fellow with the International Radio and Television Society, and the broadcast networks somehow survived.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, the new media issue initially focused mainly on how to record television programs. While the first prototype of a videotape recorder was reported to have been demonstrated all the way back in November of 1951, at Bing Crosby's recording studio in Los Angeles, it took until the late 1970s for the industry to finally sort out the competing standards and get something nearly inexpensive enough for the consumer market, if you consider about \$1,000 for a VCR a competitive price (Lardner, 1987).

As I entered the 1980s, three major events began to shape the context in which new media and my own career would evolve.

The computer had been evolving since the 1930s, when John Atanasoff had developed the Atanasoff Berry Computer. Then came the ENIAC in the '40s, and then the first UNIVAC computer was delivered to the U.S. Census Bureau in June 1951 by Remington Rand Corporation. Thomas Watson Jr. pushed IBM into building computers in 1950. Thus, with this background of big, military, government, and large corporation-based central (mainframe) computing, a major shock occurred when the PC began to become a part of the desktop and the home. While it was 1976 when Jobs and Wozniak introduced the Apple I, by the early '80s IBM had rolled out its PC and rapidly surpassed little Apple in sales (Bellaver, 2006). The age of distributed computing and incredible personal computing power on your desktop had arrived.

The second major event was the early '80s move by the Federal Communications Commission to allow a little of the federally controlled broadcast spectrum to be used for limited consumer wireless telephones. It was expensive and limited, but it began what we all take for granted today as our right to mobile communication, and that had implications for new media.

The third event was the breakup of AT&T, which officially occurred on January 1, 1984, after the consent decree was issued on August 5, 1983 (Bellaver, 2006). That milestone created the opportunity for the rapid expansion of competitive communications and technology development, leading to the networks we take for granted today.

I will not unduly bog the reader down with too much detail—I think the above three events are central to my own, as well as your sense of context, as we move on to our shared time in the 21st century. Certainly, my life and

career were forever changed by these events, and so was my sense of “new media,” although it was not always that clear to me at the time.

From 1982 to 1984, I led the process at the University of Pittsburgh that resulted in the creation of the first “Campus of the Future” in U.S. higher education. This eventual partnership with AT&T involved creating the first voice (phone) data (networked computing) and video system converged on a fiber-optic network for the entire campus. While it was a mix of analog and digital technologies, you could get what you wanted electronically, where you wanted it, when you needed it, and it allowed limited interaction with distant source machines as if you were in the same room. It sounds fairly standard by today's experience.

This prototype was evolved by 1987, in another partnership with AT&T, at Ball State University, and became a “market model” for both K–12 and higher education. I went on to lead projects like it across the country as head of my own consulting firm.

It was the precursor application, a kind of analog-digital hybrid of what we are now used to in applications as we use wired and wireless digital applications involving audio, video, text, and graphics. The university went on to become the number-one wireless university in 2005, according to Intel.

This market model demonstrated the kind of electronic environment that was able to deliver or shift in format many content sources. The basic policy implications of this shift had caused problems for the FCC chairman years before, in 1980, when he questioned “whether a newspaper delivered electronically is an extension of print and therefore free of regulation (First Amendment protection) or whether it is a broadcast and consequently under the control of (FCC rules) government” (Drake, 1995, p. 162). Electronic life had policy complications, and that could have implications for new media.

Without overcomplicating this legal mine field, simply understand that, in January 2008, the writers' strike, which almost ground Hollywood to a halt in production, was greatly about how writers are paid for the extended use of their work in new media areas. Most of the concern occurred when convergence allowed digitized content to move from known to new contexts.

Let me bring my story to an exit point briefly. The experiences I gained led me to found the Graduate Center for Information and Communication Sciences at Ball State University and to become a founding board member and President and Chairman of the Board of the U.S. Distance Learning Association in the late 1980s, where we would see satellite-delivered video education sessions evolve to online delivered classwork and streamed video, even cell-phone-based sessions. Through the 1990s, I led converged network-based campus projects across the United States and saw the evolution of what started as a military network and evolved to universities and then to what we all take for granted today, the Internet. The VCR and the videodisk

evolved to the DVD and hard drives that digitally stored video content, and the simple cell phone evolved to become a device for entertainment, texting, and visual directions delivered from satellite as well as the more common telephone device.

In 2003, I founded the International Digital Media and Arts Association and still serve on its board and as its executive director. I am continuously confronted by “new media” evolving from what I thought I understood to be new media, which have either disappeared or become the new old traditional media—does anyone remember eight-track tapes for audio?

This is the context, the ever more rapidly changing context, in which I will discuss new media, and I hope you will learn as I did not to hold too tight to your definition. Things change, and so will you. Nevertheless, we will also discuss some things that I hope you will agree are constants and fundamental to our common experience and to our shared future.

New Media Versus Traditional Media

As you now know from the preceding introduction, *new* versus *traditional media* definitions must relate to context and time from my experience. Almost every related technology, at some point in its evolution, may have been considered “new media.” That makes defining it a bit tough.

Be that as it may, let us establish a contemporary working definition for the purpose of this essay and use it as a baseline as we move forward. Although it is not as simple as we might like, the term *digital* might serve as our baseline label for defining *new media* with some reservations.

If we say that new media encompasses those technologies that move, store, manage, and allow manipulation of digitized information, whether for news, entertainment, communication, visual or other purposes, we may have a starting point.

We must remember that we are dealing with one of the more complicated areas in life, communication, and one of the more complex concepts, information. Every hour of our waking days we create information of all kinds. If we do it digitally, it is reduced to ones and zeros and then what? We must find an appropriate medium for communicating both the code and the message contained in that code with our desired audience. Media, new or old, do not exist for themselves, shocking as this may be to a sizable segment of the working world; they exist to help human beings get their information communicated.

Let us take a relatively simple example. A graphic artist has been asked to create the cover of the catalog for a digital art exhibit in Chicago. The exhibit has a theme, a title, artist contributors, a sponsor or some source of support, a somewhat defined audience, and the rest of the world, today or whenever in the future, who might pay some attention to this cover work.

All of the elements mentioned above were present “before digital,” but “after digital,” things are a bit more complex. While there is still the challenge to the graphic designer to create the visual information that communicates an acceptable, appropriate, and even creatively reinforcing message about the exhibit, in the new media world, life is both better and much more complicated.

Before digital designers had their experience, some limited research time to review related designs that were available nearby, the wishes of those who commissioned the work, the challenge of a relatively limited audience with modest potential for broad exposure—with limited lasting and broad-based archival potential, and their courage and creativity.

Now, what has changed after digital? Graphic designers still have the experience, but with the Internet and worldwide access to both contemporary and archival examples, the research of related designs can be both extraordinary and daunting. When do you stop? With texting, cell phones, e-mail, and other invasive personal access, when does the designer get enough input from those who commissioned the work, whose gallery will be featured, or whose works will be inside the catalog that the design will cover? Then, designers must also consider the impact of worldwide access to their work since it will, no doubt, be added to a Web page and available across the globe now and likely archived for future reference. Nevertheless, perhaps the saving grace is that artists still have their creativity and courage, and that may be the true bridge for all of us between before digital and after digital. As we move forward in this essay, the real issue between old media and new media may continuously come back to the concept of integrity in communicating information, and that involves the courage of the reader/viewer to question the accuracy of the content and the commitment of the creator of this information to integrity.

Exploring Technology and the Myth of Interactivity

Techencyclopedia’s (www.techweb.com/encyclopedia) definition of *new media* is an intriguing one:

The forms of communicating in the digital world, which includes electronic publishing on CD-ROM, DVD, digital television and, most significantly, the Internet. It implies the use of desktop and portable computers as well as wireless, handheld devices. Most every company in the computer industry is involved with new media in some manner.

For more than 20 years, we have been in an era of digitally based technologies that allow manipulation of all forms of digitized content that can be converged on broadband (often fiber optics) and easily and instantly transmitted across the planet via the Internet.

Before we leap forward to the myth of interactivity, it is critical to our lives as citizens of the 21st century that we consider what is significant about this technology discussion. It is not the coolness of Blu-ray or HD, iPhone, MP3, GPS, VoIP, or any other technologies. These will shift with engineering breakthroughs. Marketing will rename or reconfigure a service to enhance sales, and new opportunities will evolve, as they always have done. Technologies are simply tools.

What is important to us as we contrast new media and traditional media in a digital world is to understand the key words used in the foregoing. They are *manipulate*, *converge*, and *instant*, whether referring to accessed information or to transmitted information.

As citizens and potential professionals in the digital world, we have every aspect of our lives affected by new media. To be well informed, even educated members of our society, we cannot be naïve about the implications of these three key words.

Let us begin with *manipulate*. Once you digitize an image, a document, a film segment, it can be relatively easily manipulated. Now, we have been manipulating all sorts of media, and everything else for that matter, for a very long time. Analog films and video were edited, and “wet” or film-based photography was also manipulated, as were written articles or text. Our issue today in new media is that manipulation is relatively easy and most users of digital technology can do it: Certainly, younger people who have grown up digital find this to be no big deal to do. That was not the case in the analog world.

If a photograph used in a trial was manipulated in the analog world, there were a relatively finite number of professionals who might have had the experience or skill level to achieve this. Today, with a cell phone camera, little experience, and some relatively inexpensive software, it is no big achievement to capture and manipulate an image.

On Friday night, when we need to just get out of our space and see a film on the big screen, we do not care if the film footage was digitized in Hollywood and sent via broadband to New York, London, and Wellington, New Zealand for simultaneous editing by three different groups working on AVIDS as long as what we see on the big screen is entertaining to us. The end justifies the means for us.

Nevertheless, if two students, one in Queensland, Australia, and the other in Muncie, Indiana, are taking an online distance-learning class and go to a Web site and each turns in a paper that has a number of paragraphs “lifted” from the site and inserted into each of their papers without credit, this easy-to-do manipulation of text is called plagiarism, and it is especially painful if the faculty member happens to notice or if he or she is using software that now checks papers for this sort of dishonesty.

What is the point here for us? New media in a digital world open up vast manipulation opportunities to masses. The benefits, for example, to film making are remarkable. Without integrity as a key element in user judgment, the

potential for disservice to our society is significant in every field you can list due to the pervasiveness of our digital world. From identity theft to digital photo makeovers to political contests, we have a new obligation as citizens in the digital, new media age. We cannot assume that integrity is always a primary consideration in what we see and read, and, thus, critical thinking and a healthy dose of skepticism are required.

Convergence is the next key word. While not simple to achieve, it refers to a digital world where telephony, computer data, and video are all digitized signals that can be transmitted and switched over the same network that is IP or “Internet protocol”-based. The rules of economics and access have changed. A voice-over Internet protocol (VoIP)-based telephone call to China from the United States is today no big deal for a Chinese student calling home. It was a very big deal only a few years ago. A U.S. soldier serving in Iraq can sit down in a tent before a computer screen with a Web camera and visit with his family in California via an IP-based session. This “video conference” or call had a significant cost before the expanded capability of broadband Internet.

Today convergence of voice, data, and video signals over an IP-based network, transmitted across the Internet, means that both the technical and the economic barriers that limited our choices and breadth of communication and access are mostly gone.

So what, you might say? This is just the way it is today, after all. For new media and for citizens of this time in the digital age, we have access to the widest scope of information ever, and that means others have access to us as well. Privacy and personal judgment become more important to us as stalkers, friends, and even pedophiles, and, oh yes, potential employers visit our Web site, our Facebook, and other social-networking site entries. Using data-gathering software, marketers and others can easily profile us, and very little we do electronically can be held private. The concept of access is truly a two-way street, and personal privacy becomes a new challenge. If we put up something “stupid,” revealing, or just tasteless, the world can see it just as we can see others via new media.

While there are numerous examples of this phenomenon, none can be much more telling than the January 2008 story of the Michigan woman who advertised on craigslist, a popular Web site, for an assassin to kill her lover’s wife. She was quickly discovered and arrested. Stupid, we might exclaim, but the simple truth is that with all the good that comes with access in our new media world, judgment and responsibility end up being much more important today because we are so much more “exposed” than we were in past.

Just in case you assume this concern to be overstated, let me refer you to the 2007 book *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today’s Internet Is Killing Our Culture*, by Andrew Keen, someone who has pioneered a number of Internet start-ups himself.

It is easy to look back to the summer of 2003, when 12-year-old Brianna LaHara was caught by the Recording Industry Association of America after downloading, copying, and distributing 1,000 songs to her friends. She was young, the case was settled out of court, and the association needed to make a point.

Nevertheless, was the point clear to her slightly older contemporaries? Perhaps not, if you consider the June 2005 study of 50,000 undergraduates by the Center for Academic Integrity. In it, 70% admitted to cheating and 77% of them “didn’t think that Internet plagiarism was a serious issue” (Keen, 2007, p. 143). The issues of judgment and integrity become more prominent.

The availability of images, music, movies, and text, all someone else’s work, all converged on an incredibly accessible network, and all easily stolen (yes, this is stealing), represents a seductive temptation to us as users and a real threat to the culture of which we are a part. Thus, the notions of user courage and skepticism, and integrity in providing and using information are critical to our social and professional futures.

The third key word is *instant*. In this digital world, speed is all, and we can truly think it, access it, or record it and send it around the planet instantly, and that is both good and risky.

Much as I would never subject you to my writing in this essay without editing it, rethinking the content, and revising it, that is less likely in this era of “just hit the send key.” At the end of the day, after the editing this may not be great, but it will not be careless.

As a PhD and a professional with almost 40 years of experience, I have never received so much poorly written and insufficiently thought-out junk than in the last decade as e-mail and texting took over the majority of correspondence. New media have broadened the base of input in many areas, and instant communication has changed the quality of content, not always for the good!

Some limited examples should help to make my point. Note that while personal carelessness in electronic communication may just cause a little loss in confidence, when new media gets involved, much more is at stake.

My first example will be Wiki’s. Newton’s Telecom Dictionary notes that “a Wiki, in its simplest form, is a web site that can be written upon and edited by multiple users at once” (Newton, 2006, p. 998).

While there is nothing inherently wrong with democratically shared information, and no system of information development is without some fault or risk, would you trust your health to an MD who got his latest drug information from a Wiki? He might have gone to Web MD, a site with reviewed and vetted content, and gotten poor information, but which source has the greatest credibility and the least risk? Remember, a Wiki can be instantly available for access, and the qualifications of contributors are generally unknown.

Since this raises a both disturbing and very difficult set of considerations for the reader as well as the author in our time of new media issues, I want to go a little deeper and

once again involve you with Andrew Keen’s work, this time in the context of the January 2001 creation of Wikipedia by Jimmy Wales with Larry Sanger.

Keen (2007) reports the clash between Dr. William Connolley, a well-published and recognized climate modeler and expert on global warming, and a Wikipedia editor who punished Connolley for “strongly pushing his POV (point of view) with systematic removal of any POV which does not match his own.” The result was that Connolly, who Keen notes “was pushing no POV other than that of factual accuracy,” got restricted by the editor on this democratic information site without any consideration for relative expertise or credibility, and on appeal he was given the same deference as his unknown foe, “who, for all anyone knew, could have been a penguin in the pay of Exxon Mobil” (p. 43).

The implications of this should be disturbing to all of us unless you believe that a new college freshman is as competent to teach the Basic English course as is a tenured and well-published senior professor. Certainly, the freshman might be more entertaining and might make some valid points, but would you pay tuition or, more important, give your time for this level of expertise?

Let us jump ahead in Keen’s work to see why Larry Sanger, who ran Wikipedia’s day-to-day operations, left the company after 2 years. According to Keen (2007), Sanger found “that the democratization of information can quickly degenerate into an intellectually corrosive radical egalitarianism.” In effect, “he learned that fully democratic open-source networks inevitably get corrupted by loonies” (p. 186).

Keen (2007) noted that what Sanger realized to be Wikipedia’s problem “was with its implementation, not its technology (p. 186). Thus, in an attempt to do better, Sanger launched Citizendium in September 2006, which he described as “an experimental new Wiki project that combines public participation with gentle expert guidance” (p. 187).

Citizendium lists its difference as a Web 2.0 Wiki as “credibility and quality not just quantity,” involving “both general public and credentialed experts,” using “our real names, not pseudonyms,” and being “both collegial and congenial.”

Based on this and numerous other Web 2.0 examples, Keen (2007) notes that “This gives me hope that Web 2.0 technology can be used to empower, rather than overshadow, the authority of the expert, that the digital revolution might usher in an age in which the authority of the expert is strengthened” (pp. 188–189).

I have told my clients, my students, and my colleagues for 25 years that the technology is just a tool and what we do with it in application makes all the difference for the human condition.

The reason I have emphasized the Wiki issue is to help the reader consider how easy it is for those who have reason to know to be shouted down by so many who will only

work at the noise and not the content quality. In the new media world, credibility and careful thought presented with care, not just instantly off the top of the head, still matter.

My second example is Weblogs, or blogs, which are really nothing more than a Web site for an individual or individuals. Not being a great fan of blogs, I conferred with a colleague who has studied this digital world phenomenon. Dr. Jay Gillette described a blog as, primarily, an electronic diary or journal of an individual whose thoughts are made public by instant access via the Web. The blogger may be serious or not, 13 or 45, passionate about the topic, well-informed or not, biased or objective, but the blog is the blogger's unrestricted and unvetted thoughts. It is instantly accessible, and credibility is the challenge to the reader's judgment, as it is with any source, just more so in this case. We see bloggers everywhere, and especially in politics in an election year.

So what is the point? If the source of the information is not credible in a time of instant and immediate access, then the information may be worthless or, worse, deceiving and dangerous. If we do not develop a healthy sense of skepticism and check out the credibility of sources of information as citizens of a digital world in which instant access lessens effort, we are subject to the worst of new media, and that lessens our society. The more lazy easy access makes readers, the greater the risk to all of us. My final example involves one of our more trusted roles, the credibility of the editor function in new media in this time of instant access in the digital world.

The simple description of the role of the editor in traditional print or broadcast media was primarily to see that the story submitted fit the time or space available after judging its relative importance for placement in the paper or news show and to be certain that it was accurate and clearly presented to protect the credibility of the organization. It was always a time-challenged role where deadlines, scoops, and audience appeal were critical issues.

What is so different about the role of an editor in new media? First, in a world of instant access where everyone can be published or viewed, the time pressure and the volume increase make careful vetting that much harder, especially in the wide variety of new media outlets. Even traditional media such as the venerable *New York Times* and *CBS News* have lost credibility over the past few years from inaccurate stories from people as credible as the former CBS anchor Dan Rather, who reported stories alleging that the then-President George W. Bush had shirked his military duties as a young man, which proved to be false and happened to be reported in September 2004, just over a month before the next presidential elections. Rather left the anchor job as a part of the fallout.

In new media, the pressure of time, the breadth of sources, and the less concentrated competition for scoops, audience appeal, and glory make this editing role much more difficult. Since new and traditional media compete for audiences, this is true for both.

The very traditional *New York Times*, in May 2003, reported that Jason Blair, a 27-year-old reporter, regularly misled readers with "frequent acts of journalistic fraud" over months of reporting before he was caught.

So what is the point? New media, with all of its pressures and opportunities, has a somewhat weakened capacity to ensure accuracy. The responsibility for ferreting out truth and veracity in our information-rich world falls more heavily than ever on the reader and the viewer, who are bombarded by new media and all its competing sources. If we are too lazy, too rushed, too unconcerned with truth or at least credibility, we become the victims of new media, not the beneficiaries of greater and more immediate access to a world of new and creative information sources. It certainly complicates matters when these sources arrive two or three at a time on our screen.

In case this is becoming a bit depressing, there is a bright side, and once again I will turn to Keen's book for a great example of "managing new media and traditional content without compromising editorial standards or quality" (p. 188), as he puts it when he describes how the British newspaper *The Guardian* has moved part of its business online without compromising "high-quality news gathering and reporting."

One result has been that the online version, *Guardian Unlimited*, has more online U.S. readers than do top U.S. newspapers such as the *Los Angeles Times*. One critical and credible step has been that the division between professional reportage and amateur opinion has been clearly delineated.

Most of us love to see an underdog win, to see the amateur best the pro. It makes for great entertainment, but when it comes to our health, our living, our government, our laws, it really matters to us to know the source of our information. We make decisions, select paths, and base critical judgment on information, whether credible and accurate or not. We have the right and the responsibility to know the kind of source before we decide on the value of the information. We have the obligation of integrity as we become sources of that information in an information-driven economy where global access is now reasonably common.

Our content today is unquestionably the richest in information at any point in history, and access to it is worldwide. While not everyone has fully equal access, you can find an Internet café in almost any city in any country across the globe. The potential for changing lives with access to information is unquestionable. Can anyone question the impact that having access to information by people around the world had on the events of 1989 in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, had on the Chinese government in quelling student riots? Even after shutting down satellite visual access, the fax and Internet communication kept information flowing to the world and greatly affected the level of government reaction and harm to human life.

In a recent conversation with a stimulating friend who is president of Constellation Communication, I was challenged to imagine what might have been if young Anne Frank, a diarist in the Netherlands during the Nazi invasion of her home who hid in a secret set of rooms to survive while the world looked on, had been a blogger with access to the Internet of today. She may have brought worldwide attention more quickly to the atrocities being leveled against Jews by the Nazis. Unless she was extremely clever, she might have also been traced electronically and found more quickly, and therefore her diary might never have been shared. It is always a two-sided sword. Our endless opportunities in a new media world bring with them some serious new responsibilities.

The final issue I will discuss regarding new media within the technology area is interactivity, which some have tried to use as the more important or compelling aspect of defining new media.

Interactivity, as defined by Newton (2006), is “the ability of a person or device to talk to or communicate with another device in real time” (p. 484). So I ask you, if you are playing on a pin ball machine and the ball sticks and you hit the machine and the ball moves without (or with) a “tilt” penalty, is this an interactive experience? If you are working on your Mac and it freezes up and you reboot it and it becomes responsive, is this an interactive experience? If you speak to your SYNC-equipped Ford product and the requested song comes up, is this interactive? If you e-mail me and suggest that I am lost, and my laptop sends back an automatic “drop dead” or “I’m away” message, is that interactive?

They all may be somewhat interactive by definition, but most of us would not find this level of interaction very satisfying. The promise of interactivity, especially as it relates to new media, is a murky area and one that is more myth than deliverable in my experience except, perhaps, in gaming. If you have ever been caught up in a voice response system loop where you absolutely cannot get your question answered or your call shifted to a human, you understand the fundamental myth.

As humans, we are naturally interactive with each other, and we thrive on it, to a point, but in the world of new media, we face some obvious limitations, and often we resort to marketing-driven “overpromise”; since some of you will likely become Web 2.0 and, perhaps, Web 3.0 entrepreneurs as well as users, let me clarify this enticing area in a simple fashion.

Interaction requires access, and it tends in the new media world to expect a 24/7 level of responsiveness. I do not mind when an e-mail arrives at my machine. I begin to be concerned when I receive 100 between 2:00 and 3:00 a.m. on a business trip to Asia and I am expected to instantly respond. Machine interactivity is limited by artificial intelligence levels in terms of available choices in the software and the level of secured access. Online banking and other interactive services amply demonstrate

this, as does gaming. Nevertheless, there are limits that we humans have in a new media world of 24/7 access on a global basis. Businesses often figure this out when resources do not permit quality and quantity of personnel sufficient to meet the promises of marketers of consumer help and ever-present access. Then customers get turned off and depart.

Most of us, no matter how big a tech junkie, have capacity limits and therefore cannot dedicate 24/7 response time. We sometimes actually require a life separate from this hyper-interactivity; we even desire a bit of thinking time.

So what is the point here? Interaction is a human need and desire and a technology option. It is highly desirable, and it comes with limitations. Promise it wisely, and be somewhat skeptical of the level of interactivity promised to you. Understand the limits of the Second Life-type experiences and the addictive potential of Internet dating, gambling, pornography, ad nauseam. Both the human and the machine still have limitations.

Your time is your most valuable resource, and it is often the way new media players are measured for success. Interactivity, like seduction, is often a means to a not always satisfying end. Participate wisely since you can never get your time back, whether you are making the contact or promising to respond to it.

The promise of interactivity reminds me a little of what my colleague Scott Shamp, who directs the University of Georgia’s New Media Institute, calls “the Law of the Hammer. . . . when you have a hammer, everything looks like a nail.”

How New Media Are Developed and Assimilated

Most new media entrants in the time of our “digital” line in the sand definition were evolved from a combination of technological, marketing, and economic factors combining to create a new opportunity.

The Internet offers tantalizing opportunities to reduce distribution costs, to more broadly spread content from local to global access, and to create greater author access in the highly competitive field of print journalism. Who would have printed a diary of an unknown author for local or even regional distribution just a decade ago, and then the blog arrived? Now, some blogs are carried in print newspapers.

Who would have considered evolving a 30-second story for the six o’clock TV news into an expanded print version that would also be carried both in the electronic version of the newspaper and as the expanded subject of the author’s blog? Who would have believed that this would be done by a reporter working in a corporate contract for both print and broadcast interests, historically in competition with each other?

Who would have believed that YouTube would have opened a wide and very popular portal for so many wannabe video and film amateurs? This story, including that of social networks, is just in its early chapters.

Finally, who would have been persistent enough just a decade or so ago to assume that the wireless phone, then just a few years from being a big clumsy device sometimes carried in a good-sized bag, would become a pocket camera, a source of news, entertainment, texting and e-mail, gaming, and sports—and that list is still evolving as formatting issues are addressed.

Every market seeks growth for its opportunities and products. The developers of technologies often create a technology for more limited or differing uses than marketers can help sell to users. Most businesses, and print journalism and electronic news media are businesses, may come kicking and screaming into a new world changed mostly by the Internet, but they understand competition and survival, and they do change to survive.

Over the past 25 or so years, digital technology has been at the heart of the most rapid and broad set of changes, across the globe, that mankind has ever experienced. It has merged evolutions with revolution and curiosity with unprecedented access to information, and it is disturbing and disrupting to numerous cultures, our own included, in the United States. Previously held taboos are now fodder for Internet chats, and if they are out there, a very hungry new media segment sees no reason not to also discuss them, and that competition forces even the traditional media into the same discussion. Values, ethics, judgment, and integrity all sometimes suffer.

All this means opportunity, and it includes risks for every society and profession across the globe, not just this country.

Remember, each new generation comes to the world that it finds at its time. While assimilation of new media today is an issue for executives, investors, practitioners, and mature users, it is not such a big deal for the very young. If they have no sense of history or context, it is just the way it is to them.

The “So What?” Factor

It is essential in my view, to both a free and independent personal life and to an informed citizenry in a free democracy, that each generation realize that its tools of technology and the resulting new media and their consequences fit

into a time that is part of a greater context. That greater context includes both the lessons of history and the opportunities for choosing a better or lesser future that we can create via our choices and our tools.

At a time when rapidly appearing and shifting new media present us with an ocean of information that is both global and local, that is, not unlike our oceans, filled by both pure and polluted sources, that like the oceans ebbs and flows with the tides but is ceaseless in presence, the responsibility of both the users and the creators of our information has never been greater. Creators of information without integrity, sources without responsible editing, vetting, and valued credibility, can do great personal damage as well as harm to society. Open and universal access to such information means that those without the courage to be skeptical of sources, expertise, and veracity can be easily fooled, misled, and even harmed by foolish health or financial advice, bad drugs being promoted, character assassination—and the list is long.

New media will continue to evolve for the good and not so good: Will you have the personal responsibility and the courage to guide its use for you and your time to serve us well? That is the ultimate challenge, not the ability to tick off a list of new-media technologies.

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MEDIA PORTRAYALS AND REPRESENTATIONS

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Communication scholars and researchers have long been interested in the way things are portrayed in media. Much of this concern stems from the pervasiveness of media in our daily lives. Currently there are more than 300 million people living in the 111,384,000 households in the United States. Recent Nielsen estimates suggest nearly every home in the United States has at least one television. The 114 million households with televisions have the sets on for about 7 hours per day, with the average viewer watching TV about 30 hours per week. Television viewing represents about 30% of the average American's leisure time and is the single largest leisure activity for most Americans. In addition, the Internet is becoming as ubiquitous as television.

The average American spends about 2.3 hours per week using the Internet for entertainment purposes.

While an extensive review of media usage patterns is outside the scope of this chapter, it is clear that if other media choices are included, such as time spent listening to the radio, reading newspapers, magazines and books, listening to music, watching movies, and playing video games, Americans spend a great deal of time with media. With so much media stimulation going on, it is no wonder that researchers spend a great deal of time discerning what sights, sounds, and vicarious experiences audience members are likely to experience. While this chapter will focus primarily on television, those interested in studying media portrayals research can examine media content in any of the aforementioned formats or channels.

Concerns about the way things are portrayed in media generally stem from two perspectives that we can call the “mirror of society” view and the “social influence” view. Scholars operating from the mirror of society view examine media content because they believe that such examinations provide insights into the nature of our culture. They believe that media portrayals are a reflection of the way society thinks or feels about an issue. In a simple sense, the mirror of society view suggests that what you see in the media is a reflection of what society thinks or feels.

Hacker (1951) and others have suggested that examination of media portrayals is important because the social status of groups and individuals can be identified through these portrayals. Hacker argues that groups of high social status will appear more frequently than will their low-status counterparts and that the portrayals of high-status groups and individuals will be more positive. Conversely, members of groups believed to be held in low esteem or who are of relatively low social status in society—such as the elderly—appear very infrequently in media. Evidence supporting this perspective is quite strong. Even the most cursory examination of the portrayals literature demonstrates that some groups are systematically underrepresented on television over long periods of time. On television, adults tend to be disproportionately white, young, attractive, wealthy, and male.

Because of its pervasiveness, social critics often focus their attention on media portrayals on television. The ubiquity of television is often offered as an argument for studying

TV content, but portrayals scholars have studied many different channels including comic books, radio, magazines, newspapers, music videos, the Internet, billboards, film, commercials, brochures, record covers, CD cases, and greeting cards.

While the media portrayals literature often focuses on television, literature reviews focusing on a particular portrayal across a variety of different channels can provide further evidence to support the notion that media are a mirror of society. For example, researchers examining portrayals of the elderly appearing in newspaper articles, magazines, prime-time television programs, children's programming and cartoons, magazine advertisements, letters to *Dear Abby*, children's literature, poetry, TV advertisements, magazine cartoons, birthday cards, and even jokes report that older adults are indeed underrepresented, occupy less prominent roles on television, and are often portrayed negatively.

By using media portrayals as a barometer of social status, researchers can make comparisons between the U.S. and other cultures. Research examining portrayals of the elderly in cultures where the elderly are held in higher esteem, such as China, Japan, and Korea, find the elderly represented quite differently. Older adult characters are found more frequently, occupy more prominent roles in the programs, and are portrayed in a more favorable light.

A much more common view adopted by media portrayals researchers is based on the notion that media portrayals affect audience members and their attitudes. From this perspective, scholars and social critics are concerned that inaccurate or stereotypical portrayals have a negative impact on audience attitudes and perceptions of reality. This social influence view is much more commonly employed in the portrayals literature and is predicated on a much wider set of theoretical underpinnings than the relatively simple notion of media mirroring society. In general, the social influence perspective or view suggests that media portrayals affect audience members but does not explain the theoretical mechanism causing these effects. Thus, a number of middle-range theories have been offered up by scholars to provide the specifics about how media portrayals influence individual audience members and ultimately society. The next section of this chapter examines some of those theoretical perspectives and discusses some of the research that has been produced from each perspective.

Theories Commonly Employed in Media Portrayals Research

Perhaps the most widely accepted theoretical explanation for media effects was first proposed by Albert Bandura (1977) to explain how television violence affects children. His theory—social learning theory—is in its most simple form a theory of modeling or imitation. Bandura believed, and much subsequent research has demonstrated, that in

addition to learning through the “trial and error” of their own behavior, children can also learn vicariously through the observation or modeling of others. In fact, Bandura suggests that anything that can be learned from direct experience can also be learned vicariously or by watching someone else—real or imaginary—enact the behavior. He further contends that people can often learn things more efficiently through modeling or imitation than they do through their own trial and error efforts. Research into the social learning process clearly indicates that audience members can and do learn vicariously from media models.

Social learning is far more than the mere imitation of mediated models, however. In addition to being able to watch the model behave, audience members can also learn about the consequences or outcomes of performing the model's behavior. Thus, from a social learning perspective, it is important not only to identify the types and frequencies of particular behaviors occurring but in addition to identify the outcomes or consequences of those behaviors. For example, a researcher interested in portrayals of sexual harassment might also examine the consequences of sexually harassing behaviors. If the harasser is punished or socially ostracized, the audience member may learn not to engage in sexually harassing behavior. If, on the other hand, the mediated portrayal of harassment is accompanied by a laugh track indicating harassment is just a “joke” and sanctioned by other characters, the audience members may learn that harassment is not a big deal. Clearly, that is not the message anyone involved in the writing of a television show intends to send, but it is nonetheless a distinct possibility—particularly within the realm of the situation comedy. The relevance of this theory to the study of media representations is even clearer when you realize the use of multiple models and models of high social status, when the situations or context of the model performing the behavior is realistic, and when audience members find themselves in situations similar to those presented in media.

The effects of social learning are not short-lived and have been shown to last as long as a month. Furthermore, when media portrayals provide detailed accounts of some target behavior and portray the consequences of such actions as positive, even if the positive outcomes are transitory and the deviant action is later punished, people can and do learn the antisocial behavior. The ultimate negative consequences can be easily forgotten or misunderstood by some audience members, and others may attribute the failure to unrelated factors (e.g., bad luck). In fact, Bandura (1986) suggests that audience beliefs about the nature of the behavior and its consequences often outweigh direct experience with the behavior and its consequences. Reliance on the source for information further increases the likelihood of social learning occurring.

Thus, from a social learning theory perspective, media portrayals provide models for audience members to acquire new behaviors and insights into the consequences of those behaviors. Social learning theory, however,

assumes that audience members have the ability to control their behavior and do so based on their understanding of the consequences of the behavior as well as their own moral and experiential worldview. So audience members do not mindlessly imitate what they see on television but rather use what they have learned—that is to say, the behavior-consequence link in their decisions about how they should behave along with what they believe to be right or wrong in their decision to enact or not engage in a particular behavior.

Another very common theoretical rationale employed in media portrayals research is the cultivation hypothesis. First proposed by George Gerbner (1969), the cultivation hypothesis suggests that when people watch television, they are acquiring or cultivating a view of the “real world” that is shaped by the way things are portrayed on television. Unlike a more traditional conception of learning, where the individual audience member does not merely learn the information presented to them via media, Gerbner argues that people do not intentionally or voluntarily adopt attitudes based on the information provided by a single television program, but rather, they acquire or “cultivate” a view of reality that is based on underlying cultural themes that occur throughout television programming. It is the underlying themes that cause audience members to cultivate a view of reality that more closely approximates the portrayal of reality in media. These underlying themes are things such as “The world is a scary place,” which arise because so many programs are predicated on the assumption that bad things happen all the time. Other such themes include “Might makes right,” which is based on the notion that violence is a common solution to problems; “It is ok to be impolite if you are being funny,” which assumes that being funny is valued more than other social norms; and “The elderly are a dying breed,” which suggests that the elderly are not valued.

The most interesting and perhaps the most controversial aspect of cultivation hypothesis is that it is the underlying myths or themes that run throughout media that are of concern to audience members. This is quite different from more traditional learning theories, which suggest that people learn about the world from television in much the same way they learn about anything else. They are exposed to the content, attend to the content, retain or store the content in their heads, and are able to recall the information when they need it. Cultivation effects occur without audience awareness of the process. Cultivation effects are particularly pernicious because the audience need not be aware that they are being exposed to those underlying themes and are consequently less able to defend themselves against the effects of media exposure. A further complicating factor is that it makes very little difference what audience members watch on television since the myths and themes are so pervasive that they run throughout television. In theory, the audience will be influenced just as much by watching the news or educational

programming as they will from watching *Jerry Springer* or *Dog the Bounty Hunter*. Television is seen as a primary vehicle of story in our culture, and television is seen as a primary vehicle for the inculcation of our young. Whether the story is *Hansel and Gretel* or *Live Free or Die Hard*, the moral, myth, or theme is the same.

So the cultivation hypothesis has been widely used as a theoretical rationale for studying media content and is particularly popular as an explanatory mechanism because it allows researchers a great deal of latitude in deciding not only what they will study but also how they will study it. Studying manifest variables such as the age of the actors is one thing, but with cultivation as a rationale, researchers can also study underlying or more interpretative behaviors, such as character values or incidents of being polite.

More recent conceptualizations of the theory have begun including two additional concepts—mainstreaming and resonance. While these are outside the scope of this article, suffice it to say mainstreaming and resonance are concepts used within cultivation to explain exceptions to the general cultivation rule, which is “The more you watch, the more likely you are to view the world as it is portrayed on television”—regardless of other factors such as education and personal experience. Resonance occurs when viewers have direct experience in addition to the symbolic experience they gain through media exposure. People who have been mugged and watch a lot of television tend to think that the world is an even more dangerous place than do those individuals who watch a lot of television but have never been the victims of violence. Mainstreaming refers to those instances when heavy viewers from different backgrounds view the world similarly—even when their backgrounds suggest that they should not. For example, audience members with a high socioeconomic status (SES) should view the world as being less dangerous than would audience members from a lower SES. This is because people from a low-SES background are more likely to have personally witnessed or experienced violence. Thus, mainstreaming and resonance are used by scholars conducting cultivation research to explain those anomalies that occur among respondents who are either more different than they should be or less different than they should be, based on their experiences.

While social learning theory and the cultivation hypothesis are most commonly employed, a variety of other theories can be and have been employed by media portrayals researchers. Most often, researchers employing other theories focus less on media portrayals and more on the impact of those portrayals on audience members. Agenda-setting research also places an emphasis on media portrayals but generally focuses on the representation of issues by media more than character demography or behavior. Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) first proposed their theory of agenda setting in 1972 in an article examining the impact of media on the 1968 presidential campaign. They suggest that media do

not so much affect audience behavior or even attitudes toward a particular topic. But media are most effective, according to McCombs and Shaw, at influencing the importance or salience of issues in the minds of audience members based on the prominence the issue receives in media content. In short, media can raise audience awareness levels about an issue by frequently discussing an issue. Thus, agenda-setting research often entails analyzing the content of some media channel (e.g., the newspaper) to determine which issues have been discussed, how many column inches were devoted to the issue, and where the stories were located within the newspaper (e.g., front page and above the fold). Once the prominence of the issues has been identified, the researchers typically survey audience members to find out how important they think those issues are. Often this is done by simply asking the respondents to rank the issues in importance. Agenda-setting effects are determined by finding a correlation between the prominence of the issue in media content (e.g., the number of times the issue was written about) and the importance audience members place on the issue (e.g., the rank they assign to the issue). In short, when an issue receives a great deal of attention, audience members should rate that issue as being more important than other issues that have received less attention.

Researchers initially focused on the first level of agenda setting. This first level corresponds to the preceding description of agenda setting. Such researchers simply identified an issue—say gun control—and then determined the prominence of that issue in media content. More recently, researchers have begun examining what is often described as the second level of agenda setting. While scholars are not in 100% agreement on the definition of the second level of agenda setting, it is reasonably safe to say that researchers examining the second level go beyond the frequency of issue portrayals in media to include the characteristics or attributes related to the issue presented by media. So in the case of the issue of “gun control,” portrayals can be framed as constitutional arguments (e.g., “The Constitution guarantees the right to bear arms”), self-defense arguments (e.g., “The police don’t come until the crime has been committed, so you must protect your own family”), or firearms-as-the-devil’s-tool arguments (e.g., “The widespread availability of guns in the United States contributes to or causes crime”). How the argument or issue is framed, as well as the characteristics of the issue that receive attention by media, is included in the analysis of media content. In terms of content analytic investigations, this means that the category systems are more complex and do not just include measures of issue portrayal frequency but also categorize issue portrayals by the type of depiction. This extension of the theory provides researchers a more complex and more specific measure of media portrayals. Generally, the more specifically two variables are measured, the higher the degree of correspondence you will find—assuming that a relationship actually exists between the two variables.

One criticism that has been levied against agenda-setting research has been the lack of a theoretical mechanism to explain why the prominence of an issue is related to audience perceptions of issue importance or salience. This shortcoming appears to have been remedied by Iyengar and Kinder (1987), who suggested that the mechanism underlying agenda setting may be the same mechanism that is used in cognitive psychology to explain “priming effects.” The simplest way to understand priming is to think of the mind as a device that needs exercise to be effective. When an individual gains information, that information is stored in an area of related information so it can be found or recalled in the future. When information in one storage area is activated or employed, the other information in that area is also exercised or activated. Consequently, when issues and their attributes are framed in a particular way, all that information is stored together within the mind and is recalled together on subsequent recollection efforts. Thus, when the National Rifle Association (NRA) pairs the issue of gun control with family safety and frames the issue in the Second Amendment of the Constitution, all those issues and related issues are stored together and are all activated when any part of that issue is relevant. Priming goes further, suggesting that not only are the issues stored together, but with exercise or activation, those beliefs are more easily recalled than other, less often considered beliefs.

It is important to note that agenda setting has traditionally focused on the prominence of issues in media content and the corresponding levels of salience or importance audience members place on that issue. Priming is a cognitive theory that focuses on how information is organized, stored, and retrieved within the brain. Thus, the correlations observed between media portrayal frequency and audience perceptions of salience are actually attributable to the way information is stored within the brain. This extension certainly does not reduce the value of the theory; rather, the addition of priming as an explanatory mechanism for agenda setting helps us better understand why issue prominence in media influences audience estimates of issue salience. It also helps explain why issue prominence does not affect all audience members in the same way. Some audience members have different types of information stored within that cognitive schema, and consequently, mentions of issues by media activate different information based on their idiosyncratic methods of storage.

While agenda setting, cognitive priming, and issue framing are not the same phenomenon, they often occur together. Examining not only the issue of prominence (agenda setting) but in addition the characteristics of the issue employed in the message (framing) and the other issues organized within the cognitive structures of the audience members (priming) provides a strong theoretical rationale for the studying of media content and portrayals.

Bradley Greenberg (1988b) proposed the “drench hypothesis” as an explanatory vehicle for the effects of media portrayals, though this is far less commonly employed as a

theoretical rationale for studying media content or portrayals. Greenberg's argument is clear and persuasive. In the drench hypothesis, Greenberg suggests that a single event can be far more influential or life changing than a series of smaller events. Events such as the shootings at Columbine High School, the Kennedy assassinations, or the space shuttle disasters (*Challenger* and *Columbia*) can have a much more pronounced effect on audiences than the stalagmitelike effects that occur over time with repeated exposures to much smaller and less meaningful events such as shootings by fictional characters on prime-time programming.

Greenberg is suggesting that highly memorable and impression-leaving events—real or fictional—can be more influential than repeated exposure to the small, less-memorable portrayals that occur on television. Seeing a single automobile accident—such as the death of Princess Diana—can be much more influential than the cumulative effects of a season full of NASCAR accidents or a lifetime of chase scenes from Hollywood. Proponents of the drench hypothesis recognize that, in terms of media portrayals, sometimes less can be more.

Greenberg also recognized that the argument underlying the cultivation hypothesis is weakened by the fact that audience members are still affected differentially by media portrayals. Some heavy viewers of violence, for example, view the world quite differently from other heavy viewers. This suggests that audience responses to portrayals differ, to some degree, by audience member. Thus, any theory focusing on the impact of the influence of media portrayals must take into consideration that audience members are affected differentially by the same message or series of messages. If audience members are affected differentially, then it is a logical necessity to recognize that different portrayals have different levels of influence on audience members.

While only a few studies have attempted to empirically test the drench hypothesis, the empirical evidence supporting the position is promising (see Bahk, 2001; Reep & Dambrot, 1989). There is, of course, potential for tautological reasoning when using the drench hypothesis. Portrayals that are highly memorable or have a high impact influence audience members more than low-impact portrayals do. Of course, the problem stems from the fact that if drench effects are observed, then the assumption is that the portrayals were high impact. If drench effects are not observed, however, it is not an indictment of the theory but rather evidence that the image was not impactful enough. This potential does not negate the utility of the theory but rather reminds us to scrutinize carefully the assumptions of the theories before we employ them.

What is very important here is the recognition that media portrayals can and undoubtedly do affect audience members differentially and that single events or portrayals can be just as important as or more important than the cumulative effects of media portrayals. This is not to say that the cumulative effects of media portrayals are unimportant. Rather, it is to suggest that the potential for media

effects is a complex and multifaceted issue. The effects of portrayals may influence audience members cumulatively as well as from a single exposure. Similarly, audience members may also go relatively uninfluenced by media portrayals as well.

It is also important to note that while all of the theories discussed here examine the same issue—media portrayals—they are all quite different. Agenda setting focuses on how issue prominence in media content influences audience perceptions of issue salience. Priming theory focuses on how information is stored inside the head of viewers and accessibility. Accessibility here means that people are able to recall information because they have been primed or provided the opportunity to exercise that recall through exposure to media portrayals. Cultivation suggests that media portrayals influence audience members as a cumulative effect. Furthermore, cultivation theory suggests that it is not the information in the portrayals per se causing the audience to cultivate a particular worldview. Rather, cultivation suggests that the themes that run throughout media content are the culprit and not the portrayal itself. This nuance is often lost in discussions of portrayals. Audience members do not learn that elderly people are not highly valued in our culture from the content within media depictions of older adults. Rather, the audience members cultivate a negative perception of the elderly because they are underrepresented or depicted in a negative or stereotypical fashion. Those perceptions come from shows that contain older adults as well as shows that do not. By favoring younger adults on programs, the show is helping audience members to cultivate the perception that older adults are not so important. Finally, social learning theory suggests that audience members can and do learn.

Research Methods and Portrayals Research

Communication scholars employ a variety of different research methods in their quest to understand media portrayals, but the vast majority of the studies employ content analysis. Perhaps the most important scholar writing about content analysis was Ole Holsti. In his classic treatise on the subject, Holsti (1969) defines content analysis as “any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (p. 14). Holsti was one of the first scholars to recognize that the technique could be used with text as well as any other durable data including photographs, oral communication, Web sites, brochures, or television programs.

Content analysis is a research technique that takes samples of media content (e.g., a television program, newspaper article, Web site) and reduces the content into more manageable categories. For example, a scholar looking at media portrayals of race would watch the television program and every time a character appears on the screen would classify that character by their race. Thus, at the end

of the study, the researcher would be able to make claims about the racial composition of television such as “12.5% of the characters on television were black.” In this way, researchers can examine how closely the characteristics of television mirror the characteristics of reality. For example, Robinson and Skill examined television portrayals of the elderly and found that only about 2.5% of the prime-time television viewers were 65 years of age or older. Obviously, the key to meaningful content analytic studies includes the development of content categories (such as the racial cohorts on television or the types and frequency of sexual harassment behaviors on television). In addition, it is imperative that anyone trained as a coder can reproduce the same or nearly the same results from the same data. This reproducibility of results is called reliability in the realm of research methods and is critical to the researcher employing content analysis as a research tool.

Of course, content analysis need not focus exclusively on such “obvious” categories of interest. In fact, one common criticism of content analytic research is that too often content analytic schemes focus on easily observable phenomena instead of the most important images. It is relatively easy to count the number of door knobs that appear during the course of a television program, but it is not particularly interesting or useful. It is much harder, for example, to identify all the acts of altruism that occur within a television program. Acts of altruism are a much more complex phenomenon and much more difficult to identify or code. Someone telling a “little white lie” so that someone else is not embarrassed could be coded as an act of dishonesty, or an act of kindness to save the face of the other interactant can be an act of kindness in one coding scheme. Similarly, researchers can not only examine the portrayals of some behaviors but also content analyze the consequences of those behaviors, thereby providing a more complex and potentially more useful coding system.

Critical to content analysis are the techniques employed by the researcher in developing the sample. Anyone content analyzing the front pages of newspapers during the month of September in 2001 would undoubtedly find that nearly every story focused on the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Anyone looking to see how often issues such as education, the war on drugs, or the economy occur would conclude that there is little or no interest in those issues, based on their frequency of occurrence in the newspaper. So it is critical to use sufficiently large samples of media content and to draw those samples randomly if at all possible. Much like survey methods, however, there are of course times when such efforts are not possible or even desirable. The goals of the researcher should guide the sampling techniques employed by that same researcher.

Of course, content analysis is not the only method employed by researchers examining media portrayals. For example, researchers employing the cultivation hypothesis as the theoretical rationale for their study describe the content analysis component of their investigation as “cultivation

analysis.” Once they have documented the content on television relevant to their study—either through their own content analysis or through previous studies that have analyzed media content—they may begin the second phase, which is often called “cultural indicators.”

Cultural indicators research typically involves conducting a survey of audience members to determine how much media they consume and their knowledge about and/or their attitudes toward an issue. For example, cultural indicators researchers ask respondents to estimate the proportion of the population that are police officers (e.g., 1 in 10, or 1 in 100, or 1 in 1,000) and generally find that heavy viewers believe there are more police officers than do light viewers. Thus, cultural indicators research is really survey research that attempts to find out if audience member perceptions of reality are indeed based on media portrayals.

The other theoretical perspective discussed earlier may employ such survey methods as well. Researchers employing social learning or priming theory as their theoretical rationale for the study are somewhat more likely to employ experimental or quasi-experimental designs. Nevertheless, most research media portrayals use content analysis to determine what content the audience is consuming and then employ survey techniques to examine the attitudes and beliefs of audience members.

Media Portrayals Research

It would behoove anyone interested in studying the media portrayals literature to read two books—*Life on Television* (Greenberg, 1988a) and *Life on Daytime Television: Tuning in American Serial Drama* (Cassata & Skill, 1983). Both books are excellent examples of scholarship, provide a historical context for current study of media portrayals, and address many of the theoretical, methodological, and coding issues that face media content researchers. The work by Gerbner and his colleagues in the area of cultivation is also well worth reading for the same reasons. Gerbner’s work (1969) is also useful because it will help students see how a theory and a method develop over time and how the theory guides researchers in their media content investigations.

If, however, a student were to be allowed only one reading on the topic of media portrayals, DeFleur’s (1964) article “Occupational Roles as Portrayed on Television” would be the definitive article to read. It is long enough and detailed enough to provide a wonderful introduction to the area. It is also an example of rigorous research that contains descriptions of the portrayals that are thick enough or sophisticated enough to give insight into the occupations and explains why such portrayals are potentially influential to children. Finally, it helps researchers see how decisions about issues such as sampling are actually made—DeFleur discusses why particular shows or types of shows were omitted from the analysis and how decisions about show inclusion were made. When two

shows that were intended to be included in the analysis occurred at the same time, DeFleur used the flip of a coin to determine which show would be coded and which show would be excluded. It is important to recall that DeFleur was content analyzing the 250 half-hour programs without the benefit of a VCR and is quite careful to describe the decisions about coding and sampling that were made a priori and on the fly.

More recently, the National Television Violence Study (NTVS) was published and represents a spectacular example of content analysis as well as studies investigating the impact of those portrayals on audiences. This multivolume set of books is literally the last word on television portrayals of violence. The coding details and sampling techniques and statistical decisions are so carefully explained and well thought out that the books literally represent a graduate course in media portrayals research.

The NTVS constitutes the largest and most systematic content analysis of television programming ever conducted and reported in a single investigation. Researchers examined more than 10,000 hours of TV content gathered between 1994 and 1997 that were randomly selected from 23 channels aired between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. Rather than simply coding acts of violence, NTVS researchers coded nine contextual features that may increase or decrease the risk of harmful effects, including the attractiveness of the perpetrator and victim, types of weapons, realism of the portrayals, whether or not the violence was justified or not, how graphic the portrayals were, and the outcomes of the violence.

Just more than 60% of the programs analyzed contained some violence, and the levels of violence were relatively stable over the 3-year period. Just under 40% of the violence was perpetrated by the “good guys,” and 33% of the “bad guys” who engaged in violent behaviors were not punished. It is interesting to note that in more than 70% of the scenes containing violence, aggressors were not criticized by the other characters, did not appear to feel any remorse for their actions, and were not punished at the time. Data from the 1996–1997 television season suggests that children watching 2 hours of cartoons a day will view approximately 10,000 violent incidents in a year. Typically, these acts of violence are sanitized and/or trivialized and do not depict the long-term consequences of the violence. The typical violent program contained at least six acts of violence per hour, and more than 40% of the violent scenes were either couched in a humorous context or contained an element of humor. These acts of violence spill over into programming oriented to children. In fact, children watching 2 hours of cartoons a day will see somewhere in the area of 10,000 violent incidents in a calendar year.

Even though most topics have not been as well studied as violence, this body of literature is growing at an astonishing rate. Even a cursory review of the journals illustrates that this is a very popular area of study and one that is no longer strictly within the domain of media scholars.

Studies discussing how illness and health care professionals are portrayed appear in medical journals just as studies examining portrayals of the elderly appear within the social gerontology literature. These studies examining portrayals of institutions, professions, and individuals are generally offered as explanations for audience attitudes and stereotypes. While a detailed review would be far too long to include here, a more general overview will provide an insight into the kind of work currently being done and an opportunity to discuss some of the common or stable findings within the media portrayals literature.

The demography of television has always been a popular topic of study. Typically, these studies make comparisons between media portrayals and reality and often use census data for such comparisons. For example, Robinson and Skill (1995) report that research has consistently shown that the elderly are underrepresented on television (and in nearly every other media channel ever examined). Most studies find that elderly characters represent fewer than 3% of the characters on prime-time television, and in the United States more than 12% of the population is 65 years of age or older, and they tend to be relegated to minor roles. Elderly characters also tend to be portrayed in a negative or stereotypical light. Characters under the age of 18 also tend to be underrepresented on television, and characters between the ages of 25 and 45 tend to be overrepresented. This pattern exists on Saturday morning programming as well as prime-time programming.

Historically, portrayals research has shown that even though females represent 51% of the U.S. population, female characters have been underrepresented throughout the history of television. While estimates vary, most studies conducted before the 1990s indicated that females were outnumbered by males at a rate of 2 to 1, although this disparity appears to be decreasing. More recent estimates (see Glascock, 2001) of female characters on prime time suggest that about 63% of the characters on TV are male and only about 40% of all central or main characters are female. With well over 70% of the producers, directors, writers, creators, and executive directors being male, it is clear that this trend is just as true behind the camera as it is in front of the camera.

In addition to being underrepresented, female characters are more likely to be identified by their marital status than are male characters and less likely to be identified by their profession or occupation. Similarly, female characters are typically younger and occupy less prestigious and lower-paying jobs than do their male counterparts. While the percentage of female characters has improved significantly since the 1970s, they are portrayed in a different and often less positive light than are male characters.

Ethnic groups and minorities have also historically been underrepresented on television. Latino, Asian, American Indian, and almost all other groups appear on television very infrequently. They tend to be invisible, and when they do appear, they are cast in small and noncentral roles. They

are also likely to be cast in stereotypical or negative roles when they do appear. Television portrayals of blacks have increased fairly dramatically since the beginnings of television. Recent census data suggest that approximately 12.1% of the U.S. population is black, and during the years 1990 to 1995, about 14% of all prime-time characters were black.

A recent estimate of the 2001 prime-time season (Gluscock, 2001) suggests that those trends have remained relatively stable. Gluscock reports that 81.1% of all prime-time characters were white, 13.9% were black, 3.0% were Hispanic, 1.5% were Asian, and 0.5% were Native American. The demography of main or central characters changes these percentages slightly. Gluscock reports that 82.2% of all main characters were white, 13.1% were black, 3.3% were Hispanic, 0.7% were Asian, and 0.2% were Native American. The most recent census data suggest that the demographic profile of the United States looks slightly different from that of television. In the 1997 census, 72.7% of all U.S. residents were white, 12.1% black, 10.9% Hispanic, 3.6% Asian, and 0.7% Native American. Keep in mind that small fluctuations can be a function of sampling as well as the popularity of a particular type of show and do not necessarily indicate a cultural trend.

Other topics have, of course, received varying levels of attention from media portrayals researchers. A quick scan of the literature produced the following list of topics that have been addressed within the past few years:

- Demography of television
 1. Age
 2. Gender
 3. Race
 4. Socioeconomic status
 5. Occupations and professions
 6. Sexual orientation
- Health on television
 1. Illness
 2. Mental health
 3. Handicaps
 4. Suicide
 5. Diet
 6. Suicide
 7. Eating disorders and obesity
 8. Exercise
 9. Alcohol consumption
 10. Drug use
- Families and relationships on television
 1. Dating and romance
 2. Marriage
 3. Families
 4. Divorce

5. Relationships
6. Friendships
7. Grandparents
8. Stepparents
9. Self-disclosure

- Institutions on television
 1. Religion and religious behavior
 2. Politics and political candidates
 3. Science and scientific phenomena and skepticism
 4. Legal system and criminal justice system, including violence, crime, terrorism, hate crimes, gangs, and firearms portrayals
 5. Health care system and health care professionals
 6. The press and the media
 7. Educational system

This list is not meant to be exhaustive by any means and does not come close to identifying the variety of studies that would be subsumed under each topic. In most cases, a study that examines a particular portrayal also gathers data on a number of other variables in the process. Studies looking at violence also report gender and race and may report other variables such as presence and types of weapons, how graphic the violence is, or whether or not the violence was justified. This list is just an indication of some media portrayals that have been examined recently to give you an idea of what kind of work is being done within this area. Much of the work that has been done has focused on specific behaviors (e.g., sexual behaviors and violence), but other work has focused on topics such as portrayals of altruism or depictions of agencies. The ability to create or discover a way of identifying the portrayals you are interested in is really the only limitation to studying media portrayals.

Even though a great number of studies have examined media portrayals and representations, there is still a great deal of work that needs to be done. Certainly, media portrayals can and have changed over time, so there is a continuing need to maintain accurate records about media content. Studies that compare portrayals from different countries are becoming more and more common. Similarly, studies that examine portrayals in media other than television are becoming more popular again. Future research needs to examine portrayals across multiple media channels and cultures to determine how these portrayals affect audience members. In addition, future research needs to examine the differences in media representations between central characters and peripheral characters more closely. Central characters may be more important as potential sources for social learning, but the characteristics and behavior of peripheral characters may shed more light on attitudes held by audience members. Finally, the strengthening of the theoretical rationale for these media content studies will benefit both the content analysts and the social critics and help scholars better

understand the relationship between media and society. Anyone studying media portrayals would benefit greatly from considering these programs as narratives. Such an examination may illuminate the nature of what makes a good story as well as the potential for those portrayals to affect audience members.

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MEDIA USES AND GRATIFICATIONS

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From one end of the globe to the other, people in all walks of life use media—in their homes, at their daily labors, and as they move by foot or vehicle from place to place. Every one of these uses involves an audience member making a conscious or unconscious, habitual or new choice among an increasing explosion of media options: traditional choices of radio, TV, and newspapers, magazines, and books and newer options such as Internet sites, video games, DVDs, and MP3 players. In addition, each user is faced with ever-increasing avenues for getting access to their media choices. Users, thus, make “choices” of what to seek and how. In the tradition of media studies known as “uses and gratifications,” the fundamental questions have been the following: Why do people make particular media choices? What needs are they filling by doing so? What impacts do their choices have on them? Under what conditions are some choices made and not others?

One person, coming home from a stressful day, may turn to an often-viewed TV drama, not so much for its content but because one of the actors is a familiar favorite, someone welcomed as a “friend.” Another may be suspecting that she has some kind of digestive disorder and goes online to find health-oriented Internet sites. Another is becoming increasingly upset about the state of world events and turns to his favorite politically oriented news show for confirmation of his worldview. A crafts fanatic turns to a do-it-yourself TV channel; a lonesome college student seeks refuge in a guilty pleasure, listening to rap music, while none of her usually critical family are home. Accounting for

these kinds of audience choices is the essential focus of the uses-and-gratifications approach.

Historical Origins: From Media Effects on Audiences to Audience Effects on Media

A number of intersecting events led scholars both in the social sciences and humanities to become interested in the relationships between media, audiences, and society. One was the rise of the mass media themselves, with the increasing presence in people’s lives resulting from the rapid diffusion, in turn, of newspapers, film, radio, and television. With each new technology, media use rose exponentially. A second major impact was World War II—the first war in which mass media were deliberately used on a massive scale to reach and in many cases to persuade citizens. Post-war documentation of the seemingly enormous impacts of media campaigns in Nazi Germany led social scientists in the United States to initiate research programs focused on media effects.

These interests in “audience research” took on a number of forms, each of them interrelated to each other. One interest in audiences resulted directly from becoming aware of the Nazi use of media. On the basis of accounts, it was expected that media could have immense direct “hypodermic”-like effects on audiences, where everyone would be affected the same way. This assumption led some social scientists and policymakers to a concern for the possible negative effects of media and to a host of the now

familiar questions on media effects. One common example is how violence portrayals by media affect audiences. A second early interest in audiences was essentially the opposite of a concern for whether media have negative impacts. Rather, the question became “How can media be used to sway audiences to societally approved impacts?” One familiar example is the question of how to use media to persuade citizens to stop smoking.

A third interest in audiences was also driven by a focus on media effects. As soon as media began to proliferate, media institutions needed to account for themselves—to their investors, advertisers, and society. This need led them initially to an interest in audience counts—how many people were using this or that channel or attending to this or that program. Soon, this interest evolved to asking what persons used what media, with initial attentions focused on such questions as whether more educated citizens were more likely to use newspapers or newly immigrated citizens less likely.

Each of these three early interests in audiences dominated media research in the 1940s through the 1960s. Each continues to be a major part of the media studies agenda today. Each is, at root, an interest in media effects on audiences. Yet, despite early anticipations of strong and direct effects, the quest to identify effects has been far more difficult and elusive than expected. It became a byword to suggest that audiences were difficult and expensive to reach, even “obstinate” (Bauer, 1964). “Effects” research moved from the early emphasis on finding direct effects to identifying limited or indirect effects. To discern indirect effects, researchers had to identify other factors that stood between media use and media impact. Increasingly, for example, it was proposed that a host of “selectivity” processes stood between media and its effects, usually summarized as selective attention, perception, and recall. A plethora of alternative theories of what mediates media effects began to be explored, including explorations of how characteristics of spokespersons (e.g., source credibility), messages (e.g., one-sided vs. two-sided presentations), channels (e.g., radio or television), receivers (e.g., audience member age), and contexts of media exposure (e.g., home or car) stood between media use and media effect.

This emphasis on understanding the conditions under which media affect audiences continues today. There is a general consensus that in fact media can affect audiences, sometimes in directly observable ways, but most often indirectly, and sometimes in hidden, concealed ways. The journey from the general acceptance in the 1960s, when at best media were seen as having only limited effects, to the current more complex understandings has been a long one. Various research traditions have pursued different lines of inquiry into these questions, often in relative isolation from each other. Thus, for example, media researchers in the “critical-cultural tradition” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1972) have focused more on how media

negatively affect audiences in concealed ways, while those in the “quantitative empirical” tradition have focused more often on how media may be used to achieve societal-mandated ends such as a citizenry more involved in political life or more attentive to health concerns. Alternatively, “audience reception” (Hall, 1973; Morley, 1992) and “sense-making” (Dervin & Foreman-Wernet, 2003) studies have focused more on how audiences use media to make sense of their lives within the context of sometimes facilitating and sometimes hindering societal conditions. In contrast, uses-and-gratifications researchers have focused more on goal-oriented needs fulfillment.

These different ways of looking at media audiences are often called research traditions. Another name for them is *discourse communities*. This term is useful because it reminds us that research traditions differ not only in how they focus on audiences and their relationships to media but also in their assumptions and vocabularies that become like private languages. The very way these communities talk about media is influenced by and influences how they understand media. This is one reason why many media audience studies seem so contradictory.

Our focus in this chapter is specifically on the uses-and-gratifications tradition, providing a picture of the dominant emphases and accomplishments of that tradition as it began to slowly emerge in the late 1950s and stands today. It is important to note that in the very earliest years of media studies in the 1940s, there was an interest in how people use media to function in their lives, which arose almost simultaneously with the emergence of the emphasis on how media affect people. For example, in work that preceded any of the now formalized attentions to audiences, it was found that audience members were filling needs by listening to radio quiz shows and soap operas, and these provided more than mere diversion or entertainment. For some audience members, media provided education and emotional release as well. Likewise, researchers in these early years found that newspapers were being used not just for information but also as tools for daily living, respite, social prestige, and social contact. This early emphasis on audience motivations was, however, eclipsed by the massive focus on media effects that resulted from widespread public concern for preventing negative and promoting positive media impacts.

Despite marked differences in the various early attentions to media effects, all efforts to study media effects ended up challenged in one way or another by the “obstinate” audience. It came to be generally understood that audience members were using media for specific functions in their lives in ways that seemed to defy researcher attempts to identify media impacts. It was this challenge from recalcitrant audiences that served as an impetus for the turn toward understanding audiences in audience-oriented ways—to understanding why audience members use media and what they use it for.

Media researchers in various traditions took this turn toward audience-oriented studies of audiences almost simultaneously, although in very different ways. Thus, for example, marketing research began to focus more on audience motivations and lifestyle contexts rather than merely audience counts. Critical-cultural studies, formerly focused primarily on identifying biases and hidden ideologies in media messages, began to have a more intensive focus on how audiences make sense of media messages, attempting to unravel why it is that sometimes audiences passively accept media messages and sometimes they argue and negotiate with them. Using primarily qualitative approaches, this turn became known as *audience reception analysis*. The tradition that became known by the name *uses and gratifications* grew out of and remains anchored today in quantitative social science studies. This tradition was the earliest vigorous and systematic turn to audience-oriented studies of media-audience connection.

The Foundational Assumptions of the Uses-and-Gratifications Approach

The most fundamental conception of media audience uses and gratifications came from Elihu Katz (1959), who penned the term *uses-and-gratifications approach* in 1959. A media research pioneer and one of the many scholars who attempted to find elusive media impacts, in 1959 Katz called for research to no longer focus solely on “what media do to people” but instead to concern itself with “what people do with . . . media.”

The turn toward audiences in this way was in actuality one of the first turns toward looking at media-audience relationship as a communication relationship rather than merely a transmission relationship. The focus in the various approaches to looking at effects assumed that media were transmitting particular meanings in their messages and that audiences were passive recipients of these messages, for good or for bad. In contrast, the uses-and-gratifications turn toward audiences was opening the door to a larger question. Media institutions were no longer seen as the sole source of determining the meanings of media messages. Rather, audiences were proposed as having independent roles. In the media effects paradigm, it was assumed that there was only one way—the producer’s way—of making sense of a movie or hearing a song or understanding a story. Furthermore, it was assumed that there was only one way media could be used—in the way media producers predicted it would be used. In contrast, the foundational assumption of the uses-and-gratifications approach was that audience members have some degree of independent control over what they get out of media and how they use what they get.

While Katz laid down the call for attention to how audiences use media in the late 1950s, the approach known today as the uses-and-gratifications approach did not begin to emerge formally until the 1970s, when McQuail,

Blumler, and Brown (1972) began to put people’s use of media under their microscopes. It was Blumler and Katz who began to formalize the emergence of the approach in 1974.

Since these earliest formulations and continuing till today, the many researchers working in the uses-and-gratifications tradition have adhered to a central set of core assumptions. These have been discussed in a wide variety of ways but can be summarized as involving five essential propositions: (1) audiences are actively selecting from different media; (2) audience media selection is goal directed; (3) the media and other potential sources compete for audience attention; (4) personal, social, and contextual worlds mediate audience activity; and (5) the uses people make of media and the effects media have on people are interconnected. Each of these assumptions is reviewed below.

Audiences are actively selecting from different media. In the uses-and-gratifications tradition, it is assumed that audience members are active in their selections and uses of different media. The terms used to describe the different media that audiences are selecting can be very confusing because they vary across authors and across time. For example, what is meant by channel in one line of work may be described as technology or medium in another. Across many studies, the possibilities have included channels, mediums, technologies, genres, texts, and content. Channels, mediums, and technologies are often used interchangeably and refer to distinctions such as television, film, radio, newspapers, book, cell phones, the Internet, or sometimes a specific television station, cable network, or magazine. Genre is an often overlapping term but usually refers to classes of selections within a medium, such as soap operas, video games, or television news. Texts usually refer to specific content packages, such as a particular movie, game, or news article.

The body of work known under the label *uses and gratifications* has assumed that audiences actively select their uses of media from the array of possibilities available in society. It is assumed that what drives this media use reflects each person’s conscious or unconscious consideration of the usefulness of media to his or her life. Seeing audiences as active in this way has led uses-and-gratifications researchers to have debates with media effects researchers, who have tended to characterize audience members as passive recipients for whatever comes their way. The active audience characterization implies that people are more impervious to influence than media effects theories have allowed. Also, being active in general, people are also assumed to be able to report what media choices they have made and why.

Across the now almost 50 years of uses-and-gratification studies, it is fair to say that the most used “predictor” of audience gratifications has been the particular medium used. Study after study has explored the uses of this medium or that, this genre or that, this particular content or that, and then looked at the extent of and reasons for audience uses.

There have been studies, for example, of the gratifications obtained from traditional categories such as quiz shows, soap operas, and TV talk shows, and more recently the newer types such as video games, cell phone use, and MP3 player use. Usually, these studies focus on one media type at a time. Thus, for example, one sees many recent studies of audience uses of cell phones.

When multiple media types have been compared, the results show a commonsensical pattern to the findings. As examples, newspapers more often gratify needs for information, whereas TV does so more often for entertainment and pleasure and cell phones for connecting to friends and relatives. In saying this, however, it is important to emphasize that all studies show a great deal of variety in how audience members use specific media. Even for quite specific genre types, for example, quiz shows, the array of gratifications is diverse, indicating that individual audience members use media in different ways.

Audience media selection is goal directed. People are assumed to have specific reasons for selecting the media that they do. The fundamental idea is that audience members turn to media because they expect media to gratify specific needs. For example, a person alone in her apartment may feel the need for companionship and may turn on the television to engage in imagined interaction with characters on some show. While this link between the need and the expectation of a gratification is not considered the only predictor for media use, in the uses-and-gratifications approach, it is considered an important contributor once other factors such as access to media are taken into account. Furthermore, this link between need and expected gratification is central to the basic idea of uses and gratifications. Indeed, this link is the source of the approach's very name.

One of the primary goals in some 50 years of research has been to develop a catalog of possible media gratifications. Two basic approaches have been used. One is to simply ask members of a particular audience their reasons for media use, allowing them to answer in their own words. The second has been to ask audience members to indicate the extent to which a roster of gratifications applied to them and their media engagements. Researchers then developed from these responses, using various content analytic and statistical tools, categories of potential gratifications. With both approaches, the aim has been to develop typologies, or categorical lists, of underlying gratifications.

Because the studies that have pursued the goal of developing lists of possible media gratifications have differed widely in their attentions, no agreed-on list of gratifications has yet been developed that can be applied to all forms and instances of media use. Studies differ in ways almost too numerous to account for—what subgroups of audiences are studied, for what media, in what contexts. For example, a study focusing on children and television produces a somewhat different list of gratifications from one focusing on general-population audience uses of

public television or on teenage users of video games. Furthermore, as new media have proliferated and geographical locations of media use have multiplied, studies attending to these “new” media in “new” locations have added new gratifications to the roster or variations on older ones.

Despite all this often overwhelming diversity in media gratifications, there are some core coherencies. A basic set of four categories of gratifications permeate almost all the lists, albeit under different names and described in different ways. This basic four appeared, for example, in a 1972 study by McQuail, Blumler, and Brown under the labels *diversion*, *personal relationships*, *personal identity*, and *surveillance*. Some 15 years later, in his review of numerous studies, McQuail (1987) produced a summary of gratifications organized into essentially the same four categories but now with slightly different labels—entertainment, integration, and social interaction; personal identity; and information. McQuail also added a roster of illustrative subcategories. This roster of common reasons for media use serves as a useful illustration of the kinds of typologies that have been developed and still are being developed. It is shown in Table 56.1.

Media and other potential sources compete for audience attention. The third essential proposition that is foundational to the uses-and-gratifications approach is that audiences can gratify their needs in a variety of ways using both media and nonmedia sources such as family and friends. These alternative sources are in competition with each other as potential sources of audience need gratifications. This phenomenon is referred to by uses-and-gratifications researchers as the “functional alternatives” proposition (Rosengren & Windahl, 1972). Basically, it says that we exist in a world where there are a number of ways in which our needs for things such as companionship and information can be fulfilled. Media are simply a portion of the possible sources we turn to for gratifications.

The proposition that media compete for audience attention has, of course, been a long-term understanding. The idea that audiences have alternative media to turn to in gratifying any particular need has, however, developed much more slowly. There was a time once when with few media available, it was assumed, for example, that audiences turned to television to be entertained and newspapers to be informed. It was assumed that if you knew what kind of media an audience member turned to, you knew what gratification the audience member sought. This simple proposition, however, never offered a satisfactory explanation because even in the early days of media development, different audience members were deriving diverse gratifications from single-medium engagements. Thus, for example, if a group of 100 audience members turned to the latest Harry Potter movie, in a gratifications study, we could easily find at least a few mentions of every possible gratification.

<i>Gratifications as listed in McQuail (1987)</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Entertainment	
Escaping, or being diverted from problems	Working-class man whose work challenges his aging body collapsing at home into escape into sports TV
Relaxing	Teenager turning to the reggae music his father introduced him to in order to relax when school is stressful
Getting intrinsic cultural or aesthetic enjoyment	Besieged parent of twins sensing the joy of being human in a Longfellow poem
Filling time	Patient filling time with a portable electronic game player in doctor's office
Emotional release	Third-grade boy working out aggressions with a video game
Sexual arousal	Young woman feeling sexual stirrings watching romantic movies
Integration and social interaction	
Gaining insight into circumstances of others, gaining social empathy	Voter coming to understand how lack of health insurance is affecting his neighbors
Identifying with others and gaining a sense of belonging	Lonesome teen learning he is not the only one interested in collecting rocks
Finding a basis for conversation and social interaction	Secretary anxious to discuss last night's TV drama with friends at work
Having a substitute for real-life companionship	Isolated mother comforted by feeling she shares in human compassion on a talk show
Helping carry out social roles	Young boy seeing that even world-famous jocks have to apologize sometimes
Enabling one to connect with family, friends, society	Grandfather comforted by the e-mailed photos of his grandchildren
Personal identity	
Finding reinforcement for personal values	Mother seeking confirmation that her decision to instruct her daughter about birth control is wise
Finding models of behavior	Mother seeking models for convincing her daughter to practice abstinence until she marries
Identifying with valued others	Teenager gaining a sense of self by hearing a teenage celebrity share his views
Gaining insight into one's self	Employee struggling with boss seeing in a TV drama a possible way to think about his own behavior
Information	
Finding out about relevant events and conditions in immediate surroundings, society, world	Father concerned about his son's draft status seeking information on military actions
Seeking advice on practical matters or opinions and decision choices	Woman just diagnosed with high cholesterol seeking medical advice
Satisfying curiosity and general interest	Newspaper reader doing his habitual morning skimming of latest news
Learning and self-education	Student writing essay required for his English class
Gaining a sense of security through knowledge	Passenger seeking assurance that weather is conducive for flying

Table 56.1 Common Reasons for Media Use

SOURCE: As Reported by McQuail (1987, p. 73).

Now, as the traditional boundaries between media-defined functions have become blurred, no direct connection between type of medium and gratification obtained can be assumed. Understanding what predicts how audiences see connections between media and the gratifications they obtain has become even more critical. Uses-and-gratifications researchers now increasingly attempt to determine under what circumstances a specific medium will be chosen for a particular gratification. Recent research has documented that as new media source and content combinations are introduced into media landscape, audiences are actively comparing new ways of satisfying needs with old ones, sometimes retaining past choices, sometimes choosing new ones, and sometimes adding new ones to a personal set of media gratification options.

Personal, social, and contextual worlds mediate audience activity. This fourth foundational proposition grows out of the preceding one. Since the link between media choices and how audiences see those choices as filling needs has been shown to not be directly predicted by media type, uses-and-gratifications researchers have turned to identifying what mediates these relationships—what stands between media choices and how audience members are gratified by media use. The major thrust in this quest has been to predict audience reasons for media use. This has led to the development of a catalog of various predictors for the origins of needs. Three major classes of predictors of audience needs have been identified: (1) demographic, (2) psychological, and (3) environmental/contextual variables.

The most common set of variables offered as predicting the origin of needs has been the demographic characteristics of media audiences and users. Such variables have sometimes been referred to as the “social circumstances” of media users because demographics reflect the social categories and roles society uses to categorize people. Demographic variables commonly include measures such as age, level of education, gender, and ethnicity.

Personality or other psychological characteristics have been the second major group of predictors of audience needs. Using psychological motives for predicting communication behavior was given its first extensive consideration by McGuire (1974). Since that time, a variety of psychological variables have been tested as possible explanations for gratifications sought and obtained. Some have been derived from what is commonly called the “big five” personality model, which categorizes people based on five dimensions: (1) extroversion, (2) neuroticism, (3) openness to experience, (4) agreeableness, and (5) conscientiousness. Others have focused on qualities such as loneliness or a need for sensation seeking and arousal. Still others have gone further to suggest that these psychological differences are rooted in genetic makeups that then affect human temperaments, including traits such as activity level, adaptability, and attention span.

The third major group of predictors of the origins of audience needs has been factors external to media users—contextual and environmental factors. The reasoning here

has been that the life conditions audience members find themselves in may produce tensions, create problem awareness, frustrate real-life satisfactions, reinforce particular media-related values, or provide a field of expectations about media use (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). A woman who just broke up with her significant other may decide to watch a movie for solace, whereas another may watch the very same movie to learn how to cope with a cheating spouse. These external factors may interact with audience personality and other traits, creating a complex picture of media use.

Researchers have in fact demonstrated the interconnectedness of these predictors and how they relate to audience needs and gratifications through media use. As this work has advanced over the years, audience needs have been increasingly defined as both innate to and descriptive of the individual and at the same time relating to the individual’s place in society and the constraints and freedoms associated with that societal location.

The uses people make of media and the effects media have on people are interconnected. Throughout the years, ongoing attempts have been made to link media gratifications research with media effects research. It has been argued that audience members who turn more to particular media to meet their gratification needs—whether these choices be conscious or unconscious—will be more likely to be affected (either negatively or positively) by the content and characteristics of that media. Such impacts have been hypothesized for a host of potential audiences—for example, young children who rely more heavily on media for information because of their relative lack of life experience and background information and get a distorted view of politics, teenage girls who rely heavily on teen magazines as their sources of models for being female and become obsessed with weight issues, isolated older adults who turn to television for feelings of being social but end up seeing the world as more fearful and threatening.

In this sense, it can be seen that the media uses-and-gratifications tradition, although actively pursuing an agenda of understanding audiences in audience-oriented ways, still straddles between effects-oriented and audience-oriented approaches, struggling with how to simultaneously see audience members as unique individuals and as anchored in societal conditions and highly constrained by media choices society offers them.

Underlying Mechanisms: Theories of the Media Use/ Media Gratification Connection

A great many studies such as those described above have been done focusing on predicting audience member needs and gratifications. Because of differences in how researchers measure the many variables involved and, in particular, what media they focus on and how they categorize

gratifications, it is not easy to extract consistent patterns across studies. Many of the patterns that have emerged do, however, meet commonsensical expectations. Thus, for example, a large number of studies have shown that in general, younger adults have been more likely to name personal identity and entertainment as media gratifications, whereas higher educated adults have been more likely to name information and women more likely to name integration and social interaction. Likewise, studies have shown that audiences using newspapers report more information gratifications, those using radio more diversion gratifications, and those using television more diversion and companionship gratifications. Most important, however, although differences have often been statistically significant, research has increasingly shown that predicting user needs and gratifications is not the same thing as understanding how users make connections between different kinds of media and how they use them.

As a result, the more sophisticated turn in this work has begun to dig much deeper, focusing in particular on mechanisms or theories of what it is that explains the connections audience members make between their media use choices and the gratifications they obtain from media use. Several consistent guiding propositions have emerged from this work, which we summarize below as four sets of explanations focusing on understanding the underlying mechanisms. None of these is considered the single explanation of audience media uses and gratifications, but taken together, they provide a developing complex set of understandings of what is involved in the media use/media gratifications connection. In addition, they have begun to provide empirical support for the basic assumptions on which the uses-and-gratifications tradition rests.

The first set of explanations has focused on understanding audience members' activities as ongoing processes. Thus, for example, Levy and Windahl (1984, 1985) were the first to propose that audience activities can change during single engagements with media. They were also the first to empirically study differences before, during, and after media engagement. This work has provided support for the idea that audience members are actively engaged in ongoing self-monitoring of their media use activities as these are embedded in time. On the surface, this may seem a commonsensical idea. But, given that uses and gratifications as a tradition emerged from a media effects paradigm, which expected constant and unchanging effects to operate directly from media to audiences, beginning to understanding how audience activities change during single-medium engagements constituted an important breakthrough.

The second set of explanations is also related to the understanding that audience members are self-monitoring and that their evaluations of media use change as a result of this self-monitoring. In a thrust of work known under the label *expectancy value theory*, researchers—in particular Palmgreen and Rayburn (1982, 1985)—drew on theories

focusing on attitude change in psychology to propose that audience member activity is a result of a person's belief in the probability of success (expectancy) for that behavior and the evaluation of potential consequences should that behavior succeed or fail.

Media users' expectations for their needs to be gratified have been a part of the uses-and-gratifications approach since its inception, of course. Nevertheless, this theory formalized the attention. A major focus in this work has been accounting for differences between gratifications sought and those obtained. For example, a user turns to the *Lord of the Rings* DVD set because she loves the books but on trying to view the movies finds them too violent. As a result, the gratification she sought is not sufficiently obtained. Failing to be gratified, her expectations for future similar media uses may be altered. This kind of theorizing has opened up deeper inquiries into how expectancies and evaluations of media use are formed.

The third set of attentions to underlying mechanisms also builds on the idea of media audiences as self-regulating. This development has begun to examine media as sources of affective regulation and mood management. Developed in part in response to criticisms that the uses-and-gratifications approach has placed too much emphasis on audiences as rational decision makers who weigh how best to gratify needs, this theory has proposed that media use is at least in part a function of audience members' needs for emotional regulation (Zillmann, 1988).

The idea is that media users select their media choices to minimize bad moods and maximize good moods. The choices may be conscious or unconscious and, indeed, may have started off as an accidental media engagement that over time became imprinted in user memories driving future media choices. Thus, an audience member may stumble across a comedy that makes him or her feel good, and the next time he or she feels blue, he or she may choose to watch that comedy again to achieve the same happy results. To some extent, it can be said that this theory has simply added another category of gratifications to those offered in Table 56.1, but some researchers are now pursuing it as a fundamental explanation of media use in its own right.

Although the underlying mechanisms described above may be considered as psychological in emphasis, the fourth is more sociological. As described in the section on predictors, some researchers have created integrative models whose aim has been to show how characteristics of individuals work in tandem with characteristics of societal conditions to predict media uses and gratifications. The intent has been to show that needs arise not only from biological and psychological traits but also from the connections people have with society and culture, including media economic structures and technology and social and situational circumstances.

The uses and dependency theory offered by Rubin and Windahl (1986) is an example of a theory focusing on how

media industries and society may affect audiences' choices. Society, they reasoned, can affect how accessible media are to audiences and how audiences perceive their needs and expectations for media, whereas media industries control the type of content available for audiences. For example, a given audience member may have a high need for information that compares liberal and conservative views but lack the money to purchase periodicals that are more likely to present such coverage. The audience member has become dependent on weekly Web surfing visits to political magazine sites. In this way, this theory has argued that these converging factors result in the user becoming dependent on some aspect of media to gratify particular needs. The theory has provided for understanding how individual and societal factors combine and has opened up additional avenues for complex analyses of media engagements.

The Big Unanswered Questions

When one reads the academic literature, one finds a confusing and contradictory set of criticisms within the community of uses-and-gratifications researchers and between this community and other discourse communities pursuing related issues. We provide here a general overview not of the specific criticisms about this kind of scholarship or that kind of method but rather of the big unanswered questions that researchers are continuing to debate. These same big unanswered questions are the source of ever-present debates among those using the uses-and-gratifications approach as well as among those in the critical/cultural, audience reception, and sense-making traditions of studying the society-media-audience relationship. In can be said, in fact, that these are the same big questions that dominate all media studies. We present them here without any attempt to review the plethora of arguments in the literature about each. Rather, we offer them to the reader as fodder for thinking.

How do we explain both external forces acting on audiences and internally motivated audience activities? This is, by far, the biggest and most central unanswered question. Among the many subquestions that are the focus of animated arguments are issues such as the following: If audiences are seen as the commodities they see to advertisers, can we even say that audience members have the freedom to actively select what media they use? How do we explain audience members' active and conscious choices of programs society would deem to be negative, such as pornography, while still respecting audiences' freedoms to choose? How do we explain when audiences' media choices reflect or defy larger social or cultural expectations when, for example, a member of a cultural subgroup does not reflect the dominant media uses and gratifications of his or her group?

It is at the juncture of these questions that we find young researchers in the various research traditions beginning to move toward each other in an attempt to explain the conjoint interactions of societal and individual forces on audience choices and uses. The overarching term for this issue is *the structure versus agency debate*—the question of when and under what conditions audience behavior is explained by societal forces or as a result of audience activity independent of these forces.

If there is any consensus emerging from the debates, it is that efforts must not explain what happens as “structure versus agency” but as “structure and agency.” The idea is that a media user's behavior must be addressed with multiple converging explanations focusing on both social forces and individual freedoms and coming to understand when society dominates, when the individual dominates, and when both work conjointly, whether it be in struggle or convergence.

If we look at the media life of a single user, we can illustrate this. Mary, a 20-year-old college senior, prides herself on being an independent woman, somewhat a feminist. Her dad encouraged that as well, and she loves TV shows such as *The Closer*, with strong, sassy women. Yet Mary also has a “secret” TV-viewing life. When she comes home exhausted by the strains of classes and paid work, she admits she has a “guilty pleasure.” She watches hip-hop MTV, with all the scenes of men brutalizing women. She says she doesn't understand why, but she is addicted. On the other hand, when Mary drives her car, she purposefully chooses to listen to NPR but then hardly listens at all. She describes it as having “1/100th of my ear” listening while thinking of other things. Mary also admits that she is a far too loyal member of the American consumerist society. “I am constantly buying things I do not need.” Mary acknowledges to herself that society may look down on her decision to watch MTV while applauding her choice to tune into NPR, but her preference for either medium does not reflect these social expectations. Mary's media use is complicated, as qualitative studies are beginning to show most media use is.

What is active or passive? Conscious or unconscious? Ritualistic or purposive? Habitual or goal directed? Collective or individual? Each of these pluralities pervades the various criticisms and countercriticisms levied between and within discourse communities. A host of very specific methods-oriented debates ensue. As one example, cultural studies researchers charge that uses-and-gratifications researchers assume that audience activity is conscious, purposive, active, individualistic, and goal directed and that audience members can articulate what they use media for. To counter these claims, cultural studies researchers ask these questions: What of unconscious needs—such as a youngster unconsciously feeling comforted by a particular show because the lead actor looks like his or her deceased father? What of

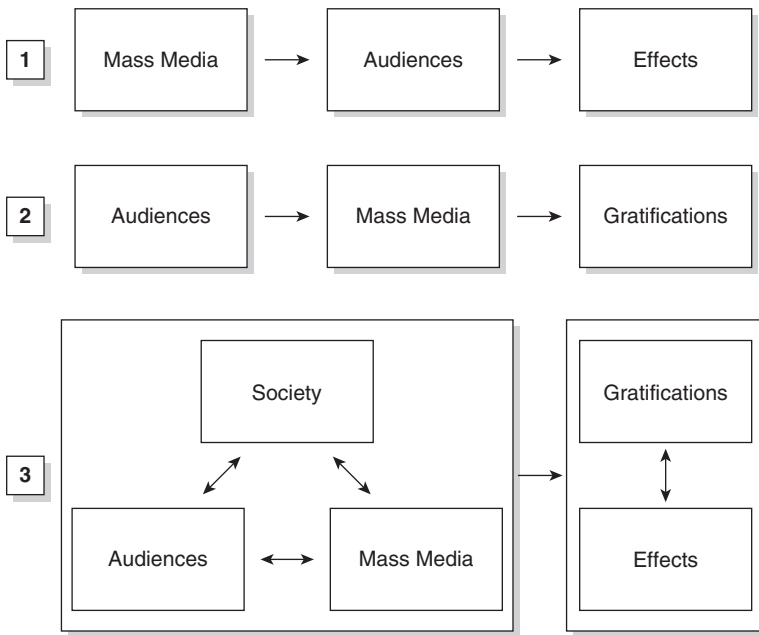


Figure 56.1 Three Ways of Looking at Media-Audience Connection

socially ritualistic media use, where friends play video games while simultaneously listening to hip-hop? Are these uses purposive? In what way? What of inarticulate users, not used to reflection and explanation? These pluralities form the fodder for not only debates but also future research directions.

What is the difference between a media effect and a media gratification? In one sense, this unanswered question rests on layers of subtle differences in complicated academic assumptions and vocabularies. But in another it is a fundamental question. On the one hand, the effects paradigm assumes that media are acting on people. On the other, the uses-and-gratifications approach assumes that people are acting on media. But some researchers counter this by suggesting that if media make offerings available that users use in particular ways, that in itself is an effect. When audience members choose to use particular media, expecting specific gratifications, aren't they predicting how media will affect them?

Conclusion

The tradition of media studies known as *uses-and-gratifications research* does not offer a grand or coherent theory of media use. Rather, it is best seen as a set of complementary and sometimes competing understandings of the connections between media uses and media gratifications. It is primarily psychological in orientation. In essence, it is an attempt to develop understandings of the psychological functions to which audiences put their uses of media.

In quantitative social sciences, mass media studies have consisted of two empirical emphases. Media effects researchers have focused on what impact media can have on people. The goal of that approach has been to prevent negative effects from harming people, promote positive effects that can help people, and provide media producers with the means by which to do either. In contrast, uses-and-gratifications researchers have sought to examine the reasons people have for using media they do. The differences between these two approaches are illustrated as rows 1 and 2 in Figure 56.1 media.

Row 3 provides a far more complex picture where somehow media, audiences, and society interact to yield media effects and/or media gratifications. This is a fair representation of the current state of attentions not only in uses-and-gratifications research but in all media studies focusing on the media-audience connection. In one sense, the complexity of row 3 may be seen as a step backward, as if somehow in 50 years there has been no resolution of the questions focusing on how media affect people versus how people affect media. But the important change is that the question has begun to focus more on multiple converging forces that acknowledge the power of society, media, and audience members. The uses-and-gratifications approach will continue to be one evolving avenue for exploring these complex relationships.

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AGENDA SETTING AND FRAMING

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Among the theories of communication in the 21st century, agenda setting, which has its roots in the early 20th century, has proven to be one of the more robust theories, if not the most robust theory, in communication. The resilience of this theory is a result of its parsimonious, yet expansive, qualities, its roots, and its connection to other theories in communication. According to Blumler and Kavanagh (1999), “among the field’s master paradigms, agenda setting may be most worth pursuing” (p. 225). The pursuit of agenda setting has seduced many researchers into studying various aspects of the theory, resulting in hundreds of published works. This prolific work on agenda setting has continued to tweak the theory, making it as strong, if not stronger, than its origins.

Even though researchers have been very innovative in their agenda-setting research, the premise of the theory remains very simple. Bearing in mind that media are the main source of information for the public, the main idea behind agenda setting is that the issues that media deem salient will influence what the public in turn deems salient. This transfer of salience from the media agenda to the public agenda is what is known in communication theory as agenda setting. In other words, media tell us what to think

about. In addition to its simplicity, agenda setting shifted the focus of researchers from attitudinal to cognitive media effects, thus weakening, if not dismissing, Klapper’s (1960) thesis of the minimal consequences of media. Even though the initial focus of agenda-setting effects dealt with cognitive effects, evidence (as seen later in this chapter) points to possible consequences of agenda setting on attitudes and opinions as well as behaviors.

The robustness of agenda setting is due not only to its simplicity and to the proliferation of research but also to its roots, which run deep to earlier conceptualizations of public opinion. Walter Lippmann, in his book *Public Opinion*, published in the early 20th century, discusses the role of media as mediators between reality and the public. Lippmann (1922) argues that public opinion is a reaction to what we see in media content, which is not necessarily a reflection of reality. The importance of media is in their creation of this new reality or environment, resulting in a “pseudo-environment” to which people react. Cohen (1963) suggested that the press tell its readers what to think about. McCombs and Shaw (1972) are the ones who coined the term *agenda setting* in their empirical examination of a U.S. presidential campaign. They surveyed undecided voters and asked them

to indicate the issues they deemed important. McCombs and Shaw also content analyzed nine news sources. They then compared media's agenda with the public's agenda and found evidence that media agenda and the public agenda correlate and that indeed media tell the public what to think about. Further studies continued to focus on the transfer of issue salience from media to the public and established the causal direction between the two agendas.

The hundreds of research projects that ensued tested the underlying hypothesis of agenda setting in different circumstances such as with a variety of media, countries, research designs, topics, and agendas, as well as under different conditions. The influence of media agenda on the public agenda has been supported over and over again.

Agenda setting has links to several theories in communication. Connections have been established between agenda setting and cultivation theory among researchers who focus on the entertainment media. Others have examined the relationship between agenda setting and the two-step flow of communication. The link between agenda setting, priming, and framing is proving to be the most fruitful and at times the most controversial development of agenda-setting research.

Attribute agenda setting is the latest leap in agenda-setting theory, and it is through this second level of agenda setting that priming and framing come into play. The second level of agenda setting goes beyond the original premise of agenda setting in terms of the transfer of issue salience from media to the public to the influence of issue attributes on evaluation by the audience. Priming deals with the salience of attributes in the public's judgments of public officials and candidates for public office, whereas framing deals with the salience of attributes in the public's judgments of issues. Thus, media not only tell us what to think about, as established by the first level of agenda setting, but media also tell us how to think. The controversy lies in whether framing and priming are extensions of agenda setting or whether they are very different phenomena. Takeshita (2006) has concerns that the link between agenda setting and framing could lead to the theory's decline, whereas others see this link as evidence of the theory's strength. According to Ghanem (1997), "this shift in emphasis does not negate the basic agenda-setting hypothesis, but rather builds on what already exists. It is one highway linking up with another major thoroughfare" (pp. 4–5).

Agenda setting has thus become a two-level theory, with one level dealing with objects and the second level dealing with that object's characteristics and traits. It is interesting to note that the second level of agenda setting is also leading to a flood of research in many countries on different topics using a variety of methodologies just like the first level did and continues to do.

Volumes can be written on the various aspects of agenda setting, slicing it and categorizing it in many different ways. This chapter focuses on several aspects of agenda setting that seem particularly relevant at this point

in time based on the direction of the research and the controversy that has ensued as a result of some of that research. The areas of focus are the reemergence of an interest in contingent conditions, attribute agenda setting, and the second level of agenda setting as well as its relationship to framing. This chapter also examines the consequences of agenda setting that evidence indicates go beyond cognitive effects. In addition, this chapter will suggest other areas of possible agenda-setting research in the ever-changing media landscape.

Contingent Conditions

Researchers studying agenda setting have specified several conditions under which agenda-setting effects are more or less likely to occur. Research in this area has focused on the stimuli as well as audience characteristics that influence the agenda-setting process. Benton and Frazier (1976) examined the transfer of salience for issues as well as subissues. They divided several issues into three levels. Using the economy as an example, the first level would be the general category of the economy, the second level would include problems and solutions, and the third level would include pro and con positions. Their studies revealed that newspapers, but not television, produced agenda-setting effects at all three levels. Of course, in many instances the influences of newspapers and television are equal, but when there is a difference, newspapers are likely to be more influential as agenda setters. Others have examined the optimal amount of time needed for agenda-setting effects to take place. Depending on the issue, the time frame has varied from 1 week to 6 months.

The obtrusiveness of the issue, or the level of personal contact with the issue, also seemed to influence the transfer of salience from media to the public. The more unobtrusive the issue, the more likely it was for agenda-setting effects to take place. On the other hand, personal experience with an issue tends to dilute or diminish the role of media. Inflation would be an example of an obtrusive issue if it reaches the point where it affects our daily purchases. Foreign policy for many of us is an unobtrusive issue because of the lack of personal experience with the issue. Lee (2004) attempts to reconcile the obtrusiveness of an issue hypothesis with that of the cognitive priming hypothesis, which posits that personal experience enhances, rather than lessens, agenda-setting effects. He concludes that obtrusive issues tend to show agenda-setting effects within a shorter time frame than do unobtrusive issues. Closely related to issue obtrusiveness is the geographic proximity of the issue. Palmgreen and Clarke (1977) found that agenda-setting effects are stronger for national issues, which are usually less obtrusive than local issues.

Studies on the role of interpersonal communication on agenda setting provide mixed results, with some studies suggesting that interpersonal communication enhances

agenda setting and others reporting the opposite effect. McLeod, Becker, and Byrnes (1974) examined the role of interpersonal communication and found that it played a greater role in agenda setting when newspapers declined as an information source late in the campaign. Shaw (1976) found that interpersonal factors were good predictors of agenda setting. Studies by Erbring, Goldenberg, and Miller (1980) also found that interpersonal communication enhanced the agenda-setting effect. Other researchers found that interpersonal communication diminishes the agenda-setting effect. To add to the contradictory results, still others found that interpersonal communication enhances agenda-setting effects under certain conditions and reduces it under others. Jones, Denham, and Springston (2006) examined the role of interpersonal sources and health issues and found that interpersonal source of information had more of an influence on younger women, whereas older women were more influenced by exposure to media. Other studies just produced inconclusive results on this matter.

Several researchers continued to examine the conditions under which agenda setting takes effect by focusing on the individual and by examining the effects of demographic and psychological variables on agenda setting. Respondents who are interested in an issue and who have a positive attitude toward media are more likely to be susceptible to agenda-setting effects, whereas party affiliation and political philosophy had limited effects. In the same research venue, Tsfaty (2003) found that on the aggregate level, the correlation of the media and the public agendas was weaker for skeptics, those who mistrust the news media, than for nonskeptics. These results held true for both print and television. Examining media reliance and not attitude toward media, Yang and Stone (2003) concluded in their study that the more media reliant the public is, the more it will adopt the media agenda.

Perhaps the most complicated yet fruitful contingent condition is the need for orientation because it provides a psychological explanation for the agenda-setting process. It also provides an understanding of why some people are susceptible to agenda-setting effects while others are not. Weaver (1980) breaks down the need for orientation into two dimensions: relevance of the issue and uncertainty regarding the issue. Relevance and uncertainty occur sequentially, with relevance as the initial defining condition of the need for orientation. An issue is relevant if it has any personal or societal relevance. Uncertainty has to do with the amount of information desired on the topic. If an individual has all the information needed on the topic, the uncertainty level is low, and vice versa. A high need for orientation will include high relevance and high uncertainty. When people have a high need for orientation, they will be more likely to experience agenda-setting effects.

Matthes (2006) revisits the need for orientation, which he considers the most prominent contingent condition for agenda setting. He develops a three-dimensional scale of

need for orientation to account for the motivational factors involved in media exposure: orientation toward issues, orientation toward facts, and orientation toward journalistic evaluations. The three orientations tie in with the first and second levels of agenda setting, where the first level of agenda setting deals with the overall issue and the second level deals with the cognitive and affective attributes of that issue. The need for orientation toward issues can explain the first level of agenda setting, while the orientation toward facts can explain the cognitive dimension of the second level of agenda setting and the orientation toward journalist evaluations could help explain the affective dimension of the second level.

Attribute Agenda Setting

Most of the research on agenda setting has investigated the salience of public issues, but sometimes other objects, such as political candidates, have been the focus of investigation. Here the term *object* is used in the same way that social psychologists use the phrase *attitude object* to designate the thing that an individual has an attitude or opinion about. At the level of attention, which is the original arena for agenda-setting effects, the media agenda and the public agenda are defined in the abstract by some set of objects. In turn, these objects have attributes, a variety of characteristics and traits that describe them. When journalists talk about an object and when members of the public talk and think about an object, some of these attributes are emphasized and others are mentioned less frequently. For each object on an agenda, there is an agenda of attributes that influences our perception and understanding of the object.

These attributes have two dimensions, a cognitive component encoding information about specific substantive traits or characteristics that describe the object and an affective component encoding the positive, negative, or neutral tone of the descriptions of these traits when they appear on the news agenda or the public agenda. For example, a news story about a substantive attribute, the leadership ability of a candidate, might quote a supporter referring to this attribute of the candidate in a positive tone and his opponent referring to this attribute in a negative tone.

When the object on the agenda is a public figure, there is significant evidence that the images of these persons in the public mind parallel the media's attribute agenda.

Both traditional agenda-setting effects and attribute agenda-setting effects involve the transfer of salience. The core proposition for these two stages, sometimes referred to as the first and second levels of agenda setting, is that elements prominent on the media agenda become prominent over time on the public agenda. To paraphrase and extend Bernard Cohen (1963), media not only may be successful in telling us what to think about, they also may be successful in telling us how to think about it.

Attribute Agenda Setting and Framing

In its evolution over the past 40 years, agenda-setting theory has converged with a variety of other communication concepts and theories, and attribute agenda-setting links theory with framing. Although there are many widely divergent perspectives on framing, Robert Entman's (1993) frequently cited definition contains language that is complementary to agenda-setting theory in its use of the term *salient*:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. (p. 52)

Both framing and attribute agenda setting call attention to the perspectives of communicators and their audiences, how they picture topics in the news, and, in particular, to the special status that certain attributes or frames have in the content of a message. Nevertheless, detailed comparisons of framing and attribute agenda setting are complicated by the plethora of definitions for framing.

In an overview, Gamson (2001) identifies three research domains of the framing approach: (1) the origins and use of frames in the construction of messages, (2) the examination of specific frames in messages, and (3) the interaction of audiences and these messages. In communication research, both agenda setting and framing encompass the specific content of media messages and the effects of this content on audiences. And, as we shall see, the two approaches at times can be virtually indistinguishable in addressing questions about media content and the effects of media content. Nevertheless, the framing and agenda-setting approaches largely diverge in regard to the origins and use of frames in media messages, with considerably more emphasis on this domain in framing research. Here, we will focus on the content of messages and the effects of these messages on the audience, the domains encompassed by both approaches.

Over the long history of media message analysis, scholars have used many levels of abstraction, and three major approaches can be distinguished in both agenda-setting and framing research. One approach is a tight focus on a specific frame or attribute in media messages, such as Iyengar's (1991) distinction between episodic and thematic frames. Even more specific are Kahneman and Tversky's (1984) experiments on the consequences of whether information is presented rhetorically in terms of losses or gains. Nevertheless, many researchers favor a second approach widely employed in quantitative content analysis, in which message content is measured and described in broader, more comprehensive terms of what is selected, emphasized, and excluded. Framing research also frequently considers the central emphasis in messages (Barnett,

2005), and most of the frequently cited definitions of framing refer specifically to emphasis, selection, and exclusion. Gamson (1985) defines *framing* as the emphasis of certain features and the denying of others. Gitlin (1980) defines *frames* as "principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters" (p. 6). Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, and Ghanem's (1991) definition is similar: "A frame is a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (p. 5). In addition to emphasis, Entman's (1993) definition also specifies consequences, the promotion of "*a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described*" (p. 52, italics in original).

In agenda-setting research, Ghanem (1996) introduced the concept of the compelling argument, the idea that certain attributes of an object function as compelling arguments for their salience. Compelling arguments are certain ways of organizing and structuring the picture of an object that enjoy high success among the public, an approach that considers the emphasis in media messages from the perspective of the audience. Ghanem examined a situation in Texas during the early 1990s, when intensive crime coverage in the news generated very high levels of public concern about crime as the most important problem facing the country. Nevertheless, during this same period of time, actual crime rates in Texas were declining and had been for several years. Ghanem's examination of the various ways in which crime was framed in the news revealed that the salience of crime on the public agenda was related especially to the frequency of news stories about crime in which the average person would feel personally threatened. This attribute of crime, this frame in the crime coverage, explained the salience of crime as a public issue even better than the total coverage of crime during this time did. This aspect of the coverage was a compelling argument among Texans for the salience of crime. More recently, Sheafer (2007) has demonstrated the impact of negative coverage of the economy as a compelling argument among voters across five Israeli elections for the Knesset between 1988 and 2003.

Both framing and agenda setting deal with cognitive effects. Agenda setting has long been touted as one of the theories that shifted the focus from attitudes to cognition. Framing is also seen as a cognitive effect associated with the construction of reality and how people think about important public issues. As with media messages, researchers examine these effects from many different perspectives. Kahneman and Tversky (1984) demonstrate that the alteration of messages, shifts in the rhetorical framing of messages, will affect which options will be selected by the public. Iyengar (1991) found that differences

in episodic and thematic framing influence the attribution of responsibility by the audience, with episodic frames leading to the attribution of responsibility to the individual and thematic frames leading to the attribution of responsibility to systematic causes.

Agenda-setting research has moved beyond the salience or perceived prominence of objects and their attributes to investigate the consequences of these effects. At the first level of agenda setting, this includes the priming of attitudes as well as the formation of attitudes and opinions. At the second level of agenda setting, there is evidence of attribute priming, the influence of both substantive attributes and their affective tone on attitudes and opinions.

There is an opportunity here to systematically explicate media effects, particularly regarding *how to think* about public affairs if framing and attribute agenda setting are considered as convergent or at least complementary approaches to the study of media effects. If we more carefully conceptualize and measure *how to think, what we know, how we interpret, and what we understand*, we can significantly advance our understanding of media effects.

Underlying Psychological Processes

Theoretical efforts to distinguish between framing and attribute agenda setting in terms of the underlying psychological processes have found mixed success, both in terms of empirical fit and in stimulating new empirical investigations. Price and Tewksbury (1997) and Scheufele (2000) focused on two aspects of knowledge activation, the concepts of accessibility and applicability (Higgins, 1996), arguing that framing is grounded in applicability, whereas agenda setting is grounded in accessibility.

Nevertheless, there is empirical evidence from the earliest years of agenda-setting research that the salience of issues on the public agenda is considerably more than the accessibility of those issues as a consequence of the frequency with which issues are portrayed in the news. When an individual is asked to name “the most important issue facing the country today,” the perceived salience of an issue presented through media content is significantly moderated by that individual’s state of mind, in particular his or her level of need for orientation. Weaver (1977) found that during the 1972 U.S. presidential election, the strength of agenda-setting effects among North Carolina voters increased monotonically with their level of need for orientation. Takeshita (1993) found a similar pattern in a Japanese local election. The strength of an individual’s need for orientation is a combined function of the perceived relevance of the topic and the individual’s uncertainty about the topic. Specifically in terms of the knowledge activation model, Todorov (2000) refers to applicability as the relevance of the knowledge context and noted that “the size of accessibility effects is a function of the applicability of knowledge activated by the

initial questions” (p. 430) and that “applicability constrains accessibility effects—a highly accessible concept may not be applied when it doesn’t share any relevant features with the stimulus” (p. 431).

One of the few attempts to empirically distinguish accessibility and perceived importance is Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley’s (1997) experiment comparing the effects of TV news stories that presented two different attributes of a highly publicized KKK rally, free speech versus public order. Significant effects were found for the perceived importance of the attribute emphasized in each of the news reports. No effects were found for the accessibility of these attributes. Nelson and colleagues concluded thus:

Our results contribute to the growing body of evidence questioning mere accessibility models of political judgment and opinion. . . . Our results point to a more deliberative integration process, whereby participants consider the importance and relevance of each accessible idea. (p. 578)

Kim, Scheufele, and Shanahan’s (2002) study of an urban development issue focused specifically on the accessibility of issue attributes. The salience of the issue attributes emphasized in the local newspaper was measured (inversely) on the public agenda by the proportions of survey respondents who indicated “Don’t know” or “Neutral” in response to issue attribute questions that asked how likely it was for each attribute to happen as a consequence of this proposed development. “In this operationalization, salience of issue attributes refers to their cognitive accessibility or the ‘ease in which instances of associations could be brought to mind’” (p. 15). Although the accessibility of the issue attributes increased sharply with greater exposure to the newspaper, the resulting attribute agendas among the public bore little resemblance to the attribute agenda presented in the news coverage. Unlike previous attribute agenda-setting studies grounded in a variety of open-ended and closed-ended measures of the *perceived importance* of attributes that found substantial correlations between the attribute agendas of media and the public, in Ithaca, the pattern of salience among the public measured in terms of cognitive *accessibility* did not replicate these attribute agenda-setting effects. What emerged was a different version of media effects in which the *relative* amount of increased salience for the six attributes among newspaper readers when compared with persons unaware of the issue paralleled media agenda in two of three comparisons.

Consequences of Agenda-Setting Effects for Attitudes, Opinions, and Behavior

Agenda Setting of Issues and Attitudes

When we talk about media effects, we often mean certain influences media messages exert on the audience. There

is no widespread agreement on what the concept of influence means. In mass communication, the division between two types of media effects is accepted—media-induced change in the public’s priorities and direct persuasion. Traditionally, attitudes and opinions were treated as similar concepts in assessing media influence, especially when opinions represented evaluative judgments about particular issues or events.

Mass communication scholars used a socio-psychological approach in explaining media effects through the 1950s and 1960s. The core concept of the socio-psychological approach was attitude change, and persuasion was considered to be the main tool of such change. Nevertheless, attitude change studies showed little or no effects through persuasion. Agenda-setting studies restored confidence in the idea that media have quite significant effects. Persuasive effects of media messages were understood as specific cases of a broader media function—to inform the audiences about the events.

Nevertheless, establishing the fact that media structure the opinion of the audience does not answer the question about whether or not media change the attitudes, and if so, how. Some findings suggest that the increased salience of media issues leads to stronger opinions and makes the attitudes more extreme. There was evidence that increasing salience helps form opinions and attitudes. An enhanced coverage of certain issues by media brings about variously framed information that leads to new or modified knowledge and subsequent opinion formation. Researchers also agreed that the psychological priming mechanism underlying the agenda-setting function might be accountable for attitudinal effects. Some authors consider priming as having more long-term effects: “The greater the cumulative exposure to relevant stimuli, the greater the likelihood that ‘mere mention’ of relevant stimuli triggered priming of applicable attitudes, regardless of the amount of recent coverage in the news” (Althaus & Kim, 2006, p. 973).

Nevertheless, these results do not elucidate the question whether the dominance of the media agenda over public opinion leads to the persuasive effects. In other words, the time has come to explore the link between issue salience and attitude change. Ideally, parallel and simultaneous testing of agenda-setting and attitudinal consequences in experimental studies could determine whether such a link exists. This task is difficult to accomplish without further elaborating particular variables inside media messages and determining the specific psychological processes that mediate transformations of public opinions. Leff, Protes, and Brook (1986) tried to test agenda-setting and attitudinal effects in a study with a quasi-experimental design; they found some limited indications of attitude change. The results were far from being conclusive due to methodological and theoretical limitations. The authors suggested that “the stylistic form of an investigative report . . . may affect profoundly its

degree of impact” (p. 313) and considered further exploration of a link between a message form, the nature of an issue, and relevant opinions.

Agenda Setting of Attributes and Attitudes

As agenda-setting research progressed to the attribute level stage, a new opportunity to reevaluate the relationships between agenda setting and attitudes appeared. Different classes of media messages were proposed, which identified finer distinctive elements inside broader categories, namely, substantive and affective attributes or frames of an issue. Unlike content frames, the numbers of which are constantly increasing and changing, these attributes capture the characteristics that apply to any media messages. Affective attributes, as an example, color the tone of issue coverage, which not only may raise the importance of the issue but may also help form a certain attitude in audience members or change an existing one. The evaluative character of affective attributes places them at a commensurate level of analysis with attitudes, evaluative in their nature. The impact of a negative or positive tone on the people’s assessment of the state of economy has been recently documented. Both experimental and nonexperimental studies confirm the role of affective attributes in shaping the attitudes and opinions of people.

Empirical evidence exists that not only the tone of textual messages but also television news images depicting the behavior of political candidates negatively or positively shape the corresponding attitudes of respondents to these candidates. The studies in the framing tradition brought converging results. These studies employed the concept of valence framing, which is similar to affective attributes. Such frames evaluate issues or situations in either positive or negative terms. Using frames with either negative or positive connotations, the authors found that “valenced frames and risk framing in particular are shown to affect individuals’ perceptions, evaluations, and behaviour” (Schuck & de Vreese, 2006, p. 22). Substantive attributes did not become the focus of attitude studies partly because of their matter-of-fact nature, which does not transform directly into the evaluative nature of opinions and attitudes. The substantive attributes may activate certain cognitive structures, which can trigger corresponding evaluative mechanisms. Although a comparative study of substantive and affective attributes did not measure the attitudes related to these attributes, it indirectly pointed at possible preferences the subjects might reveal in interpretation of corresponding issues. Brewer (2002) found that subjects explained their issue opinions either through “equality” or “morality” frames used in their particular treatments. More direct studies of a link between substantive attributes and attitudes can be compounded by a particular attitude to a specific issue or an event depicted in a

media message, not to a more general substantive attribute applicable across particular topics.

Agenda Setting, Attitudes, and Mediating Psychological Mechanisms

Attribute manipulation tied with attitudes toward and opinions about media messages might require an examination of mediating psychological processes in the relationship between agenda setting and attitudes. It is widely accepted that priming is the mechanism that underlies the agenda-setting process. Because of this mechanism, salience translates not only into issue prominence but also into specific voting behaviors. Nevertheless, as previously noted in the discussion of attribute agenda setting and framing, the priming mechanism understood solely within the bounds of the knowledge activation model's concept of accessibility does not provide an adequate explanation for agenda-setting effects. For example, the question whether the most active or the least active media users are susceptible to the agenda-setting effects is not solved. McCombs and Shaw (1972) found that those who were less knowledgeable of the media agenda followed its accounts more. McKuen and Coombs (1981) and Wanta (1997) think that those with more interest in politics and media coverage of politics are more susceptible to the agenda-setting effects. On the other hand, McLeod and colleagues (1974) and Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder (1982) found that the most interested individuals are less affected by the media agenda. The roots of the disagreement might lie in the different types of the need for orientation. But this need as a motivational factor must trigger a certain psychological process. There are some indications that Petty and Cacioppo's (1981) elaboration likelihood model (the ELM) might offer such a complementary mechanism. The ELM postulates that attitude change, as a result of media or personal influence, may happen both when people are highly involved in the issues and messages and are able to process them as well as when their involvement and ability are low. Although the authors of the ELM maintain that the attitudes become stronger when information processing is more elaborate, they also admit that increased repetition of peripheral cues or having a rehearsal of an attitude position, may enhance the accessibility.

Petty, Priester, and Brinol (2002) also point at the link between the agenda-setting approach and the ELM. They maintain that "by setting the agenda of what is important to evaluate, media can have important 'indirect' effects on attitude change" (p. 167).

Developments in agenda-setting research provide a way to systematically test the characteristics of the messages and the issues beyond the messages. The ELM offers two ways of processing information: It pays serious attention to the role of the message factor in attitude change, and it

embraces both the motivation and the ability of the audience to process the information. These features make the ELM one of the very useful tools along with the mechanism of priming for investigation of how agenda setting produces its media effects.

Although the terms *opinions* and *attitudes* are often used interchangeably in political communication, studying how agenda setting is linked to attitudes as more stable predispositions of the public to evaluate the issues on media agenda must be a distinct area in future research. Moreover, a better understanding of this link might boost further contributions to existing findings about the agenda setting/behavior relationship.

Looking to the Future

The first empirical study of the agenda-setting function of media was followed by hundreds of similar studies conducted in different countries. The explanatory and predictive power of accumulated knowledge allows several specific venues of future research in agenda setting to be envisaged, such as studying how new media pose challenges for understanding what is a common agenda for the media and the public. Another venue would be going beyond predominantly political communication emphasis into studies of media agenda setting through entertainment and other genres. Researchers can also continue to study the psychological processes in the need for orientation, which switches on the agenda-setting mechanism.

Agenda setting also plays a significant part in the broader social roles of media: surveillance of the larger environment, transmission of culture, and connecting different segments of society together. Furthermore, theoretical development of agenda-setting concepts would illuminate the links between issues as general categories and different attributes and demonstrate how issue and attribute saliences differ in their impact on the public perception of these issues.

Some researchers have expressed concern that the technological change in media with the Internet becoming a more and more dominant source of information will not only diversify the voices but will also lead to the fragmentation of the media and public agendas, with unclear consequences for democracy. Nevertheless, initial studies seemed to dispel these fears. Roberts, Wanta, and Dzwo (2002) demonstrated that there was a correspondence between the issues covered by media and the issues discussed in electronic bulletin boards (EBBs). Other studies reported evidence that the media agenda is still whole, not fragmented as some might argue. Another study showed that the second level of agenda-setting and priming effects of media work continuously in the digital environment. The issue attributes in online papers examined in the study successfully transferred to the attribute salience of the audience.

The role of entertainment media in the transfer of salience to the public agenda may become an area of serious attention considering the size of the audiences these media command. Holbrook and Hill (2005) found that non-news sources, in their case criminal dramas, heighten the accessibility and salience of certain issues for the viewers, leading to agenda-setting effects.

The agenda-setting paradigm contributes significantly to the current mass communication scholarship by constantly generating studies with fresh approaches and new angles. The concept of agenda setting has practical applications in academia, journalism, and politics. These are the healthy signs of agenda setting's viability. Moreover, the agenda-setting hypothesis is a part of the ongoing debate about the future of the mass communications field: This debate reflects the interest in agenda setting as one of the tools for truth seeking in the field of communication.

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CULTIVATION AND MEDIA EXPOSURE

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Television is the storyteller of our nation and the world, telling most of the stories to most of the people, most of the time. As such, it has become our most common and constant learning environment, one that very few people can or even want to escape or ignore. Children today are born into homes in which most stories are told by a centralized commercial institution rather than by parents, peers, schools, or the church. Television thus shows and tells us about life—who wins, who loses, who is powerful and who is weak, and who is happy and who is sad.

Television is only one of many venues that help explain the world. What is different about television is that its version of reality is generated by a small number of multinational media conglomerates whose messages bombard everyone with basically the same perspectives at the same time. These views are not very different from those found in other media or imparted by other powerful socialization agents. Yet television is unique because it provides a common set of images to virtually all members of society and because people tend to spend more time with television than with other media.

Since television's inception, there has been concern about its effects. The popular press and the government continue to ask, "What does television do to us?" Teachers and parents wonder if television makes children more aggressive or if it helps or hinders learning. Although seemingly simple, these questions are complex, and the answers are far from simple or straightforward.

Cultivation analysis is one approach to find answers to these broad questions. It is the third component of a research paradigm that investigates (a) the institutional

processes that underlie media and the production of their content, (b) the prevalent images in media content, and (c) the relationships between watching television and audience beliefs and behaviors. In its simplest form, cultivation analysis asks if those who watch more television have views that are more reflective of what they see on television compared with people who have similar demographic characteristics but who watch less television (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2009).

Cultivation studies typically begin with identifying and assessing the most recurrent and stable patterns in television content, looking for those images and values that often cut across most program genres. These findings are then used to generate questions to uncover people's conceptions about social reality. These questions are then posed to samples of children, adolescents, or adults using standard techniques of survey methodology. A key element in these surveys is the assessment of television viewing. Questions about viewing typically ask how much time the respondent watches television on an average day. The analyses then determine light, medium, and heavy viewers on a sample-by-sample basis. Hence, the analyses look for differences in the amount of viewing, not specific amounts of viewing. The questions about social reality used in cultivation analysis do not mention television but rather provide answers that reflect either the dominant views or images seen on television or those found in reality. The resulting relationships between amount of viewing and the tendency to respond in terms of what is seen on television reflects television's contribution to viewers' conceptions of social reality (cultivation).

Those who watch more television are different from those who watch less television in many ways. Although all demographic groups have people who watch more or less television, there are overall differences between those who watch more and those who watch less in terms of sex, age, education, income, occupation, race, and other demographic and social variables. In short, cultivation analysis assumes that those who watch less television are exposed to more varied and diverse information compared with those who watch more television and thus rely more on television for their information. Consequently, cultivation theory predicts that the more time a person spends watching television and being immersed in this mediated world, the more likely his or her views about reality will reflect what is seen on television.

Does Genre Matter?

Over the years, some researchers have questioned whether exposure to specific genres of media messages should be a critical component in understanding the cultivation phenomenon and effects. Cultivation studies that were conducted by the group of scholars who began this line of research, traditionally associated with the Cultural Indicators Project (George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Michael Morgan, James Shanahan, and Nancy Signorielli), have assessed global amounts of viewing, typically asking how much television (not what types of programs) is watched on a typical day. "Classic" cultivation is thus concerned with the long-term and long-range effects of living with television in general. Consequently, these studies predict that those who watch more, television's heavy viewers, see more of these images and messages on a regular basis and that their views of social reality will be influenced by the messages and images they see day in and day out.

Others have explored and studied media effects in a cultivation framework but have measured viewing in a more specific than general manner. Some researchers have asked viewers to fill out viewing diaries (Hawkins & Pingree, 1981) or asked viewers to indicate what shows they regularly watch or have watched during the last week, sometimes choosing these programs from lists of available programs in the viewers' area (Slater & Elliott, 1982; Weaver & Wakshlag, 1986). Potter and Chang (1990), for example, asked high school students how often they watched 12 different television genres (situation comedies, movies, etc.) during a week, using this information to create different measures of viewing. They also calculated a measure of the total amount of viewing, including the amount of viewing of each type of program, and measures that combined the two responses proportionally. This analysis found that students' viewing was somewhat evenly distributed and that most of the students watched each program category about 4.5 hours a week. Although Potter and Chang did not find substantial cultivation

effects in this study, they concluded that a proportional measure of viewing might be the best overall indicator to explore the cultivation phenomenon in future research. Finally, there is also some thought that a measure of attention to media should also be assessed (Chaffee & Schleuder, 1986) and used in conjunction with viewing measures.

Some scholars believe that cultivation research should focus on different genres of programs because they assume that different types of programs present diverse views of the world and social reality. Cohen and Weimann (2000) note that different genres, although typically formula driven, tend to present viewers with diverse views about the world. News, crime, and action programs and programs that explore current events, for example, are thought to focus on social order, examining public rather than domestic life and typically distinguishing right from wrong. The plots of these programs examine events and action, with the characters presenting the motives and the context for the events. On the other hand, situation comedies, family dramas, and soap operas, again formulaic in nature, focus on domestic issues, family relationships, and friendships. Similarly, Grabe and Drew (2007) suggest that one of the reasons scholars have examined possible genre-related cultivation differences is that content analyses typically show variation in portrayals among genres. Situation and romantic comedies present different types of stories from crime dramas, with the former genres having considerably less violence than the latter genres.

Violence, Crime, the Mean World, and Interpersonal Mistrust

The area of study that has received the most attention and been most often associated with the phenomenon of cultivation is people's conceptions about fear, violence, and interpersonal mistrust. Studies of television content conducted in the cultural indicators perspective have found that network television's prime-time world has had a consistent and fairly high level of violence for more than 30 years. About 6 out of 10 programs are violent, with violence occurring at the rate of four to five acts of violence per program (Signorielli, 2003). Similarly, other studies of television violence, including the content analysis of the National Television Violence Study (Smith, Nathanson, & Wilson, 2002) in the mid-1990s, found violence across all channels (cable and broadcast throughout the day, with the most similarity during the prime time hours), with somewhat more graphic violence on the cable channels. As a result of this consistent level of violence viewing, cultivation studies have predicted and found that those who watch more television are more fearful and believe that they are living in a mean and dangerous world. They are more likely to buy guns and watchdogs for protection and to install more locks on windows and doors. These heavy viewers tend to overestimate the likelihood that they will

be involved in violence and tend to overestimate the numbers of police and others in law enforcement and crime detection. In short, viewing tends to heighten perceptions of danger and risk and maintain an exaggerated sense of mistrust, vulnerability, and insecurity (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980).

Some researchers, however, have postulated that viewers' conceptions about fear and violence are the result of more genre-specific viewing. Several studies show relationships between conceptions about crime and the viewing of crime programs, despite the knowledge that television's crime programs typically distort statistics about crime in society. Dominick (1974), in a study of fifth-grade children in New York City, found that those youngsters who watched more crime shows believed that criminals typically were caught and, when arrested, had knowledge of their civil liberties. Carlson (1983), in a study of sixth- through twelfth-grade children in Providence, Rhode Island, found a strong relationship between crime show viewing and expressing attitudes not supportive of civil liberties. Interestingly, these findings were particularly strong for those students who came from middle-class families and whose parents were more likely to be nonconformist.

Hawkins and Pingree (1981) asked schoolchildren in Australia to keep viewing diaries and found that cultivation effects were genre specific and that different genres of programs offered subtle differences about social reality. Some of their analysis focused on the Mean World Index (television answer in italics) which asks if (a) people would be helpful or *just looking out for themselves*, (b) people would be fair or *try to take advantage*, and (c) people can be trusted or *you have to be careful in dealing with people*. They found that scores on the Mean World Index were related to the children's viewing of crime-adventure programs but not viewing cartoons. Scores on more general violence measures, however, were related to viewing both crime-adventure programs and cartoons. On the other hand, scores on the Mean World Index and violence measures were not related to viewing situation comedies or dramas. Although news viewing was also not related to these measures, Hawkins and Pingree noted that the cultural environment of Perth, Australia, was considerably different from those of many U.S. cities in terms of real world violence. In general, scores on the Mean World Index were related to overall viewing measures, whereas scores on the violence measures were more specifically tied to viewing different program genres.

A study of 4,840 Jewish high school students in Israel (Cohen & Weimann, 2000) found differences in cultivation that were genre specific and illustrated cultural differences. Israeli high school students who were heavy viewers of news programs were more likely to have more trust but less likely to express the fear of being victimized or of being exploited. Watching soap operas, on the other hand, was related to expressing less trust in others, whereas watching comedies was related to having more

trust in others. They also found that overall viewing was important and related to the youngsters' views about their safety. Those students who watched the most television expressed a greater sense that they might be exploited and a greater sense of an awareness of police presence in their day-to-day environment.

Holbert, Shah, and Kwak (2004), using a national probability sample, found that viewing television news and policy reality programs was related to measures of fear of crime but that viewing crime dramas was not. This analysis also found that viewing of programs that are not fictional (such as police reality programs) tended to be more strongly related to conceptions of social reality than the viewing of fictional crime dramas. They interpreted this difference as due to the increased perceived realism of the police reality programs.

There is also considerable evidence showing relationships between exposure to violent media and respondents' aggressive attitudes or cognitions, including aggressive political opinions. For example, there is a positive relationship between supporting the death penalty and viewing crime dramas (Holbert et al., 2004). Similarly, a study using data from the 1976 election study found that crime drama viewing by men was related to a willingness to use force to uphold the law and maintain order in society (Reith, 1999). Eyal, Metzger, Lingsweiger, Mahood, and Yao (2006), in a study of undergraduates, found that watching violent television programs (such as *Cops*, *The Sopranos*) was related to having more aggressive political opinions such as supporting capital punishment, vigilantism, and supporting the use of force by the police. Interestingly, this study found that playing violent video games was not related to holding aggressive political opinions. Along the same lines, using data from experiments and results from the 1995 National Election Survey pilot study, Holbrook and Hill (2005) found that frequent watching of crime dramas such as *Without a Trace*, *NYPD Blue*, and *Third Watch* was related to expressing the view that crime is one of the most important issues facing the nation. Moreover, respondents' overall judgments about the president were related to the president's actual performance in addressing crime in society.

An interesting study that surveyed first-semester college students and their parents found that parent viewing of crime dramas was related to having greater perceptions about the prevalence of crime as well as talking about and warning their children, particularly their daughters, about crime while their children were in high school (Busselle, 2003). This analysis, however, found no relationship between viewing and perceptions about crime for the college students, which was most likely due to the students' decreased viewing of crime programs (or any television viewing) while away at school.

There is also some evidence that viewing specific genres is related to perceptions of the federal government. Pfau, Moy, and Szabo (2001) found that viewing reality programs,

such as *Cops*, was related to positive perceptions of the law enforcement branch of government. At the same time, this study found that those who viewed dramas dealing with law enforcement and the law (e.g., *Law & Order*) did not have more favorable conceptions about the federal government, particularly law enforcement agencies, while the viewing of science fiction programs (such as *X-Files*) resulted in less confidence in the federal government. There was no relationship between conceptions about the federal government and the viewing of news-magazine-type programs.

Other Evidence of Cultivation

There is also considerable evidence as to the viability of the cultivation phenomenon that goes beyond assumptions about violence, crime, and interpersonal mistrust. As television programs have consistently underrepresented women and women's roles, analyses in the traditional cultivation model have found that those who watch more television tend to give more gender-stereotyped answers to questions about the roles of men and women in society and that youngsters who watch more television tend to say that boys and girls should do chores that are gender stereotyped, such as boys mowing the lawn and girls cleaning the house (Morgan, 1987; Signorielli & Lears, 1992a).

There is also evidence that viewing specific genres of programming is related to conceptions about issues relating to sex role stereotypes. For example, specific media use is related to male undergraduates expressing support for traditional masculine ideology. Ward, Merrywether, and Caruthers (2006), using a sample of 656 male undergraduates in a Midwest university, found that those young men who frequently read male-oriented magazines and consistently watched the top 35 prime-time comedies and dramas indicated cognitive involvement with television programs, watched music videos, and expressed support for traditional masculine ideals, including the conception of women as sex objects and as the "sexual gatekeepers" (p. 712). These young men also thought that men were more sexually driven than women and perceived dating as a "battle of the sexes" (p. 712). At the same time, the young men who had more traditional views of masculinity, both in general and in terms of their future life partner, expressed more negative views toward childbirth and less support for breast-feeding in public.

Tiggemann (2005) explored media use and conceptions about body weight in a sample of 1,452 high school students in South Australia. Although overall television viewing was not related to body image variables, those high school girls who often read fashion magazines expressed agreement with several measures of body image including striving for thinness, acceptance of bulimia as an option to reach their ideal body weight, and wanting to be more muscular. At the same time, there was

a relationship between spending more time watching soap operas (because these stories were perceived as being more realistic than other genres) and the desire to be thin as well as the internalization of societal or cultural ideals of beauty for men and women. Among the boys, watching both soap operas and music videos was related to expressing a desire to be more muscular. Overall, the high school students in this study who indicated that they often used television programs, such as soap operas, to learn about the world were more likely to have negative self-images, particularly of their bodies, and to exhibit disordered eating behaviors.

Another subject that has been isolated for genre-specific cultivation analysis is talk shows, particularly how watching these programs may influence teenagers' conceptions about life. Davis and Mares (1998) found that teens who watched more talk shows overestimated the number of teens who ran away from home, the number of teenaged girls who became pregnant, and the numbers of both boys and girls between 15 and 19 who have had sex. Similarly, Rossler and Brosius (2001), using a sample of teens in Germany, examined German talk shows in an experimental paradigm exposing some teens to a week of talk shows. They found that those teens who watched five consecutive episodes of talk shows overestimated the percentages of gay males and lesbians in Germany. They also found evidence that those teens who watched talk shows each day during 1 week had less restrictive opinions about lesbian or gay male relationships and displayed less restrictive attitudes about these issues.

Although relationships between television viewing and conceptions about marriage have been found in a traditional cultivation paradigm (Signorielli, 1991), genre-specific viewing is also related to conceptions about marital expectations. Segrin and Nabi (2002), studying a sample of college students, found that both idealized views (Marriage is forever, I will be married for life to the same person) and expressing intentions to marry soon were related to viewing programs that focus on romance, close personal relationships, and marriage (soap operas, romantic comedies, wedding-related programs). Overall viewing, however, was not related to these concepts in this sample. These authors also speculate that the respondents' exposure to romance-filled programs as children (such as Disney movies) may have contributed to expectations about marriage as young adults.

There is also some evidence that exposure to specific types of content is related to respondents' conceptions about sex. In a study of 3,261 seventh and eighth graders, Pardun, L'Engle, and Brown (2005) found that those youngsters who had greater exposure to sexual content said that they were more likely to be active sexually or to express intentions of future sexual activity. Specifically, those who said they watched movies with sexual themes also said that they were sexually active and that they intended to be sexually active in the future.

Finally, there is evidence that viewing specific genres is related to other conceptions about social reality. From a traditional cultivation perspective, studies have shown that those who watch more television typically underestimate the numbers of older people in the United States and are more likely to say that the elderly are infirm and to give more stereotypical responses about how people age (Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli, & Morgan, 1980). Cultivation analyses have also been conducted in areas related to people's health and nutrition. Two studies of middle-school-age children found that those who watch more television tend to say that the types of foods often advertised to children (sweetened cereals, fast food, candy, and soda) are more nutritious than they actually are (Signorielli & Lears, 1992b).

There is also some evidence that viewing different genres of programming is related to respondents having different perceptions about whites and blacks. Busselle and Crandall (2002), using a sample of undergraduates, found that having larger estimates of the amount of education blacks typically had as well as having perceptions that there are smaller differences between the educational levels of blacks and whites was related to viewing situation comedies. On the other hand, viewing television drama was related to the sense that whites are better educated than blacks and that there are greater differences in the amount of education whites and blacks have. Moreover, viewing of this genre was related to the respondents' belief that blacks' lack of socioeconomic success was due to discrimination. News viewing among these undergraduates was not related to estimates of education but was related to notions of modern racism. More news viewing and perceptions about the lack of socioeconomic success of blacks was positively related to saying that blacks lacked motivation and positively related to saying that blacks did not have fewer job opportunities.

Media use is also related to expressing biased conceptions about welfare in the United States. Data from a probability sample of respondents in the Midwest indicated that watching entertaining programs was related to conceptions that minorities made up most of those on welfare, whereas respondents who watched CNN news underestimated the age of those on welfare and overestimated the amount of money spent by the government on welfare. At the same time, those respondents who watched news programs about welfare and poverty (e.g., as seen on PBS's *The Newshour With Jim Lehrer*) were more correct in their conceptions of the types of people on welfare and underestimated how long people stayed on welfare and the amount of money spent on welfare. Similarly, reading newspaper stories about welfare was related to having more correct views about the age of those on welfare and how long the typical welfare recipient remained on welfare. At the same time, respondents' general support for welfare programs was eroded by viewing national and cable news as well as entertainment programs but supported by watching PBS news programs (Sotirovic, 2001).

Finally, Perse (1990) examined cultivation in relation to local news, including viewers' levels of involvement with such programming. She found that greater personal risk was related to respondents having an entertainment orientation to viewing the local news as well as respondents paying attention to crime news. Perse concluded that, overall, media may be more influential in relation to areas or topics with which people do not have direct personal experience.

We thus find that there are many instances in which exposure to very specific media, particularly specific genres of television programs, is related to having views about the world and social reality. One of the questions, however, that must be addressed is whether or not people, on a day-to-day basis, only watch one or two specific genres of programs. Moreover, even if people state that they have a preference for watching a specific genre, their overall media use typically encompasses viewing many different types of television programs as well as using other media such as magazines and newspapers. Most important, the full understanding of genre in relation to cultivation depends on the content to which people are exposed, yet many of the previously described studies did not begin with a genre-related content analysis. Consequently, without specific data to the contrary, it stands to reason that although someone may profess to have a television diet consisting primarily of crime programs, such as the *Law & Order* or *CSI* series, the images to which he or she is exposed may go far beyond just crime and violence. While the *Law & Order* and *CSI* programs are based primarily on the investigation of crime, they also focus on interpersonal and family relationships as well as other thematic elements showing how the world works. Consequently, heavy viewers of these programs will not only learn about crime and violence, they will also learn important life's lessons about how people interact with each other.

While the notion that media genre is a critical component in assessing the phenomenon of cultivation is interesting, it violates one of the basic tenets or assumptions of the cultivation hypothesis. As Shanahan and Morgan (1999) note, "What counts most is the total pattern of programming to which communities are exposed over long periods of time" (p. 31). Moreover, there is the possible problem that viewers and researchers may not define genres in the same way (Newhagen & Lewinstein, 1992). In addition, there is also the possibility that genre-specific studies may uncover more trivial than general effects (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Consequently, it can be argued that the body of studies that focus primarily on media genres is not made up of true studies of cultivation. Rather, these studies may be better described as dealing with more specific than general media effects that would best fit within a general learning theory paradigm rather than the cultivation paradigm.

At the same time, although genre may not be that important for cultivation theory, it may be important to

assess ongoing changes in the media environment to determine whether or not the new media environment is a critical component in the process of cultivation.

New Media

In many respects, the media environment has changed considerably in the past 25 years. The way we now receive media has evolved from the environment of the 1950s and 1960s, with strictly broadcast television (with community antenna TV in some of the more remote and rural areas of the country), theatrical films, or print media (newspapers, magazines, books), to the broad-based electronic media environment of the beginning of the 21st century. In the case of television, until the 1980s, ABC, CBS, and NBC commanded the lion's share of the television audience. There were only a few independent stations in each market, and films were seen in theaters or on television several years after the end of their theatrical run, whereas books, magazines, and newspapers were physical entities that were purchased in bookstores, supermarkets, or drug stores or at newsstands. Today, however, cable or satellite systems provide homes with hundreds of channels, and many homes now are staged to receive programs and movies on demand. Although many movies are still released in theaters, more and more films have a truncated theatrical run, and so they can quickly enter the more lucrative after-market of videodisks and cable movie packages. In addition, some films are produced solely for the cable/videodisk market. Finally, although we still can purchase physical copies of newspapers, magazines, and books, more and more consumers consume these media electronically, and online sources, such as Amazon.com, sell both electronic versions of books and the technology needed to "read" them.

Aside from cable, the technology of the VCR and now DVD players has become accessible to practically everyone. Movies are no longer "special" media, seen in either the theater or years later on television. The availability of videodisks allows consumers to build home libraries of movies and television programs, rent disks from video stores, or use services such as Netflix that deliver movies to your door via the U.S. mail and most recently through electronic sources. We have also changed the way we define what constitutes mass media, moving from broadcast, film, and print to include the World Wide Web and some computer technology. The question then becomes if these changes in venues affect the phenomenon we call cultivation.

Although the way we now receive our "stories" has changed, the way these stories or messages are produced and their content have not changed and, if anything, have become even more homogeneous. Media today are dominated by transnational, global conglomerates whose goal is to maintain a large share of the audience and increase profits. Indeed, as there are more and more channels and more

and more outlets, there are fewer and fewer companies responsible for creating the content to fill these venues. The number of transnational companies continues to become smaller and smaller, with Disney, Time Warner, Bertelsmann, General Electric, Viacom, and News Corp. among the largest and most influential.

Certainly, today's expanded channel media environment provides very content-specific programs dealing with any number of life-related issues (weddings, divorces, courts, food, pets) as well as the traditional fictional "stories." At the same time, the structure of the industry, with its small number of transnational and large media companies, produces messages about the world, its inhabitants, and how they work that are more similar than dissimilar. Consequently, the smaller number of production venues may result in a more homogeneous than heterogeneous media environment. Cultivation has always been concerned with the broad underlying elements of content and how audiences interact with these messages. Indeed, as Shanahan and Morgan (1999) note, "the content of messages is more germane than the technology with which they are delivered" (p. 201).

In light of this, the research in this area does not invalidate cultivation as an important and reasonable way to explain impacts of media on viewers. Beginning with studies on the impact of the VCR on viewing and cultivation, Morgan, Shanahan, and Harris (1990) found that rather than detracting from cultivation, the VCR actually served to amplify cultivation findings, noting that there are more similarities than differences between new technologies and television. Similarly, Dobrow (1990) found that those who typically watch more television (heavy viewers) used the VCR to extend their viewing habits, whereas those who watch less television (light viewers) became even more selective in what they chose to watch. Likewise, Perse, Ferguson, and McLeod (1994) found that those who spent more time watching videotaped movies expressed greater interpersonal mistrust than those who did not watch as many movies.

Cable is yet another venue that some predicted would have an impact on cultivation. Again, given the industry constraints and practices, cable typically delivers more of the same type of messages because many cable channels depend on syndicated network programs to fill most of their programming needs. At the same time, cable also professes to provide "new" and seemingly more diverse programming for viewers. Cable has fewer constraints, and some recent studies of content have found that programs produced only for the cable market often contain more violence and sex than do traditional network offerings (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Overall, however, the change cable has brought to viewing practices is mostly on the surface. As Shanahan and Morgan note, "People are still using their free time to view televised entertainment," and there has not really been "a reduction in our overall exposure to typical mainstream entertainment programs" (p. 208). In short, cable is an outlet that provides an intensified version of traditional network fare.

Cable may thus have some impact on cultivation findings but typically in the directions and ways we would expect from traditional heavy viewing of network programming because cable still provides mass-produced programs made by a small number of concentrated media organizations (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Morgan and Rothschild (1983), for example, found that in homes with cable, traditional sex-role perceptions were stronger compared with homes without cable. Perse and colleagues (1994) found that respondents who had cable subscriptions expressed stronger feelings of interpersonal mistrust, particularly if the respondents tended to use cable to watch typical network broadcast-type programs. At the same time, respondents who viewed more specialized cable offerings (A&E, C-Span, Discovery Channel) did not express greater fear or interpersonal mistrust.

The big question that now faces the study of media effects is whether today's increased interactive media environment will change how media influence those who use them. As computer technology continues to decrease in price, it has become more affordable for the average person, and children's education has become more tied to having access to computers and online technology such as the Internet. As of 2003, computers were found in just over 60% of U.S. homes, with almost 55% of homes having access to the Internet (*Statistical Abstracts of the United States*, www.census.gov/compendia/statab/tables/08s1099.pdf). A focus of continued research in the cultivation tradition thus must begin to assess the more general content of the Web and specifically to determine if those who spend time with computers using it as a primary entertainment venue come to view the world in much the way it is seen in the messages they receive on their computers. But it is critical for new studies to ascertain if the messages found in these computer venues present the same values and elements that we have consistently found in television programs. Nevertheless, given the close ties of Web sites with media-related industries, it seems reasonable to posit that those whose "entertainment" is now tied to computer technology will receive more traditional than nontraditional messages about the world and its people. As such, it also seems reasonable to posit that the evidence of cultivation will remain largely the same.

Evidence of Cultivation

As many studies in media effects, cultivation analyses, whether designed from the prototype of the more "traditional" or "classic" position or from a more genre- or media-specific prototype, typically generate small effects. As even those who watch very little television may watch 7 to 10 hours a week and certainly interact with those who watch more television, the cards are really stacked against finding evidence of cultivation. Consequently, finding even small differences between light and heavy viewers may indicate far-reaching consequences. Moreover, small

effects may have profound consequences. For example, a difference of 1 percentage point in ratings may indicate the success or failure of a program, and a difference of a few percentage points in an election may determine who wins or who loses.

Variations in Cultivation: Resonance and Mainstreaming

Cultivation is a continual, dynamic, ongoing process, not a unidirectional flow of influence from television to viewers, and research has found two processes that reflect differences in how cultivation may work. Direct experience may be important for some viewers; the phenomenon called *resonance* illustrates how a person's everyday reality and patterns of television viewing may provide a double dose of messages that "resonate" and amplify cultivation. For example, those who live in high-crime urban areas often show stronger relationships between amount of viewing and stated fear of crime. Although *resonance* might be an important explanatory concept for genre-related studies, most of these studies do not discuss this possible variation in cultivation-related findings.

Television and similar media venues provide a shared daily ritual of highly compelling and informative content for diversified viewers. Media images seen on television or in other venues typically eliminate boundaries of age, class, and region. Consequently, the mainstream is a relative commonality of outlooks and values that is cultivated by consistent and heavy exposure to the world of television. The phenomenon of *mainstreaming* means that heavy viewing or media exposure may override differences in perspectives and behavior that result from numerous factors and influences. In other words, attitudes or behaviors that would ordinarily be attributed to different social or political characteristics may be diminished or absent in groups of heavy television viewers or media users. For example, for some topics, the beliefs of those who designate themselves as liberal or conservative are often very different when there is little television viewing. But when heavy television viewers who call themselves liberal or conservative are asked about these same topics, the liberals may give responses that are somewhat more conservative and the conservatives may give responses that are somewhat more liberal. The result is that both groups reflect beliefs that are more moderate or middle-of-the-road. In short, *mainstreaming* reflects the sense that television cultivates common perspectives, a relative homogenization that illustrates how television viewing has become the true melting pot of the American people and increasingly the world. Most studies discussing *mainstreaming* focus on overall viewing levels rather than look at viewing of specific genres of programs, however. Few of the studies focusing on media genre using cultivation as a theoretical framework look at their findings in relation to these important variations in cultivation.

Conclusion

Our knowledge of cultivation and the cultivation process is by no means complete. Although the studies described in the forgoing certainly show that the phenomenon of cultivation is found in genre-specific viewing environments, the overall concern is whether viewers consistently maintain these very narrow viewing habits. Given television's importance in society and people's dependence on "entertainment," it is probably unlikely that viewers turn off the television set when they cannot find their favorite type of program. Rather, it is more likely that they continue to watch the next best thing that catches their attention. Or they may turn to another entertainment venue where they will be exposed to the same general types of media messages. All in all, the evidence certainly points to the finding that viewing, whether generalized or specific, is related to viewers' conceptions of social reality.

Cable exacerbates the influence of television, and we still do not know much about how new technologies such as the World Wide Web and computers may affect cultivation. Certainly, if people use computers as another vehicle to gain access to their usual viewing diets, then the computer will operate more as a television set than as a computing machine. Similarly, people may use the Web to spend more time with their favorite types of programs; to find more information about the actors and actresses who play the roles in these programs; or to serve as a vehicle to download movies, newspapers, or other print material. The actual technology (a computer) may not matter if it is being used as a television set or in the way other media have typically been used. What matters most is the system of messages to which people are exposed, and we need more studies assessing the nature of the messages to determine if there are similarities or if there are meaningful differences among media venues. Consequently, if we make the reasonable assumption of homogeneous messages in today's media environment, because those messages are produced and distributed by a small number of very concentrated and interdependent media industries and continue to imitate successful formats and genres. Today's greater competition for media audiences should thus continue to enhance rather than fragment television's contribution to people's conceptions of social reality, namely cultivation.

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VIRTUAL REALITY AND PRESENCE

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The Experience of Virtual Reality

Virtual reality (VR) creates a sensory and psychological experience for users as an alternative to reality. More than just one technology, VR is an ever-growing set of tools and techniques that can be used to create the psychological sensation of being in an alternate space. Underpinning the techniques used to create compelling virtual environments is the basic observation that information is fated for processing by a human sensory and perceptual system that has evolved to interact with regularities occurring in the physical world (Gibson, 1966, 1979). The more one can provide the system with sensory inputs that simulate and effectively mimic those encountered in nature, the more convincing the resulting perceptual and cognitive experience will be for the user. The ultimate goal of designers and users of VR environments is a computer-generated simulation that is indistinguishable to the user from its real-world equivalent. Reaching toward this goal has already enabled us to realize some of VR's potential for use in training, engineering, and scientific research and for providing uniquely gratifying entertainment experiences (Biocca, 1996; Hawkins, 1995).

Illusions for the Senses

The hardware and software used to create a VR system are designed to replicate the information available to the

sensory/perceptual system in the physical world. In other words, a computer and its peripheral devices produce outputs that impinge on the body's various senses, resulting in convincing illusions for each of these senses and thus a rich, interactive multimedia facsimile of real life. There are system components that create such illusions for each of the senses, in particular for vision, hearing, and touch (Burdea & Coiffet, 2003).

A virtual experience reproduces, to the extent that hardware and content are capable, the real-world experience of being in a space by creating the sights, sounds, and sense of touch associated with moving through and interacting with that place. Input devices determine what the user is doing and allow the VR environment to respond appropriately. The system monitors a user's actions and updates the presented information so as to make the behaviors and outcomes in the virtual environment as realistic and congruent with the real world as possible.

Immersion and Presence

The most deeply compelling VR experiences are associated with high levels of *immersion*. In the research community concerned with VR systems, immersion means the extent to which high-fidelity physical inputs (e.g., light patterns, sound waves) are provided to the different sensory modalities (vision, audition, touch) to create strong

illusions of reality in each. This is in contrast to *presence*, the *psychological* sensation of being in a virtual place (Biocca, 1997). (Commentators in the video game community often use the term *immersion* to refer interchangeably to either physical inputs or psychological presence.)

Presence is the sensation of nonmediation while experiencing a mediated environment (Barfield & Weghorst, 1993; Lombard & Ditton, 1997; Steur, 1995). In other words, media experiences such as cinema and VR can be so absorbing and compelling that the observer loses some sense of his or her physical surroundings (i.e., including the medium itself) and responds physically and emotionally in a way that is analogous to actually being in the mediated (i.e., represented) place.

Researchers studying presence further subdivide the concept into notions such as *telepresence*—the sense of *being in* some remote location represented by the medium (Hirose, Yokoyama, & Sato, 1993)—and *social presence*—the sensation of *being with* and interacting with someone in another place (Zhao, 2003). Applications of VR for telepresence can enable the exploration of dangerous (e.g., nuclear power plants) or hard-to-reach environments (e.g., remote medical diagnosis) from a distant location. Such applications of VR can even be accompanied by distant robotic effectors that respond to the physical movements of a user immersed in the VR environment. The result is a feeling of “being there” in the remote location.

There are many levels of immersion and presence that can be achieved through different combinations of input and display devices. These levels can be thought of as points along a “virtuality continuum” whose end points are the real world and completely virtual environments (Milgram & Kishino, 1994). Points in between correspond to what has come to be known as *mixed reality*. Mixed reality consists of *augmented reality*—the blending of mostly real and some virtual content—and *augmented virtuality*—mostly virtual, with some real content (games created for Sony’s EyeToy, which puts the player into a game on-screen, represent an example of augmented virtuality). Mixed reality is discussed in the section Future Directions.

The degree of presence experienced in a virtual environment tends to correspond to the degree of immersion. Technically speaking, modern PC- and console-based video games constitute a major portion of commercial VR applications. Although peripheral input and output devices are becoming popular to make these games more immersive (discussed below), these “desktop display” applications don’t quite live up to the archetypal sense of the term *virtual reality*.

The most compelling VR environments are implementations that literally envelop the user in a virtual world, surrounding the user with stereoscopic visual imagery and sound, tracking body motion, and responding to behavior in the environment. The user experiences the sensation of having entered a computer-generated landscape that surrounds him or her in all directions. Parts of the environment will allow for naturalistic, body-based interaction—the user can

walk through the environment while the scene changes in realistic ways, can hear different spatialized sounds while visiting different locales, and can reach out to touch and manipulate various features.

Strangely, as the realism of virtual humans approaches that of actual humans, observers tend to experience an uncomfortable sensation much like that created from observing a human corpse. Even in the most (currently) hyperrealistic virtual humans, the perceptual system’s extreme competence in detecting tiny aberrations from normal behavior and appearance lead to this surrealistic property. This sensation, referred to as “The Uncanny Valley,” was first described by Mori (1970). Paradoxically, people seem to prefer watching and interacting with less realistic human characters.

Virtual Reality Technology

VR applications can range from simple desktop applications, wherein the virtual environment is presented in a window on the desktop, to immersive motion platform systems that provide users with a complete virtual experience (Burdea & Coiffet, 2003). The world of systems can be divided into nonimmersive and immersive approaches.

Nonimmersive VR

The most basic nonimmersive configuration is a virtual world in a window on a computer screen. This modality is, indeed, the basis for many computer games and online environments such as *Second Life*. These systems require little more than conventional computing capabilities, though high-performance graphics cards are a common component. Manipulation of the environment and navigation within the virtual space can be done using keyboard commands, mouse input, or gaming controllers. Keyboard-based input systems are necessarily limited by the small number of keys that have clear meanings in a VR environment (such as the arrow keys). Keyboards are available for gaming applications with extensive relabeling, though these tend to be very game specific. Mouse input provides a simple yet rich interface. The mouse can be used to pitch and roll the view, navigate using aircraftlike control for fly-throughs, or select specific objects or locations in the space by clicking on them. Some means such as varying combinations of mouse button presses or keyboard selections must be provided to switch the usage through a variety of modes. Joysticks provide a more natural interface to some virtual environments in that aircraftlike navigation is more easily mapped to a more aircraftlike control. Modern gaming controllers often have multiple joysticks and additional buttons with clear navigational and selection meanings. Systems such as VR Commander allow users to communicate with a virtual environment using voice commands, though this is accomplished primarily via simple mappings to keyboard or mouse events.

In some cases, systems are augmented with sensors that allow direct 3D manipulation of the world. A *motion tracker* is a device that is able to continuously ascertain the position and/or orientation of a physical location in space, usually through the attachment of a physical sensor at that location (Foxlin, 2002). Motion trackers for desktop applications use handheld or attached devices such as styli that allow the user to move a corresponding graphical model. Styli are held like pens and allow the user to specify points or perform operations such as spray painting or drawing in the virtual world. Tracking systems can also be attached to the hands, allowing the user the ability to place virtual hands in the environment, either disembodied or as part of an avatar (virtual representation of the user). Hand instrumentation includes the system that tracks movement of the hands, simple gloves that recognize finger touches, such as the PinchGlove, or instrumented gloves that capture joint angles for the fingers. Motion trackers considerably increase the realism and degree of immersion of even desktop virtual environments because the motions of the controllers are directly analogous to motion in the environment. Tracking systems able to capture orientation allow users to directly manipulate orientation, with the object or camera in the environment matching the orientation of the sensor. Systems capable of tracking a position can virtually move objects.

The addition of 3D displays increases the impact of desktop applications. 3D is commonly accomplished by presenting two images in rapid succession on the monitor, one image for each eye, allowing for the perception of depth due to binocular cues. These displays are often referred to as *stereoscopic displays*. Any desktop monitor with sufficient frame rate capabilities can provide 3D in this form. Shutter glasses open and close before each eye in an alternating pattern so that each only sees the image appropriate for that eye. Persistence of vision prevents the perception of flicker, provided the frame rate is sufficiently fast, usually 120 frames per second. Since shutter glasses are rather large and cumbersome, multiple approaches exist that avoid their use. Displays such as the Planar StereoMirror and the iZ3D monitor present images to each eye with different light polarizations. All that is needed to view the display are simple polarized glasses as are commonly used for 3D motion pictures. Some displays, such as Philips WOWvx, dispense with the glasses altogether by placing miniature optics in front of the pixels that direct the image to only the appropriate eye. These monitors only work when the head is at a specific location (the sweet spot).

3D displays are implemented in a tracked or untracked mode. Untracked displays assume a fixed viewer position, which is reasonable for many desktop applications. The graphics system renders images for the eyes and their distinct locations. An increased perception of reality is accomplished by tracking the head so that the viewpoint can vary. This allows the user to move, increasing depth perception beyond pure stereo vision through the addition of motion parallax.

Immersive VR

Immersive VR systems seek to place the user *in* a virtual environment. The most compelling VR systems are *immersive*, so termed because they immerse the senses of the user in computer-controlled stimuli. These systems exist over a wide range of modalities. The most basic immersive system is a rear-projection screen with a stereo-capable display. The user has a motion-tracking system attached to the head so that the system can know the location of the user and render the environment as seen from that location. These systems are often augmented with tracking devices that can capture hand and body motion, allowing a more immersive experience (Foxlin, 2002).

Projection Display Systems

A single projection screen places a user next to a virtual window into a synthetic world. Additional screens can be placed around the user, forming a VR cave. A common cave configuration is five screens: four that surround the user and an additional screen above. Some systems augment this configuration with a sixth screen on the floor. Caves can provide a 360-degree immersive VR environment (Brennesholtz & Stupp, 2008).

Head-Mounted Displays

Head-mounted displays (HMDs) provide images directly to the eye and also provide a 360-degree immersive experience. A typical HMD consists of two small liquid crystal displays and optics that present an independent image to each eye. When used in conjunction with motion tracking of the head, an HMD can continuously present images to each eye that are rendered from the viewpoint of the eye in the virtual world. Turning the head pans and tilts the virtual camera so that the image appears stable to the user.

Sensors

A key element of many VR systems is the ability to track motion in space. Motion-tracking systems instrument the user's head, hands, other body parts, and any other objects that need to have analogs in the virtual world. Motion tracking makes it possible for a virtual camera to follow the motion of a physical person. Motion capture systems exist based on inertial sensors, magnetic fields, ultrasonic sound waves, infrared markers, and software-based tracking of camera images. The Xsens MTi uses inertial sensing in combination with a simple electronic compass to determine orientation. Orientation-only sensors are only appropriate for HMDs. The Polhemus Patriot uses a transmitter that generates three alternating magnetic fields. Sensors determine the location and orientation of a tracked element by analyzing the reception magnitude of three-directional coils. Magnetic sensors allow reliable and

fast tracking of the position and orientation of a sensor over a range of about 1 meter but are sensitive to magnetic fields. The Intersense IS-900 uses a large number of ultrasonic transmitters in combination with inertial tracking to determine the position and orientation of each receiver in a space that can be extended to several dozen meters square. The combination of ultrasonics, which provide high locational accuracy but at a slow rate, with inertial tracking, which is fast but subject to drift, is a sensor fusion approach that leverages the benefits of each system. The Intersense IS-1200 uses small cameras and ceiling-mounted fiducial images. A fiducial image, sometimes referred to as a marker, is a printed image with characteristics that make it easy for a computer-vision system to recognize and track it. Since a tracking space need only be equipped with pieces of paper, this approach can track over a large distance and complex geometry, though it is subject to occlusion and limited orientations. The Moven inertial-motion capture suit can capture continuous poses for the entire body using inertial sensors.

Capture of hand gestures allows the development of high-performance user interfaces. The FakeSpace PinchGlove captures combinations of finger presses, allowing simple grasp indications. More highly instrumented gloves, such as the Immersion CyberGlove II, capture all joint angles of the hand.

Haptics

Haptic devices apply forces, commonly referred to as *haptic feedback*, to the user, increasing the sense of immersion and extending the virtual experience to include the sense of touch (Bicchi, 2008). The SensAble Phantom family of devices have a stylus that can be manipulated by the user. The system tracks the stylus and uses servo motors to resist user forces or move the stylus directly. The amount of force exerted on the stylus by the servo motors can be precisely controlled. The net effect is the simulation of moving the stylus against resistive surfaces, the feel of moving over textured surfaces, and the sense that the stylus is subject to manipulation by elements in the virtual environment. A common application is virtual surgery, where the stylus becomes a virtual scalpel, with the haptic feedback simulating the resistance of flesh or bone as the surgeon conducts a virtual procedure.

Software

A variety of software solutions exist for the development of virtual worlds (Burdea & Coiffet, 2003). Many video cards have the ability to enforce stereo on existing programs, allowing games to be played in immersive environments with no modification, though the degree of immersion is limited to a single viewpoint and is most suitable for projection screen systems. Dassault Systems Virtools allows the creation of virtual worlds and 3D games

with a rapid prototyping methodology and supports HMDs and projection screens. The WorldViz Vizard VR Toolkit supports the development of a wide range of VR components including avatars.

Applications of VR

In the 1990s, there was a great deal of public excitement surrounding the coming of age of VR and all the ways it purportedly would revolutionize entertainment, education, engineering, and other activities. Today, however, a popular view is that VR has failed to live up to (often overstated) visions (Rheingold, 1991; Sherman & Judkins, 1993) and that the excitement has faded as dreams of hyperrealistic personal VR experiences have failed to come to pass. This view, though, may merely reflect a change in popular perception. The fact is that VR has steadily made inroads into an enormous number of application areas, albeit perhaps more quietly and gradually than suspected by early prognosticators (Burdea & Coiffet, 2003; Giannachi, 2004; Gutierrez, Vexo, & Thalmann, 2008; Harders, 2008; Riva, 2004; Schmorow, Cohn, & Nicholson, 2008; Wiederhold & Wiederhold, 2005). A large number of companies now specialize in equipment used in VR systems, and many have complete turnkey systems available. Furthermore, the industry may soon face another explosion in visibility and excitement as new variants (e.g., mixed reality) become more mainstream due to the ubiquity of portable devices containing many of the essential capabilities for VR (displays, camera and tracking systems, computer processing power).

Alongside evolving technology, VR applications have blossomed in a wide range of areas. VR has proven useful for gaining basic scientific knowledge, for medical diagnosis and treatment, for commerce and entertainment (especially in the realm of desktop VR), in training, and in cultural heritage. For illustrative purposes, we present here a brief sampling of VR applications.

Training

Virtual environments are often ideal to meet training needs (Schmorow et al., 2008). They provide standardized interactive experiences that are cost-effective as they are potentially reusable by a wide audience. They are safe learning experiences (i.e., mistakes only lead to virtual consequences, not costly or dangerous outcomes in the real world that make on-the-job training hazardous). They are compelling (users often report higher levels of engagement completing a virtual task relative to more traditional methods such as listening to a lecture or reading a book). It is well-known that high levels of motivation and engagement lead to improved learning outcomes. Training can be done using either fully immersive or desktop virtual environments.

Communication Skills

Researchers at the University of Florida used a CAVE environment to create a virtual “standard patient” for imparting communication skills to medical students (Lok, 2006). Named DIANA (DIgital ANimated Avatar), the virtual patient engages the trainee in the doctor/patient interview process, intimating the existence of various symptoms. A system such as this could potentially replace the current training regime, which requires live actors to portray patients, is costly, and lacks uniformity for trainees.

Researchers at Case Western Reserve University have created a training simulator to enhance communication skills in dental students (Case Western Reserve University, 2008). This desktop VR application makes use of the massively multiplayer online world Second Life. Like DIANA, the focus of this training simulation is to foster improved doctor/patient communication. Students get much needed practice in collecting patient history information, informing patients about treatment options, and describing dental techniques.

Medicine

One of the most widely explored applications of VR technology is in the realm of medicine (Harders, 2008). VR allows researchers to see patient behaviors and body structures in new ways and enables new and effective therapeutic approaches.

Rehabilitation

Many medical researchers have explored the use of VR in rehabilitating stroke victims. At the University of Haifa, researchers have found a way to assess different patterns of stroke-induced brain damage (University of Haifa, 2008). Patients’ hand motions are recorded as they respond to virtual flying objects (tennis balls). The researchers’ computer models use this motion data to diagnose patients with a high degree of accuracy (approximately equivalent to that of human physicians). The value of these modeling techniques lies in their capacity to illuminate the probable outcomes of various new treatment alternatives. The ultimate hope is that these models will allow diagnosis and rehabilitation decisions that outperform any human doctor.

In a similar application, researchers at Rutgers University in New Jersey (Boian et al., 2002) used a desktop VR system equipped with data gloves for stroke rehabilitation. The patient exercises his or her affected hand and arm by manipulating an on-screen hand to interact with a virtual butterfly, play a virtual piano, and perform other tasks. At least in part due to the increased engagement that this task creates for the participant, the system leads to marked improvements. In addition, the data gloves enable a valuable recording of day-to-day progress.

Another intriguing medical application has been to give virtual limbs to amputees. One of the outcomes of losing a

limb is the phenomenon known as phantom limb pain: Patients may feel the sensation that their missing limbs still exist. This sensation is so real that patients may feel itching, soreness, and even cramps in the nonexistent appendage. Research has demonstrated that an ability to see and control a virtual limb—controlled by the remaining contralateral one—enables patients both to visualize and to mentally exercise the missing limb, to rub out soreness and cramps, and generally alleviate short-term phantom limb pain. Researchers in the United Kingdom have demonstrated a VR system for aiding patients with this visualization process (Murray, Pettifer, Caillette, Patchick, & Howard, 2006).

Finally, an active area of VR-based neurorehabilitation research is in the postural stability community, which involves developing instrumentation that allows clinicians to decouple the contributions of various sensory cues such as vision and touch (Jeka, Schöner, Dijkstra, Ribeiro, & Lackner, 1997), diagnose disorders in stroke patients and the elderly (Keshner & Kenyon, 2004), and potentially understand how to improve balance using therapeutic means. In this area of research, visual stimuli such as a moving starfield projected onto a CAVE environment are coupled to a mechanical stimulus presented via a touchplate. Models of multisensory integration predict that both visual stimuli moving across the screen at a certain rate and touch stimulation of varying frequencies delivered at the fingertip will affect stability while standing upright (Jeka et al., 1997). Research such as this holds the promise of applying VR to improve the balance of individuals diminished by age or stroke. Furthermore, the coupling of visual or auditory simulations and mechanical stimuli may ultimately be applied to the design of more sophisticated wearable and prosthetic interfaces.

E-Commerce

In recent years, Web-based VR technology has been used to enhance the online shopping experience. The increased interactivity allows shoppers to explore details of a given product, and this has been shown to increase product knowledge, lead to more positive attitudes about the product, and increase the chance of purchase (Li, Daugherty, & Biocca, 2002).

Specialized VR applications such as Aarkid and TurnTool allow viewers to inspect 3D models of a product closely in order to learn more about its features. One limitation to using these techniques has been the inability to allow the user to interact with a product beyond merely inspecting it in 3D. Recent attempts have sought to create modeling environments that can implement Web-based product demonstrations that allow the user to experience, to some degree, interacting with a product. An example is BMW’s “Dress Your Car” tool, which allows users to visualize product options interactively (www.virtools.com/applications/marketing-bmw3.asp).

One interesting recent finding is that virtual online product examination leads to increased memory for product features.

Researchers at the University of Washington have examined the outcome of interacting with a virtual product (camera) and found that although participants remembered more product features than those viewing only static pictures (they also spent more time examining the VR product), they also had a tendency to falsely remember features that the camera didn't actually possess (Schlosser, 2006).

Basic Science

VR technology affords possibilities for basic scientific understanding, which is often difficult or impossible to achieve using other methods. VR offers greater realism and complexity than is commonly found in controlled laboratory experiments. Also, VR implementations often create more control and greater replicability than do standard field experiments.

Spatial Navigation

Researchers at Johns Hopkins University studying visual perception and spatial navigation have benefited from the ability to create lifelike navigation spaces. The researchers used a virtual forest to explore the degree to which navigation performance is influenced by peripheral vision. For some participants, performance deteriorated when their field of view was narrowed. Nevertheless, others still managed to navigate the forest well. These latter participants were those who relied more on, and had better memory for, virtual landmarks that could be used to guide their navigation (Fortenbaugh, Hicks, Hao, & Turano, 2006).

Similarly, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania used immersive VR to study how viewers perceive the rate of change of approaching objects (Schrater, Knill, & Simoncelli, 2001). Their research disentangled the relative contributions of optic flow (spatial change information) and changes in size. The study found that size changes alone can be an effective indicator for perceiving the object's approach.

3D Visualizations

One area of VR-based molecular modeling is in the area of protein and biomolecular simulation. Simulating the energetics and physics of processes such as protein folding in 3D can help scientists and students alike better understand the structure and function of biomolecules. Molecular simulations are also sensitive to the manipulation of both time and space. For example, proteins exist at the spatial scale of angstroms to nanometers (Hunter & Borg, 2003) but can be scaled up to centimeters using virtual simulations. Likewise, protein folding simulated at their natural timescale of nanoseconds is informative but does not explain dynamic processes such as photosynthesis or DNA repair. Simulations that operate at these longer timescales have been produced and can elucidate a number

of important biological processes (Humphrey, Dalke, & Schulten, 1996).

Consumer Gaming

Consumer gaming has adopted VR technology in a major way. Estimates put profits in the video game industry on par with the film industry. The sophisticated computer graphics used in today's PC and console games are the most widespread commercial adaptation of basic VR to date. As computer-generated graphics have advanced in fidelity, devices for sensory immersion have improved as well. Wide-screen, high-definition displays are becoming commonplace, and surround-sound audio systems implement highly realistic 3D spatialized sound. The realism generated by these devices can greatly enhance the sensation of presence while playing.

Devices that were once relegated to the VR lab have also begun to creep into the mainstream. Inexpensive stereo shutter glasses can turn a PC-based game into a life-like 3D stereoscopic experience. Also available are inexpensive HMDs, such as eMagin's 3DVisor, that serve the same purpose. The success of Nintendo's Wii system underscores the possibilities of, and enthusiasm for, tracking devices that translate a player's physical activity (beyond finger movements on a joystick or keyboard) into actions in the virtual world. Enabling senior citizens or other nontraditional game players to participate by swinging a virtual baseball bat or rolling a virtual bowling ball promises dramatic new outcroppings of VR gaming applications. Other companies have taken up this mantle by focusing on peripheral devices that increase immersion using haptic feedback (e.g., Novint's Falcon).

In addition to the home-gaming market, many sophisticated VR installations have been developed for entertainment purposes. Once the primary domain of video games, arcades have survived the home-gaming explosion by devising ever more immersive player experiences. Input devices have moved from joysticks and buttons to replicas of actual environmental objects, such as motorcycles and personal watercraft, that tilt and lurch in concert with the game action. Arcade game designers have gone so far as to make realistic fire hoses for playing virtual firefighter and even replicated the interior of a tractor-trailer for simulated truck driving. Even an entire room can be devoted for use in highly compelling, projection-based golf course or hunting simulations.

With the expansion of the gaming market and culture for the past several decades, virtual games have increasingly been used not only for entertainment but also for serious purposes such as learning, training, exercise, and therapy. So-called serious games have drawn much attention for their potential to radically change the tradition of brick-and-mortar classroom teaching to "digital game-based learning" (Prensky, 2005). Virtual games for educational purposes have been reported to provide educational effects such as increased motivation, memory retention,

and engagement. One of the principle adopters of video games for learning is the U.S. military. VR games have proven useful for teaching the proper use of military equipment, establishing tactical advantages, and collaborating with others in team-based missions. Examples include battle simulations such as the Navy's *Fleet Commander* and the Marines's *Close Combat: Marines and VBS1*. Flight simulator games have been used for years to shorten training time and reduce pilot risks. Likewise, simulation-based virtual 3D navigation games such as *Falcon 4.0*, *Fighter Ace*, and *AirForce Delta Storm* have been developed to provide virtual navigation experiences to game users.

Virtual Reality in Popular Culture

The fascination with VR's potential over the years is reflected in its portrayal by the popular media. Scores of books, movies, and TV series have explored the implications of making VR illusions part of our everyday lives. Nevertheless, due likely to the slowness of immersive VR technologies in becoming a part of the mainstream entertainment landscape, the public excitement about the technology seems to have waned to some degree in recent years. Nevertheless, VR remains a staple of science fiction writers today.

Probably the most prominent and influential vision of what VR could ultimately become is the Holodeck, depicted in the television series *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Inside the Holodeck, participants are totally immersed (although not apparently outfitted with any gear) and feel a complete sense of presence in the virtual world: Although they know that they are in a facsimile of reality, nothing in the perceptual experience belies this fact. The Holodeck's perfect realism has made it a touchstone in discussions about the current and future status of VR in academic and popular discourse (Murray, 1998). The writers of another *Star Trek* spinoff, *Star Trek: Voyager*, included not a Holodeck but a virtual physician that gave all appearances of being real. Embedded into the real world, this holographic character interacted with others with no help from any technological gear borne by the humans. Like the Holodeck, this vision of a virtual human embedded into the natural world portrays a fanciful boundary condition for augmented reality.

Although in each of these examples the authors envision highly realistic, compelling, and ostensibly useful VRs, a common thread in most science fiction portrayals is that VR serves merely as a plot device to explore ethical and existential conundrums. For example, in the *Matrix* movie series, humans have been co-opted by a race of machines, keeping their bodies in suspended animation to harvest their electrical energy. To keep us content and submissive, the machines must supply humans with a virtual existence so real that we are unable to detect its being otherwise. Another recent movie depiction, 1999's *eXistenZ*, portrays a

future use of VR in which the boundary between the real and the virtual dissolves, creating a nightmarish existence where one can never be sure what is genuine. The television series *Virtuality* envisions a world where VR is required to exercise the imaginations of crew members enduring a year's-long voyage through space. As in much science fiction, the perils of technology are explored and emphasized. In this case, the virtual world frequented by the crew is eventually invaded by a malicious virtual being that terrorizes users. An earlier fictional account—*VR Troopers*—was a live action television series in which VR was an alternate dimension that could be crossed into and in which lived evil beings bent on the destruction of “true” reality. Although each of these examples envisions highly evolved and potentially beneficial versions of VR, writers routinely employ visions of misuse and malevolence.

Future Directions

Augmented Reality

Although VR continues to make inroads into a wide variety of fields, it is often characterized by large, expensive, stationary test beds or training facilities. While the adoption of these kinds of environments is still experiencing healthy growth, the major near-term growth appears to lie in applications of *augmented reality* (AR) (Bimber & Raskar, 2005; Haller, Billingham, & Thomas, 2007). Rather than providing a user with a perception of an entirely virtual world, AR technologies change the perception of the real world. A variety of AR technologies exist, including HMDs that overlay computer graphics onto the visual field and display systems that present modified camera views.

The primary benefit of AR is mobility. In traditional VR worlds, all features are computer generated—even the user has a virtual body (e.g., disembodied virtual hands controlled by user movements enable one to touch and grasp virtual objects). AR capitalizes on the user's real environment. The computer embellishes the user's field of view by adding computer-generated information only when and where needed. For example, virtual objects or characters can be embedded into a real room alongside the user. Imagine seeing virtual signage on the side of a building that provides information about what can be found inside (e.g., addresses, business names, directory information, or anything else you might find today on a company Web site).

The necessary ingredients for AR are largely the same as for traditional VR: a display system and input sensors, with the ability to track spatial location with some precision. Today's cell phones and other mobile handheld devices have increasingly capable displays and camera systems, and location monitoring is possible using camera-based fiducial tracking, ever more precise GPS tracking, or

other currently available means. Although these capabilities are still somewhat crude for widespread deployment of AR, all these system components are rapidly growing in precision and power, and nearly all these components are already ubiquitous in society.

Technological Advances

Another driving factor for near-term adoption of VR and AR is miniaturization of the needed components. HMDs have gone from cumbersome, garish devices as large as (or larger than) a toaster to small, monocular displays about the size of a cell phone, though some, such as the Microvision Mobile Device Eyewear, resemble conventional sunglasses. The goal of HMD designers is to make devices so compact ultimately that they can be worn anywhere by anyone without attracting undue attention (much like the Bluetooth headsets common today). Devices this small are thought to be “socially acceptable,” meaning that they could be worn without arousing fear or suspicion from bystanders. Current HMDs are small enough to be portable and can be adopted for use by first responders (e.g., paramedics, the police) and military personnel. Acceptance on a grand scale will likely require smaller systems that blend more naturally with civilian attire. In addition to HMDs, this involves the use of a cell phone, PDA, or tablet PC for implementing “magic-window” AR displays that allow the viewer to see their augmented environment simply by holding up the screen in front of their face.

In addition to miniaturization and increased mobility, many other sources of expense in creating VR are becoming more affordable and easier to use. Projectors capable of stereoscopic display now sell for a few thousand dollars, in contrast to earlier models costing tens of thousands. The software for creating virtual environments has also improved dramatically, due largely to the explosion of the consumer video-game market. Several companies now even offer turnkey VR software solutions.

Increased Sensory Immersion

Another factor likely to drive a new interest in VR is the recent success of peripheral devices—most notably Nintendo’s Wii controller—in tracking body movements and increasing sensory immersion. For decades, game companies tried to increase the player’s immersion by selling peripheral input devices such as steering wheels or gun controllers; such devices generally sold poorly. Sony’s EyeToy—a webcam that inserts the player’s image into the game and responds to user movements (in two dimensions), however, was a surprising success. The release of Nintendo’s Wii system, which uses infrared sensors and accelerometers to pinpoint the player’s hand position and orientation in 3D space, suggests a sea of change in the marketability of these devices. The striking

success of a consumer product (i.e., the Wii) that makes use of tracking technology developed decades ago in VR labs bodes well for the wider adoption of these techniques in coming years. Recent attempts at consumer products for haptic stimulation, such as Novint’s Falcon, have come on the market and make possible extremely compelling tactile stimulation.

Unconventional Input Devices

Perhaps the ultimate input device won’t respond to overt user behaviors at all but rather to physiological states produced by the body and sensed with electrophysiological and other recording devices. Numerous researchers are working on so-called brain-computer interfaces that enable continuous updating of information in the virtual world based on mere thought (using electroencephalogram data), changes in heart rate (using electrocardiogram data), skin conductance (using electrodermal response data), and other indicators (e.g., cerebral blood flow measured with functional near-infrared imaging).

Brain-computer interfaces hold great potential for restoring capabilities to users without use of their limbs. Monitoring these data is also of great interest to those interested in *augmented cognition*, which is a branch of human-computer interaction research concerned with improving learning and performance in computer-based tasks by making use of physiological states such as fear, boredom, or lack of attentional capacity. As with the other technologies described above, recent efforts have been made to commercialize headsets capable of recording brain and muscle activity for use in brain-computer interfaces. As with the video-game boom, renewed interest and vigorous research activity are outcomes likely to follow from widespread commercial adoption of these exciting new VR technologies.

Conclusion

VR combines the input and output from a variety of sensors and displays to create the psychological experience of actually being in some other, virtual place. Ongoing research and development have resulted in myriad new devices for monitoring body-based behaviors and for presenting increasingly realistic information to our visual, auditory, and other sensory systems. The growing availability of VR technology has led to its adoption in a wide range of application areas. VR enables enhanced perspectives on scientific questions, safe and engaging learning environments, new avenues for medical diagnosis and rehabilitation, and, of course, deeply involving entertainment experiences. With the recent widespread adoption of portable consumer products such as camera phones, GPS receivers, and the like, VR is set to break free from its stationary roots and begin populating our natural environment with valuable

location-based information, perhaps bringing with it a new wave of exploration and excitement.

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COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

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Not much characterizes the 21st century more than computer-mediated communication. It's difficult to recall a time, just a few years ago, when we didn't spend up to several hours a day sending e-mails, participating in instant messaging (IM), or surfing the World Wide Web. Today, it's not uncommon to check e-mail before breakfast, IM friends while working on a class assignment, glance at our Facebook and MySpace pages at lunchtime, entertain friends with our most recent discovery on YouTube in the evening, and add a new entry to our blog, logging off just before nodding off at night.

When and how did our computer-mediated communication (CMC) become so pervasive, so suddenly? Did we notice it becoming woven into the fabric of our lives—our learning, our work, our relationships? Did we sense our increasing connectedness to the world as more and more people, organizations, and resources were accessible to us online?

Do we remember a time when information and communication technology didn't feature so heavily in the news? Countless news reports of the next greatest technological development, or the newest "killer app," create the hype that has encouraged so many of us to consume, to upgrade, to get the newest, coolest gadgets in this season's most fashionable colors, the most portable laptop, the fastest connection.

It's provoked a lot of fear as well—early press reports indicated that much more than 85% of all online content is pornographic; predators and stalkers are more dangerous online than off; and if you're online too much, you're going to become an "Internet addict," a recluse with eyes

glued to the screen, fingers attached to the keyboard, neglecting friends and family, and eventually becoming a law-breaking hacker or a cyberpredator, or both. Gosh, what a scary place the cyberworld is!

Most of us have negotiated this hysteria as information and communication technology have become, well, a mundane part of our lives, a set of useful tools to help us connect with others, do our work, check the weather. Nevertheless, it is an important part of our lives. And even if it does seem mundane and we take tech for granted, if we take a few moments to look back on the past decade (or the past two decades, for many of us not-so-newbies), it's clear that there has been an explosion of communication technology in our lives. And it's not surprising that there's been an explosion of research analyzing the impact of CMC on our lives. CMC research is pervasive in our discipline as well. Recall in the first volume of *21st Century Communication*, the chapter "Communication as a Field and as a Discipline" cited nine subfields identified by the National Communication Association in 2004: (1) Communication and Technology, (2) Critical/Cultural Studies of Communication/Media, (3) Health Communication, (4) Intercultural/International Communication, (5) Interpersonal/Small-Group Communication, (6) Mass Communication Research, (7) Organizational Communication, (8) Political Communication, and (9) Rhetorical Studies. Whereas, obviously, CMC has featured heavily in the research in communication and technology it has been studied in all nine subdisciplinary areas, as well as numerous other disciplines including psychology, sociology, and computer science, to name a few.

A Brief Look at Early CMC Research

Although CMC research spans the breadth of communication studies and related disciplines, it has a relatively short history. Compared with other areas of media and communication research that have spanned half a century or more, CMC research is still in its infancy—a newbie, as the tech savvy might say. Even the concept of CMC has changed to encompass the different types of technologies and communicative styles that have developed in the past few years. For example, CMC originally was defined as human communication across two or more networked computers, through services such as e-mail, chat rooms, and IM. As technology became more pervasive and user-friendly, other forms of CMC were analyzed, such as Weblogs (now known merely as “blogs”), visual chat, Web-delivered chat, webcams, and Web pages. CMC grew to include online group decision-making systems, which will be expanded on in the next chapter of this volume. Later, the definition expanded to include additional forms of human interaction including text messaging via mobile/cellular phones.

Some of the first instances of CMC research were published in the 1980s. In these early days, researchers focused on the organizational contexts of CMC, primarily in the impact of decision making and leadership in local-area networks (see, e.g., Rice & Love, 1987; Siegel, Dubrovsky, Kiesler, & McGuire, 1986). At the first signs that CMC was becoming useful for recreational and interpersonal communication, researchers asked if CMC was appropriately suited for “‘social’ uses” (Baron, 1984, p. 136). Since CMC was so new, some researchers looked back to other technological developments to see how other forms of communication technology affected social interaction. Research on telephone usage, some decades earlier, compared the degrees of “social presence” of communicating by telephone versus communicating face-to-face (f2f).

Some of the research debates occurring around factors influencing social interaction not only worked under the assumption that CMC was, in fact, inappropriate for “social uses” but also analyzed in what ways CMC is, to borrow from the Beastie Boys, “ill communication.” The popular press warned of all kinds of ills, “Internet addiction” ranking as the number one disease (without bothering to check if this addiction has ever existed). Debates centered on claims that CMC was asocial or antisocial (or both). Some critics of CMC argued that it is asocial because the quality of the communication is decreased due to technological constraints. Others contended that CMC is antisocial because it can have a damaging effect on “real life,” or “offline,” communication and relationships (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). Researchers also questioned the “cuelessness,” or lack of nonverbal cues and indicators of identity (such as class, gender, and ethnicity), inherent in CMC. Howard Rheingold (1993), for example,

discusses the limitations of CMC for cultures that rely more heavily on nonverbal communication to express meaning, respect, and social hierarchy.

Other researchers saw such “limitations” as liberating. Instead of harming communication, the lack of cues and identity markers enhanced communication because it broke down barriers resulting from classism, racism, homophobia, and other social injustices. The democratic potential of CMC arises from what Susan Herring (1993) calls its “social decontextualization.” According to Herring, the decontextualization inherent in CMC “neutralizes social status cues (accent, handwriting/voice quality, sex, appearance, etc.) that might otherwise be transmitted by the form of the message.” Although Herring admits that the lack of social status cues can make CMC less personal, CMC can equalize the social status of communicators. Thus, there is “the possibility that traditionally lower-status individuals can participate on the same terms as others—that is, more or less anonymously, with the emphasis being on the content, rather than on the form of the message or the identity of the sender.”

In debates countering the asocial and antisocial nature of CMC, researchers such as Joseph Walther (1992) argued that social interaction and bonding in an online environment is not only possible but, given time, relationship establishment and relationship building through CMC can equal f2f communication. This idea, which he termed the *social information processing model*, received a great deal of attention in the CMC research arena. A few years later, Walther (1996) argued that not only can CMC equal f2f communication for social interaction and relationship building, but CMC can actually be hyperpersonal—more intimate communication that “surpasses normal interpersonal levels.” How can this be?

Walther (2007) argues that “users exploit the technological aspects of CMC in order to enhance the messages they construct to manage impressions and facilitate desired relationships” (p. 2538). Many people find that they can take time to express their ideas with more wit and thoughtfulness, edit out errors, and make sure they’re not going to blurt out something they may regret, compared with f2f communication. They can think about the most appropriate style and tone for the relationship they wish to establish or enhance with their communicators, before hitting “send.”

The hyperpersonal aspect of CMC also brings to mind the “social decontextualization” concept (Herring, 1993). Because online communication focuses on content rather than on physical appearance and other social status cues, some people may be more comfortable communicating online. Herring (1999) suggests that “the loose, fragmented nature of computer-mediated interaction constitutes part of its appeal, and may even lead some users to prefer it to [f2f] social interaction” (p. 13). In addition, because of the relative level of anonymity and/or because participants feel the comfort a safe haven of an online community of like minds, many people have disclosed some of their most intimate

details of their lives online. This has usually occurred in community spaces such as bulletin boards, newsgroups, and chat rooms, where users are surrounded by supportive community members, similar in temperament and attuned to the same concerns and issues.

The hyperpersonal argument has been sustained through various studies that have extended and expanded research in this area to online group and organizational communication. For example Turner, Grube, and Meyers (2001) analyze the hyperpersonal nature of online communities. They suggest that “CMC enables close relationships to develop and flourish, most relationships do not occur in a vacuum but in the context of a network of supportive relationships inside and outside the virtual community.” These supportive relationships and shared experiences of the community members “interact with and cumulatively influence the development of hyperpersonal relationships” (p. 246). Walther’s own work (see, e.g., 1996) with online work groups attests that they outperformed f2f group efforts.

Many researchers argue that users can adapt CMC to their purposes despite the limitations existing in online environments. Thurlow and Brown (2003) argue that a “communication imperative” is at work. In their research on text messaging, they found that despite its creation for commercial purposes, “texting”

is in fact yet another example of how the human need for social intercourse—a kind of “communication imperative”—bends and ultimately co-opts technology to suit its own ends, regardless of any commercial (e.g., the telephone) or military (e.g., the Internet) ambition for the technology. (para. 2)

Key Questions in CMC Research

The “communication imperative” suggested by Thurlow and Brown (2003) is one of the communication phenomena that kept researchers interested in the constantly new, fluid, and adaptable ways in which people engaged in CMC. It also confirmed that CMC is an important means of social interaction. At the dawn of the 21st century, most CMC scholars and practitioners alike were comfortable with the fact that CMC is essentially social, and they moved beyond the basic queries posed in the 1980s and 1990s. Having established the important social interaction functions of CMC, they directed their attention to other key research questions: How do we portray (or perform) our identity in a computer-mediated environment? How do we disclose highly personal information online? And new questions about the impact of CMC on our establishing, maintaining, or enhancing our interpersonal relationships emerged (Baron, 1998; Parks & Roberts, 1998). Research continues to analyze how people meet online, with subsequent f2f interaction in the formation of intimate relationships (see, e.g., Baker, 1998; Parks & Floyd, 1996).

Researchers also examined the nuances of CMC, for example, the different types of CMC and their impact—both subtle and explicit—on interpersonal communication. Differences between asynchronous (where there is a delay between messages and posts) and synchronous media (“real time”) were studied. Asynchronous media, including discussion forums publicly accessible through Internet services such as Usenet newsgroups, bulletin boards, and message boards were of interest. As synchronous forms of CMC such as Internet relay chat (IRC) became more widely used, research in this area expanded. IRC was followed by IM, which the CMC researcher Nancy Baym calls a “more targeted form of chat,” directed by “buddy” lists that indicate what friends are online at any given time.

Along with differences between asynchronous and synchronous communication contexts, researchers also acknowledged the various contextual elements that needed to be included in analysis (Thurlow et al., 2004). Is the communication between two individuals, within a small group, or across extensive multinational organization? Is the communication public or private? What is the topic, and how do participants react to that topic? How do participants, for that matter, react to using CMC? Are they new to computers, are they uncomfortable with technology, or do they feel more at home expressing themselves online than through “old” communication technology, such as pen on paper? And let’s not forget that a pen *is* a form of communication technology. It’s easy to take old technology for granted because it becomes “invisible,” meaning that the technology has matured to the point that you don’t think about it and the hype and hysteria about it have passed as more and more people started using that particular communication technology.

Impact of Gender, Ethnicity, Cultures, and Other Aspects of Identity

Other aspects about CMC that can’t be taken for granted are the numerous factors that influence communication. In addition to contexts specific to CMC, other factors having an impact on communication come into play online. Recall the numerous “Factors Affecting Communication” in the first volume of *21st Century Communication*: gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture, risk, freedom of expression, and globalization. Globalization has played a role in the hybrid nature of identities (Tsaliki, 2003). By interacting with people from other nations and cultures, we adapt our identities to reflect this interaction. Globalization also plays a role in our understanding of intercultural communication (Lengel & Murphy, 2000), diasporas, and languages. In the mid-1990s, up to 90% of Net users were English speaking. By 2000, that figured had dropped to 54% (Thurlow et al., 2004). Now the majority of Net users are non-English speakers. As information and communication technology (ICT) has advanced, the ability to communicate in

other languages, such as Chinese, Arabic, and the several languages that use the Cyrillic alphabet, has become more accessible. In addition, there are efforts to use ICT to create new ways to articulate languages and raise awareness about languages that may be lost as older generations of speakers pass away.

Gender is another factor that has been widely analyzed (see, e.g., Herring, 1993, 2003, in press; O'Brien, 1999. See also Chapter 10, "Gender," and Chapter 29, "Feminist Approaches to Communication," in Volume 1 of *21st Century Communication*). Technology has been constituted traditionally as a male domain. Jonathan Sterne (1999), analyzing Internet research from a cultural studies perspective, attests, "No doubt, the Internet was originally a men's club and is still male-dominated in many places" (p. 273). Men and boys constituted the majority of the early adopters of the Net and of CMC. Many gender studies, women's studies, and feminist studies scholars of ICT have brought to our attention that, historically, there have been relatively few women-focused or women-only online spaces. They also suggest that we go beyond basic gender analyses to look for a distinct social and cultural vision for women's online roles and communicative agency (see, e.g., Miller, 1995).

This is likely an extension of the gender bias found in most computer programs and games, at least until recently. Whereas online fantasy and science fiction games are almost invariably populated by young men and male teenagers, research suggests that e-mail has a much more balanced usership. Some research suggests that women are more likely to use e-mail and IRC than are men, which is perhaps related to the concept that women are more prone to relationship building and maintenance than are men.

Communicating Identities Online

Recall the social decontextualization of CMC discussed above, which would suggest that identity markers such as ethnicity, age, and gender can be "invisible." We choose to communicate, or perform, our identities online by revealing aspects of our identities explicitly or by maintaining the anonymity afforded by text-based CMC. Researchers initially hypothesized that participants in CMC would prefer to benefit from the anonymity of cyberspace, which would make for a more equal playing ground than would f2f communication. Through years of study, however, some scholars argued otherwise. Susan Herring (2003), for example, commenting on the gendered nature of CMC, claims that "traditional gender differences carry over into CMC, in discourse style and patterns of disparity and harassment, and on the Web, in images, content, and patterns of use" (p. 218). She also attests, "Women themselves choose to reveal their gender when they could remain anonymous, and produce gendered images (including pornography), just as women choose to frequent commercial Web sites that offer mainstream, gender stereotyped content" (p. 218).

Much research has examined how communication contexts affect the way we perform aspects of our identities online. Earlier research on constructing online identities focused text-based communication spaces such as MUDs (multi-user dimensions) and MOOs (MUDs, object oriented), where role playing and identity play occurred. It is the identity play and identity construction, originally examined by researchers of MUDs and MOOs, that opened up a vast research arena. Arguably, the study of online identity construction also brought cultural studies scholarship into CMC. Cultural studies scholars helped us understand the complex, fluid, and ever-changing nature of identity. Researchers extended the ideas of theorists such as Michel Foucault, whose notion of technologies of self (originally intended to explicate how we represent ourselves through personal letters and diaries) forwarded the thinking on how we represent ourselves through CMC.

Chang (2000) argues that cyberspace is "a massive Web wherein people constantly construct, reconstruct, and co-construct the meaning of their existence through their seemingly contradictory attempts . . . to maintain their identity while at the same time extending themselves into multiple domains of experience" (pp. 49–50). The reconstruction and co-construction emphasize the fluid and collaborative nature of online identities.

Early research focused on the disembodied nature of CMC. An article by Myers (1987), "Anonymity Is Part of the Magic," addressed the potential for identity play online. The title of the article came from a quote of Myers's respondents, who spoke about the captivating nature of identity fluidity. Nancy Baym (2006) argues,

By divorcing our selves from our bodies, from time and from space, the computer opens a realm in which the multiplicity of identity that is taken to characterize contemporary life reaches an apex. We can be multiple people simultaneously, with no one of these selves necessarily more valid than any other. (p. 67)

Sherry Turkle was one of the first scholars cited widely for her work on online identities. In her groundbreaking book *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet* (1996) and subsequent work (see, e.g., Turkle, 1997), she writes of the "intoxicating," cathartic, even therapeutic nature of anonymity and identity: "You can be who you want to be. You can redefine yourself if you want" (Turkle, 1995, p. 184). Before chat and other forms of CMC had the capacity to easily include images, text was the primary way in which people could represent themselves. "All they see are your words" (Turkle, 1995, p. 184). It is through those words, Turkle and others suggested, that we not only create our identities but through our social interaction online identity construction is a collaborative process between communicators.

There are various ways in which CMC can be a collaborative space for identity construction as well as open dialogue. Douglas Kellner (1998) argues that the Internet has "produced new public spheres and spaces for information, debate, and participation that contain the potential

to invigorate democracy and to increase the dissemination of critical and progressive ideas.” Whatever the CMC means used—e-mail lists, newsgroups, Web pages, there is potential to engage others in dialogue that would, in other social, political, and cultural contexts, be silenced.

Blogging is a means for portraying identity and a key form of CMC for what Kellner calls “critical or progressive ideas.” Of course, bloggers have many different motivations to share their stories with the world. Those who create and maintain blogs have used their online narrative spaces to “document their lives, provide commentary and opinions, express deeply felt emotions, articulate ideas through writing, and form and maintain community forums” (Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrecht, & Swartz, 2004, p. 41). Blogging keeps people (research indicates more women than men) connected with their communities, whether their communities are down the street or across the globe. With the development of diasporas, or large-scale movements of communities and populations, entire cultures have become displaced from their historical and geographical roots. CMC allows these communities to expand globally while maintaining contact with others of their heritage (Newsom & Lengel, 2003).

Social-networking systems are a particularly collaborative way to construct identity. Facebook, a popular online social-networking system used by millions of adolescents and university-aged men and women, has received recent attention by researchers of online impression management (see, e.g., Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2007). This is a particularly exciting research area because it allows collaborative identity construction. Once a user puts up an online profile, others can contribute to it. For the most part, these contributions are favorable; however, “friends” have also been known to “post discrediting or defamatory messages on users’ Facebook websites” (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007, p. 3). In a study conducted by Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, and Tom Tong (2008), the researchers found that “complimentary, pro-social statements by friends about profile owners improved the profile owner’s social and task attractiveness, as well as the target’s credibility” (p. 44). The researchers note,

It is less costly to alter or distort claims that one makes about oneself (e.g., one’s own profile) than to modify or manipulate statements made by others (e.g., their pictures and wall postings). Thus, information reflected in others’ “testimonials” should be of special value to an individual making a judgment about the profile owner. (p. 45)

Seeking Safe Havens Online

The testimonials in social-networking systems, and various other ways to make and articulate judgments online, can be either beneficial or injurious. Some research, and a vast amount of popular press, has alerted us to the potential dangers lurking online and unethical CMC. Online harassment (see, e.g., Li, 2005), hate speech online (see, e.g., Lengel,

2000), and online ethics (see, e.g., Thurlow et al., 2004) have been analyzed since the early 1990s and continue to be important topics of research (see also the chapters “Unwanted Communication, Aggression, and Abuse,” “Sexual Harassment,” and “Ethical and Unethical Communication” in Volume 1). Online harassment also includes *flaming*, defined as “hostile and aggressive interaction via text-based computer mediated communication” (O’Sullivan & Flanagan, 2003, p. 69). The phenomenon is so named to represent “a metaphorical flamethrower that the sender uses to roast the receiver verbally” (p. 70). O’Sullivan and Flanagan suggest that we are careful—many different definitions of flaming are evident in research. Furthermore, flaming is subject to misinterpretation. Postmes, Spears, and Lea (2000), in a study of a group of students’ CMC, argue,

Although a message might seem rude to an outsider examining it out of context, it is not certain that rudeness was either intended by the sender or perceived by the receiver. This underlines the importance of looking at the context and meaning of messages. (p. 357)

Again, the importance of context emerges. O’Sullivan & Flanagan (2003), analyzing the different definitions and the potential problems with flaming, suggest that “‘flames’ are intentional (whether successful or unsuccessful) negative violations of (negotiated, evolving, and situated) interactional norms” (p. 84).

The anonymity factor has been flagged as having the greatest capacity to do harm. Young persons have admitted in research that they are more likely to say disparaging comments online than *face-to-face*. In addition, as identity theft has become more of a concern since the time of early CMC research, so too has the potential danger of identity play. Although much of early CMC research critiqued the hype and hysteria (see Thurlow et al., 2004) resulting from the way the popular press has reported on ICT developments and on CMC, there have been all sorts of reasons to be concerned, some coming as a surprise, as the next story indicates.

One recent case suggests the potential of identity play gone wrong. Called a “21st Century Parent’s Nightmare” (*Los Angeles Times*, 2008), it is the story of Megan Meier, befriended by “Josh Evans,” an attractive 16-year-old boy on MySpace. The online relationship went sour, with “Josh” hurling abusive affronts, including “The world would be a better place without you” (Pokin, 2007). Megan hanged herself in her bedroom closet, dying a day before her fourteenth birthday. Six weeks later, Meier’s grieving parents learned that “Josh” was, in fact, an amalgamation of a few neighborhood girls in the small Missouri town. More surprisingly, “Josh” also comprised Lori Drew, the mother of one of those teenage girls, and Drew’s part-time employee, Ashley Grills. Drew was indicted by a federal grand jury in Los Angeles (the location determined as the jurisdiction since the MySpace headquarters are in Beverly Hills) on charges—not of murder—but of conspiracy and unauthorized access to a computer.

Megan Meier's story, becoming widely known as the "MySpace Suicide," is not only a parent's nightmare but also a wake-up call to participants and legislators on the phenomenon of cyberbullying. *Cyberbullying* has been defined as "the use of the Internet, cell phones, or other technology to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person" (Wolak, Mitchell, & Finklehor, 2007, pp. S51–S52). At the time of Lori Drew's indictment, cyberbullying legislation was rare, with notable exceptions such as a Vermont cyberbullying law, passed in 2004 after the suicide of another teen, Ryan Patrick Halligan (Ruedy, 2008). Several states did have cyberstalking laws in place by that time. Although cyberbullying has received attention for several years, it is the Meier case that could have lasting legal effects and highlights the evolving nature of CMC, the Internet, and the governance of online behavior and communication. It also distinguishes the "real world" from the "cyber world." This distinction is particularly noteworthy because in early CMC research, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, there was much attention to the "real" versus the "cyber." As CMC and the Internet became more embedded in our lives, the borders and boundaries of these "worlds" blurred. Now new borders and boundaries are being drawn. Ruedy (2008) argues,

Just because an online behavior is analogized to a legal "real world" behavior does not necessarily imply that the online version should also be legal. This distinction between "real world" and "cyber world" behavior shows that analogies of computer crimes to traditional crimes are not always valid. (pp. 337–338)

For CMC participants, the emerging legislation could have serious implications for online identity and anonymity. Whereas many would like to see Lori Drew and Ashley Grills behind bars for their alleged involvement in the cyberbullying of Megan Meier, the case could have a widespread impact on any Internet user. Legislation from this case could be used in the future for various types of anonymous CMC (*Los Angeles Times*, 2008). There are many good reasons why someone would want to maintain anonymity—think of women trying to escape domestic violence, for example—and many ways they, too, could be charged. It depends on the court decision and how the precedent of this case may affect those in the future.

This is the way of CMC—so much is transforming in the way we communicate online that it is virtually impossible to keep on top of the changes. We don't know what the future holds, both the distant future and what is just around the corner.

Conclusion

Because CMC is one of the newest and most frequently changing areas in 21st-century communication, this chapter has merely touched on a few developments and issues—tomorrow an entirely new chapter could be written! This

is what makes CMC so fascinating to communication researchers.

In this chapter, you have been introduced to the historical roots of CMC research, the key research questions and debates. You've learned about the different types of CMC, from early newsgroups, MUDs, and MOOs. You've thought about the current online spaces such as Facebook and MySpace, which have had a massive increase in participants in just a couple of years. These and other social-networking sites are growing in scope and importance so quickly that it's challenging to even touch on the phenomenon, let alone research it.

Other aspects of CMC, although changing, have persisted as important to communication researchers. One aspect that has been addressed here is the role of online communities and the social support they provide to community members. Another aspect is how various communication contexts affect CMC and how the factors affecting communication—gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture, risk, freedom of expression, and globalization—play a role online. The chapter has explored the nature of online identity, particularly the fluid nature of self, and impression management. Finally, it has addressed both the privileges and the abuses of anonymity, with a specific focus on safety online, and has looked to the future of the ever-changing ways we engage in CMC.

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GROUP DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS

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A group decision support system (GDSS) combines communication, computer, and decision technologies to support group decision making, problem solving, and subsequent activities. Communication technologies incorporated into GDSSs include electronic messaging and chat, teleconferencing, document management, calendaring, wikis, and blogs. Computer technologies include portals, service-oriented architectures, and Web-authoring tools. Decision support technologies include agenda setting, decision-modeling methods (such as risk analysis or the Analytic Hierarchy Procedure), structured group methods (such as stakeholder analysis or the Nominal Group Technique), and rules for directing group discussions (such as the Parliamentary Procedure) (DeSanctis & Gallupe, 1987).

Groups engage in a wide variety of activities as they make decisions and solve problems, including information sharing, problem identification and formulation, problem analysis, criteria development, solution identification and development, solution evaluation and selection, and implementation planning. Other group processes, such as leadership and facilitation, planning, project management, conflict and conflict management, creativity, negotiation, role definition, socializing, and team development, also contribute to effective decision making and problem solving. Most GDSSs have been designed to support decision making, problem solving, facilitation, and project management but most also incorporate features that support other activities.

For example, GROOVE™, a popular online tool set that can be used as a GDSS, provides a shared whiteboard that can be used for group drawing, which contributes to creativity (Griffith & Sawyer, 2006) but is also for playing around with. Because they provide general support for groups, these systems have also been referred to as electronic meeting systems (EMSs) and group support systems (GSSs). In this chapter, we will focus primarily on their use in decision-making activities as defined above.

GDSSs are employed in a wide variety of groups for general decision making, strategic planning, product design, and quality improvement, among other uses. GDSSs can be used by groups that meet face-to-face (FTF) or by virtual teams. A typical GDSS meeting starts with an agenda outlining the meeting and indicating the features of the GDSS that will be used in various steps. For example, a group might (1) brainstorm ideas using an idea generation tool; (2) discuss the ideas; (3) consolidate similar ideas to reduce the list using a categorization tool, which puts similar ideas under a common category; (4) vote on ideas using a voting tool; and (5) make a final decision based on the vote. Note that only Steps 1, 3, and 4 require the use of the GDSS. In Steps 2 and 5, the group engages in free discussion. A GDSS is not intended to replace existing modes of group communication. Rather, it is intended to support and encourage verbal and non-verbal interaction, as well as to provide additional channels for communication and decision support. Typically,

members work at the GDSS episodically, using it for a time, then interacting without it, then coming back, and so on.

The potential of GDSSs lies in their ability to augment group information processing and analysis and to facilitate communication during decision making. GDSSs may also increase the salience of procedures to group members, thus promoting their beneficial effects. For example, if a GDSS prompts members to “Enter ideas into the brainstorming tool,” member activity is synchronized and attention is focused on this step of the decision-making process. By increasing the salience of procedures, GDSSs may also help educate groups and create an awareness of the importance of systematic approaches.

Historical Development

Douglas Englebart and colleagues at Xerox Parc, early developers of many interactive computer technologies, demonstrated the use of computers for collaborative work in the early 1970s. Many of the earliest applications of networked computers were motivated by a desire to support group work. Murray Turoff used the precursor of the Internet to conduct Delphi sessions involving dozens of authorities in the development of future scenarios. The development of computer conferencing was also driven in part by the goal of supporting group decision making and deliberation (Hiltz & Turoff, 2000).

The group decision support system grew out of research and development on decision support systems (DSSs). The concept of DSSs was given an early articulation in Little’s (1970) *Models and Managers: The Concept of a Decision Calculus*. Keen and Scott Morton (1978) provided the first broad behavioral orientation to decision support system analysis, design, implementation, evaluation, and development. The original DSS concept was most clearly defined by Gorry and Scott Morton (1989), who developed a framework based on organizational activities related to various types of decisions. They motivated DSS not on the basis of technology but on the basis of decision-making activities, viewing information systems as support tools for decision making.

Freyenfeld (1984) developed a six-category classification of DSS components. He viewed DSSs as an interactive user-friendly data-processing and display system that uses terminology familiar to the user and with its selective features helps the user avoid information overload. His six categories were (1) chief executive information systems, (2) commercial operational analysis and planning systems, (3) industrial operational analysis and planning systems, (4) preference determination systems, (5) cognitive mapping systems, and (6) expert advisory systems.

In the early 1980s, a number of researchers applied DSSs in group settings, and by 1986, the idea of developing DSSs into dedicated systems specifically designed for groups gained currency. Articles by Huber (1984) and DeSanctis and Gallupe (1987) defined the parameters of the growing field.

By the early 1990s, a number of GDSSs had been developed, mostly stand-alone systems that required special servers (Bostrom, Watson, & Kinney, 1992). In recent years, GDSSs have moved to the Internet. The number of available GDSS systems peaked in the early 1990s and has markedly decreased since about 1995. At present, ThinkTank™ and Facilitate.com™ are the two major commercially available GDSSs. However, general-purpose meeting and conference systems such as WebEx™ and GROOVE™ are sufficiently powerful and flexible so that GDSSs can be improvised within them by a knowledgeable user.

GDSS Configurations

Configurations for GDSSs vary in terms of the physical layout of the space in which the technology is used, in terms of the features the system incorporates, and in terms of the technological platform the GDSS runs on. The physical layout of GDSSs is a factor because human groups take up space and the arrangement of meeting areas influences how groups operate. The spatial arrangement of groups is strongly dependent on their size. Small groups of three to seven members can easily arrange themselves so that everyone can see and communicate with everyone else. The arrangement of larger groups must be more carefully designed if all members are to participate. Of course, information and communication technology means that groups need not convene FTF. Dispersed or virtual teams are quite common, and they add an additional spatial dimension.

DeSanctis and Gallupe’s (1987) typology of GDSSs distinguished physical layouts based on their size and whether group members were colocated or distributed. The *local area decision network* supports small distributed groups, typically in the same office building and working on the same project or task. Members typically work in their own spaces and may interact via text messages, audio links, or video links. The *computer-mediated conference* supports larger groups whose members are dispersed but must work on common tasks. Several modes of communication are available for computer-mediated conferences, but there is also often a need for tools or leaders to facilitate participation (e.g., to form a queue to speak). Small, FTF groups meet in the *decision room*. A typical design for these rooms has members seated around a U-shaped table with a common display at the front of the group and a workstation for each member. The *legislative session* supports larger colocated groups. Spaces for legislative sessions must be carefully designed and often include break-out rooms in addition to a large general-assembly room.

The DeSanctis and Gallupe typology was very fruitful for GDSS research and development but needs to be expanded in at least two respects. First, the colocated and fully dispersed groups represent extreme cases. Many virtual groups combine both colocated and dispersed aspects in that subsets of members may be colocated in different places (e.g., two

members in one office in city Z, one member in city X, and three members in one office in city Q). Second, the spread of wireless communication has altered the nature of GDSSs (and all group support tools) in several respects. First, unlike the dispersed members in the DeSanctis-Gallupe typology, members of today's dispersed groups need not be fixed to computers hardwired into offices or homes but can roam freely. Second, portable computers and wireless networks make decision rooms and even legislative conference centers "portable." Even a GDSS for a colocated group no longer needs to be fixed in place.

The second aspect of GDSS configurations, after their physical layout, is their features. A wide range of procedures may be incorporated into a GDSS, including agenda setting; idea generation; commenting on ideas; categorizing ideas; evaluating ideas through voting, rating, or ranking; minute taking; and more complex procedures such as multicriteria decision analysis, stakeholder analysis, and synectics. De Vreede, Briggs, and Kolfshoten (2006) have recently described a number of "thinklets," basic modules into which many procedures can be decomposed, which promise to be useful in GDSS design. Other features may be built into the GDSS as well, such as a "group" display screen that displays common group information (e.g., lists of ideas or vote tabulations; this supplements the traditional flip chart or chalk board); a shared whiteboard for group drawing; links to project management tools, calendars, and databases; and communication media such as instant messaging, audio links, and video links.

The final aspect of GDSS configurations is the technological platform that they run on.

Most GDSSs rely on computer workstations, fixed or portable, although some specialized tools such as "clickers" (remote push-button voting or rating devices) may be used with large groups. Early GDSSs were implemented as specialized software packages that had to be purchased and installed on a network. Today, GDSSs are also available via the Internet and can be rented as well as purchased from application service providers such as GroupSystems™, which developed ThinkTank™.

Theories of GDSS Impacts

Research on GDSSs has been guided by several theoretical frameworks. The initial work, similar to early work on DSSs, consisted of taxonomies and structural descriptions that defined the major dimensions of GDSSs. Particularly noteworthy is a highly cited framework by DeSanctis and Gallupe (1987) that distinguished different levels of support GDSSs could offer, four contexts of use (outlined above), and a number of possible functions GDSSs could serve in groups. Huber (1984) wrote a prescient paper on issues in the design of GDSSs, in which he argued that GDSSs should be designed around the activities of information sharing and use, particularly textual and relational information, rather than centering on numerical analysis, as most DSSs

do. He also argued that decisions sufficiently significant to warrant a GDSS do not occur very often. For these reasons, he predicted that it will be more difficult to convince organizations to procure and implement specialized, dedicated GDSSs than if the GDSS were offered on a service or rental basis. Finally, Huber argued that dedicated support personnel and a degree of familiarity with the management of groups would be necessary for GDSSs to succeed.

Subsequently, several theories of GDSS effectiveness were advanced. Hiltz's (1988) systems contingency approach posited that the impacts of GDSSs on productivity and performance were contingent on "characteristics of the higher-level systems within which the technology is used" (p. 1440). For instance, GDSS's impacts depend on compatibility with the demands of the organization, which may vary among organizational subunits.

Nunamaker, Dennis, Valacich, Vogel, & George (1991; see also Dennis, George, Jessup, Nunamaker, & Vogel, 1988) developed a high-level input-process-output model that describes the major influences a GDSS (and electronic meeting systems in general) can have on group processes and outcomes. The factors influencing GDSS outcomes are group characteristics (size, member characteristics, cohesiveness, etc.), task characteristics (task type, task complexity, etc.), contextual characteristics (organizational culture, incentives and reward systems, etc.), and the specific GDSS technologies in use. These authors argued that a GDSS improved the quality of group decisions by minimizing "process losses," such as restrictions on member participation and free riding, while maximizing "process gains," such as the ability of members to catch each others' errors and build on one another's ideas.

Poole and DeSanctis (1990, 2004; see also DeSanctis & Poole, 1994) proposed adaptive structuration theory (AST), which was intended to resolve some of the conflicting results gathered from empirical research on GDSSs. AST factors the way in which groups use the GDSS into the equation. The basis of the model comes from a distinction between *system* and *structure* made by the British social theorist Anthony Giddens (1984). The system is the observable behavior of the group using the GDSS, whereas structures are unobservable (but definable by inference), "rules and resources actors use to generate and support this system" (Poole & DeSanctis, 1990, p. 179). Structures come into play in the process of structuration, members' generative use of structures in generating and maintaining the system. Poole and DeSanctis (1990) argue that GDSSs embed structures underlying the procedures that are built into them (e.g., a brainstorming module) and the resources they provide for the group (e.g., the facility for all members to enter ideas into the brainstorming model at once). In the case of brainstorming, the structures include the rules for brainstorming (e.g., no criticism of ideas) at the feature level. Another type of structural element in a GDSS is the overarching set of values it is designed to promote, such as creativity or participative decision making, which is called the "spirit" of the structural set.

Structuration of group decision making occurs as members use the GDSS, thus appropriating various structures from the GDSS to enable and constrain their work. Each group does this differently. Some groups, for example, might use a voting procedure as a straw poll to get an idea of their members' opinions, whereas others might use the same procedure to browbeat the minority into accepting the will of the majority. The different modes in which groups develop "structures-in-use" account for the range of processes and outcomes that occur in groups using GDSSs. Unlike contingency theories and most input-process-output frameworks, which presume that a set of variables causes or accounts for outcomes, the AST advocates a "softer" determinism, in which the GDSS may enable and constrain the group but actors have considerable control over how it is used and hence over group processes and outcomes. The AST expects there to be a considerable degree of unpredictability in processes and outcomes promoted by GDSSs.

Gavish and Kalvenes (1996) advanced an economic model of GDSSs that considers GDSS use by groups to be in the format of a search problem with a substantial solution space. According to this model, which solutions are feasible depends on the cost of performing the search versus the payoff of the solution. One important parameter in their model is group size, which has complex effects on the size of the solution space and other aspects of the model.

Dimensions of GDSSs

To characterize GDSSs for purposes of research and development, it is important to identify the basic dimensions underlying their configurations. This enables researchers to move past the very large number of possible designs and focus on fundamental distinctions. One important dimension is *synchrony*, the degree to which members must use the GDSS at the same time versus the capability to use the GDSS at different times. In synchronous work, members must be coordinated more tightly than in asynchronous work, placing greater demands on the group. A second dimension along which GDSSs vary is *distribution*, the degree to which members can use the system if they are in different locations. The synchrony and distribution dimensions represent the two dimensions of time and place in the DeSanctis and Gallupe (1987) typology of GDSS configurations.

GDSSs in general and their features may also vary in the degree to which they constrain user behavior, that is, in their *restrictiveness* (Silver, 1988). Some tools are highly restrictive because they require users to follow closely specified rules about how to use the tool and do not offer members much freedom to adapt them. An example of this would be a multi-attribute decision-making tool that requires users to enter options, enter criteria next, and then rate the options on the criteria, after which it provides a graphical display of results. In this case, the user behavior must follow the "script" provided by the GDSS. Other tools, such as a virtual whiteboard,

are low in restrictiveness because they present a "blank slate" to the group that members can use as they wish.

GDSSs differ in terms of the *level* of support their features offer. DeSanctis and Gallupe (1987) distinguished three levels of GDSS support, each of which incorporates the level below it and adds additional capabilities. *Level 1* GDSS features support more efficient and effective communication among group members. Examples of Level 1 features are instant messaging, idea generation, evaluation techniques such as voting or rating, and minute taking. Idea generation, for instance, enables members to simultaneously enter ideas into the system, which are then displayed for the group to view, greatly increasing the speed with which the group can generate ideas and the pool of ideas they generate. The group could also list ideas "manually" by going around the group and having members state their ideas, which are then written on a blackboard. Level 1 features essentially enhance and improve traditional modes of communication and add the ability to communicate across distance.

Level 2 GDSS features provide decision support tools, such as multicriteria decision making, stakeholder analysis, and creativity techniques. These more complex tools are added on top of the Level 1 tools. A Level 2 GDSS supports activities that members could not accomplish unaided and brings advanced decision models into meetings. A multicriteria decision-analysis tool, for instance, would enable members to define evaluation criteria for a set of options, then enter weights reflecting the importance of the criteria to them, and then rate each option on the criteria. The GDSS would then calculate weighted averages of the ratings for each option, in a mathematical process that would take considerable time if done manually. The system might then provide numerical and graphical displays of the results for the group as a whole, with indications of the variability in ratings and weights for each item. This would enable the group to determine points of disagreement, which they could then discuss and resolve. Level 2 features fulfill the promise of the GDSS to improve group decision making through more sophisticated decision analysis.

Level 3 features seek to overcome a major barrier to the effective utilization of Level 1 and Level 2 GDSS features, the members' lack of knowledge about procedures and how to employ them. It takes time to learn procedures, organize meeting agendas that incorporate them, and facilitate the group's use of them. In the absence of a trained facilitator or consultant, a GDSS can present a steep learning curve to busy leaders and group members. Level 3 features attempt to flatten out the learning curve by providing guidance for the group through tools such as automated facilitation and expert systems that advise the group on strategies and approaches for making the decision. Some Level 3 systems are currently being developed, but this level of support remains some time away from general use.

A final dimension on which GDSS features vary is *parallelism*, the degree to which members can communicate or work with the system simultaneously. Electronic

brainstorming, for instance, is high in parallelism because all members can enter ideas at the same time. A public display of results of a stakeholder analysis is typically lower in parallelism because members must view it and discuss it together. Parallelism enables GDSSs to overcome the human limitations of discussion in FTF groups, in which only one or two members can hold the floor at the same time. It promotes gains in efficiency for groups in tasks that require individual inputs and not simultaneous discussion.

Key Findings of Research on GDSSs

There have been a number of reviews and meta-analyses of GDSS research (Dennis & Wixom, 2001–2002; DeSanctis, Poole, Zigurs, & Associates, 2008; Fjermestad & Hiltz, 1998–1999, 2001; McLeod, 1992, 1996; Rains, 2005; Scott, 1999). The results of these reviews are for the most part consistent, so specific works will not be cited in this discussion unless there is a unique finding.

More than 50 studies have compared GDSS groups with FTF groups that did not use a GDSS (though some of them did use procedures manually). In terms of group outcomes, GDSS groups attain higher levels of group effectiveness than do FTF groups, when effectiveness is measured in terms of decision quality, quantity of ideas generated and considered, quality of ideas, confidence in the decision, depth of evaluation, and commitment to results. On the other hand, GDSS groups are less efficient than FTF groups in terms of time to decision and ease of decision making but more efficient on tasks that could be done in parallel (such as idea generation) or complex decision-making tasks (such as multicriteria decision analysis). Members of GDSS groups are less satisfied with their decision and decision process than are members of FTF groups. Members often reported that the GDSSs were difficult to use. Finally, GDSS groups have more trouble coming to a consensus and face more conflict than do FTF groups.

There are several moderating variables for results on outcomes. When the level of GDSS features is taken into consideration, most studies find that FTF groups are no different from groups using Level 1 GDSS features in terms of effectiveness but that Level 2 GDSS groups outperform both Level 1 and FTF groups. Groups with a Level 2 GDSS also attain a consensus better and manage conflict more effectively than do groups with a Level 1 GDSS; Level 2 GDSS groups showed no differences from FTF groups on these variables. However, FTF groups are still more satisfied with their group and decision process than were users of either level of GDSS.

Distribution of the group is a second important moderator. Outcomes are markedly better for groups meeting FTF in a decision room than in the small number of studies that have thus far been conducted on distributed GDSS groups. This is a concern in view of the migration of these technologies to the Internet.

Task also moderates outcomes. Outcomes for GDSS groups are superior to those of FTF groups for idea generation tasks and for complex decision and planning tasks. These types of tasks can benefit from the technology regarding idea generation because the GDSS allows fast parallel entry of ideas by all members and complex tasks since GDSSs can help groups carry out complicated decision analysis and decision support procedures. For simpler, more straightforward decision or judgment tasks, the technology does not provide as much benefit.

In terms of the decision-making process, the reviews suggest that GDSS and FTF groups are about equal in terms of process gains and losses, with both process gains and losses for both technologies being shown across a wide range of studies. Nevertheless, the GDSS has positive effects on structuration processes in comparison with FTF groups (DeSanctis et al., in press; Fjermestad & Hiltz, 1998–1999). The guidance provided by the GDSS appears to help the groups use procedures more faithfully and effectively. Rains's (2005) meta-analysis found that GDSS groups also have greater equality of participation, influence equality, and experience less member dominance than do FTF groups (though, see Fjermestad & Hiltz, 1998–1999, who report no difference on the basis of a simple count of results across studies). Level of GDSS also appears to moderate their effects on group process, with Level 2 GDSS features leading to more positive group processes than do Level 1 GDSS features. Using a GDSS also increases the degree of task-oriented behavior compared with FTF groups.

Facilitation and leadership have strong effects on GDSS process and outcomes. GDSS groups that are facilitated have a much greater likelihood of positive outcomes than do groups with no facilitator. Dennis and Wixom (2001–2002) found that facilitated groups have higher decision quality and greater satisfaction with their process than groups working without a facilitator. There is some evidence that a flexible form of facilitation is more effective than rigid, tightly scripted facilitation (DeSanctis et al., in press).

Reviews that compared field studies of GDSS with laboratory studies report more favorable results for the field implementations compared with the lab for some outcomes. Field studies regularly report that GDSS groups are more efficient than regular FTF groups, a finding inconsistent with the laboratory studies. This may be because the groups in most field studies are engaged in longer-term, more open tasks, whereas most laboratory tasks are kept relatively simple to fit into the time allotted for the experimental session. Hence, there is more room for improvement over common meeting practices in the field than in the lab. Field studies also typically report higher levels of user satisfaction with the GDSS than is measured in laboratory studies. This may be due to the care with which GDSS groups in the field are facilitated and supported. In most field studies, the researchers have a vested interest in having the GDSS succeed because if the group does not do

well, GDSS use is discontinued and the study stops. So researchers take special care to ensure that the groups using the GDSS have the best possible experience. In those field studies that report unsuccessful implementations of GDSSs, the factors leading to negative outcomes include lack of facilitation or poor facilitation, little training or support, inflexibility in applying the GDSS, and a domineering or unenthusiastic manager or group leader.

Finally, we should note that the effects of GDSS procedures depend on how they are implemented in ongoing groups. Differences in results for field and lab studies, for instance, appear to stem from the greater level of auxiliary support given to groups in the field than in the lab. So, too, are there differences in how individual groups use the GDSS. Many GDSS features are complex and require some guidance or practice to use properly. Members do not always understand the rationale behind GDSS procedures and existing group norms, or organizational culture may conflict with the spirit of the GDSS. As groups adapt the GDSS to their own goals and norms, they may change the procedure in subtle yet important ways. For example, when a GDSS designed for U.S. users was employed in an experiment in Singapore, several groups did not use the voting procedure to indicate individual preferences but instead had the leader vote first and only then entered all their votes (in agreement with the leader). This was consistent with the collectivistic culture of Singapore but led to considerable changes in the impacts of the GDSS. The AST was developed to track and account for the impacts of appropriations by individuals and groups on the effects of GDSSs.

Diffusion and Implementation of GDSSs

The reviews cited in the previous section identified several critical success factors in implementing GDSSs. One important factor is training. In addition to “nuts and bolts” training in using GDSS features, users must be trained in the general philosophy behind the GDSS, the tasks it is best suited for, and how to design agendas. Without the “big picture,” users cannot understand what the features are for. A second critical success factor is facilitation. As noted in the previous section, effective facilitation increases the effectiveness of GDSS use. The facilitator not only serves as a resource for the group but also becomes a technology advocate and often identifies and cultivates “champions” for the system among members.

Third, it is important to tailor the GDSS and how it is used to the local context. The GDSS must be used in ways acceptable to its users and consistent with the overall culture of the organization. Nevertheless, it is also important to recognize that GDSSs are often introduced to change current organizational practices. There is a fine balance between fit with the organization and realizing the benefits of the GDSS. Finally, it is important that members experience success with the GDSS. If the group can use the GDSS effectively early on

and see concrete benefits, it is more likely to continue to use it and be willing to put the requisite effort into learning the system. For this reason, it is important to employ the GDSS only for tasks it is well suited for and to ensure that members are trained and that there is an effective facilitator. Members who have had good experiences with the GDSS are likely to become ambassadors to the rest of the organization.

Despite these suggestions, GDSSs have achieved at most a moderate level of diffusion and utilization. Many organizations installed GDSSs in decision rooms during the late 1980s and early 1990s, when they received a good deal of attention in the business press, and there were notable success cases. For example, the Internal Revenue Service used a GDSS to implement a quality improvement program in one of its regional offices (DeSanctis, Poole, Desharnais, & Lewis, 1991). The oil company Texaco built several elaborate decision rooms equipped with multisite video conferencing and GDSSs to enable distributed meetings (DeSanctis, Poole, Dickson, & Jackson, 1993). Nevertheless, over the long term, GDSSs have tended to be underused, and many decision rooms have since been repurposed or dismantled.

There were several reasons for this. As Huber (1984) presciently observed, organizing and managing GDSSs takes a good deal of time and energy, and therefore they are used primarily for special-purpose, important tasks. Hence, decision rooms often remained unused for considerable periods of time, creating a temptation to appropriate them for other purposes. Second, most users did not have the requisite expertise in working in groups or in using procedures that the GDSS provided. The steep learning curve for the technology, mentioned earlier, served as a barrier to utilization. Third, because of this barrier, facilitators were necessary to promote utilization of the GDSS. Nevertheless, facilitators were expensive and were often the first to go when the organization experienced a downturn.

The result was a dip in demand for GDSSs. Only a few commercial GDSSs are available at the time of writing, and most meeting support or conferencing systems offer only Level 1 tools. This does not mean, however, that the GDSS should be written off. Videoconferencing endured two previous periods of experimentation and failure before its successful diffusion in Web 2.0. The next section discusses new developments that may improve prospects for the GDSS.

Conclusion and Future Directions

The GDSS began as an extension of the decision support system and has developed into a distinctive technology organized around the demands of group processes. Supporting group communication, problem solving, and deliberation requires not only decision models but also a design that supports social interaction processes, promoting those that contribute to group effectiveness and counteracting those that degrade decision making. Over the past 20 years, distinctive configurations of GDSSs have evolved around different

arrangements of groups in time and space, and other dimensions underlying GDSSs have been defined, including restrictiveness, level of support, and parallelism. Research has shown that GDSSs can improve group processes and outcomes, but mixed results suggest that their effectiveness depends on a number of other factors. These include level of GDSS employed, distribution, task, and facilitation. There is no simple deterministic model of GDSS impacts. Rather, GDSS impacts depend on how the system is used and on how groups appropriate it as they work.

At least two trends seem likely to influence the future of the GDSS. First, the growth of Internet applications for groups and the concomitant increase in virtual groups has created a demand for distributed GDSSs, and such systems are now available commercially. Indeed, although GDSSs in decision rooms have not been a great success, a second generation of distributed GDSSs, which can be leased or purchased from application service providers, offer a promising future. Nevertheless, much less is known about distributed GDSSs than about GDSS configurations designed for FTF meetings, and current research suggests a disadvantage for distributed GDSSs compared with those used in colocated groups. Whereas Level 1 features such as idea generation and voting are straightforward to implement and have been incorporated into many conferencing tools, higher-level features represent a challenge. Procedures such as multi-attribute utility analysis and stakeholder analysis are typically run in colocated groups with facilitators, and there are questions as to how effectively they can be implemented at a distance. The communication problems, conflicts, and coordination difficulties faced by virtual teams pose severe challenges for distributed GDSSs.

As Fjermestad and Hiltz's (1998–1999, 2001) review shows, studies of FTF GDSSs outnumber those of distributed GDSSs by a large margin. It is not clear to what extent results from the former apply to the latter. Will distributed GDSSs be more efficient than FTF groups with or without a GDSS? Will Level 2 features of distributed GDSSs garner the gains observed with Level 2 features in FTF groups using GDSSs? How satisfied will users of distributed GDSSs be?

Another set of questions revolves around whether GDSSs can enable virtual teams to meet their challenges. Virtual teams often suffer due to a lack of common context, which fosters misunderstanding and negative attributions and can set harmful social identity dynamics into motion (Poole & Zhang, 2005). A distributed GDSS provides an online space that would give virtual teams a context to interact within. Once established, this common context could help virtual team members to communicate more effectively and understand one another, reducing negative attributions and conflict. In essence, the GDSS could function as a boundary object linking members in different locations. Virtual teams also seem to benefit from an initial focus on their task, which is often the most

important thing that binds members into a group. A distributed GDSS provides an organized environment for working on the group's task and thus should promote early development of the group. Social relationships tend to follow task accomplishment in virtual teams, and a GDSS that enables the virtual team to make clear progress can also be a vehicle for relationship development.

The second trend that has the potential to influence GDSSs is the rapid advance of information technologies. As we have noted, a major barrier to effective implementation and use of GDSSs is a lack of skill and knowledge on the part of the potential user. As a result, facilitators are needed to help plan and run sessions at present. Facilitation is particularly important for more complex procedures such as multi-attribute utility analysis. Nevertheless, a facilitator represents a considerable overhead for the organization that employs him or her and for the meeting convenor or leader, who must work with her or him to plan the session. One way of minimizing this problem is to develop Level 3 GDSSs that automate guidance and facilitation. These systems would bootstrap meeting planning and facilitation, making GDSSs more accessible to users. At present, Level 3 GDSSs primarily operate in terms of help systems and agendas that describe what the group should do (e.g., Limayem & DeSanctis, 2000). Nevertheless, advances in agent-based and intelligent systems could enable the implementation of Level 3 systems that are considerably more active and responsive than current models. A Level 3 GDSS, for example, might also learn the characteristics and tendencies of a group, allowing it to tailor its advice to the users' level of sophistication. A more active Level 3 system might also give advice "on the fly" in response to events in the system or group and interact with the group.

Another way in which advances in information technology may shape GDSSs is through enabling development of novel, more natural interfaces for distributed meetings. Current GDSSs, especially distributed GDSSs, offer a fairly sterile and restrictive mode of interacting, quite unlike the immediacy of FTF meetings. New technologies coming online, including improved videoconferencing, tele-immersive environments that bring virtual reality to telecommunication, and haptic interfaces that operate through touch and motion, may enable the construction of meeting environments that are less intrusive and are easier to use, and promote a sense of presence far exceeding that yielded by current configurations. This may mitigate some of the challenges distributed GDSSs face. Web 2.0 technologies may also enhance the GDSS experience. Rather than meeting with other disembodied members via text, audio, or video conferencing, groups may meet in venues such as Second Life™ and interact via avatars. These and other new technologies may enable new, more compelling forms of distributed meetings.

The next 10 years will be a critical time for GDSSs. New and developing technologies and applications will

determine whether they remain a useful but somewhat marginal tool or gain widespread acceptance and use.

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MEDIA LITERACY

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Media literacy is a popular term. If you were to do a search of the academic literature using one of the many databases available at university libraries, you would find somewhere between several hundred and several thousand citations for scholarly books and articles that use this term as a keyword. And as I write this chapter, a search for “media literacy” on Google results in more than 792,000 hits. Clearly, media literacy is a popular topic among not just scholars but among the general population, which includes parents, teachers, social activists, and policymakers.

It should not be a surprise that there are many definitions for *media literacy* across all this writing. In this chapter, I will first show you the range of definitions for this term and highlight the major issues that span across that great variety of definitions. Then, I will use the major ideas in those definitions to describe the characteristics that a media-literate person should exhibit.

Different Approaches

Variety of Definitions

The availability of so much information on this topic is a very positive characteristic because it indicates that the topic is an important one to so many people. There is a lot of vitality, which produces many ideas. Note the range of definitions in Table 62.1. Some of these definitions were constructed by scholars working in groups; examples include the National Communication Association and the

National Leadership Conference on Media. Media groups (such as the American Psychiatric Association) and governmental groups (such as the Office of National Drug Control Policy) also have constructed definitions. Nevertheless, most of these definitions were constructed by small groups of individuals or created by citizen activist groups that challenge the mass media and criticize many of their practices and content.

Among scholars, there is also a great variety of thinking about media literacy. Some scholars argue that media literacy should be treated primarily as a public policy issue (Aufderheide, 1993); as a critical cultural issue (Alvarado & Boyd-Barrett, 1992); as a set of pedagogical tools for elementary school teachers (Houk & Bogart, 1974); as suggestions for parents (DeGaetano & Bander, 1996); as McLuhanesque speculation (Gordon, 1971); or as a topic of scholarly inquiry from a physiological (Messaris, 1994), cognitive (Sinatra, 1986), or anthropological (Scribner & Cole, 1981) tradition. Some writers focus primarily on one culture, such as American culture (Manley-Casimir & Luke, 1987;), British culture (Buckingham, 1990; Masterman, 1985), or Chilean culture (Freire, 1985), or on several countries and/or cultures (Brown, 1991; Scheunemann, 1996). *Media literacy* is a term applied to the study of textual interpretation (Buckingham, 1998; Zettl, 1998), context and ideology (Lewis and Jhally, 1998), and audience (Buckingham, 1998). The term is also used as synonymous with or part of media education (Sholle & Denski, 1994). Table 62.2 presents a sampling of some of these scholarly definitions. Again, note the range in the definitions.

Action Coalition for Media Education	Encourage critical thinking and free expression, examine the corporate media system, and inspire active participation in society (www.acmecoalition.org)
Alliance for a Media Literate America	Critical inquiry, learning, and skill building rather than media bashing and blame (www.amlainfo.org)
American Psychiatric Association	Rather than allow the media to promote unchallenged the quick fix of violent solutions, conflict resolution skills involving patience and negotiation should be taught (www.psych.org)
Center for Media Literacy	“A framework for accessing, analyzing, evaluating and creating media. The development of critical thinking and production skills needed to live fully in the 21st century media culture.” Also defined as “the ability to communicate competently in all media forms, print and electronic, as well as to access, understand, and analyze and evaluate the powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary mass media culture” (www.medialit.org/pd_services.html#crash_course)
Children Now	Media literacy is a way to foster critical viewing skills in young viewers (www.childrennow.org)
Citizens for Media Literacy	How to think critically about TV and advertising (www.main.nc.us/cml)
Coalition for Quality Children’s Media (KIDS FIRST!)	Recognize programs that are intellectually and creatively stimulating; that break down racial, gender, handicapped and cultural boundaries; and that are produced with high technical and artistic standards (www.kidsfirst.org/kidsfirst/html/whatcq.htm)
Media Awareness Network	Critical thinking skills to “read” all the messages that are informing and entertaining and selling to them (audiences) every day (www.media-awareness.ca)
Media Education Foundation	The tools and vocabulary needed to re-examine media images and their influence on how we think about our personal, political, economic, and cultural worlds (www.mediaed.org)
Media Watch	Challenge abusive stereotypes and other biased images commonly found in the media (www.mediawatch.com)
National Communication Association	A media-literate person understands how words, images, and sounds influence the way meanings are created and shared in contemporary society in ways that are both subtle and profound. A media-literate person is equipped to assign value, worth, and meaning to media use and media messages (www.natcom.org)
National Leadership Conference on Media	The ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in a wide variety of forms of literacy (Aufderheide, 1993)
The National Telemedia Council	The ability to choose, to understand—within the context of content, form/style, impact, industry, and production, to question, to evaluate, to create and/or to produce, and to respond thoughtfully to the media we consume. “It is mindful viewing, reflective judgment” (Considine, 1997). Also, the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create information in a variety of print and nonprint media formats (http://www.nationaltelemediacouncil.org)
New Mexico Media Literacy Project	“The ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in various media” (www.nmmlp.org)
Northwest Media Literacy Project	The ability to critically assess media messages to understand their impact on us, our communities, our society, and our planet. It is also a movement to raise awareness of media and their influence (www.mediathink.org)
Office of National Drug Control Policy	“To (a) recognize how media messages influence us (e.g. develop a vocabulary to recognize manipulative techniques, develop skills to protect oneself against messages about drugs or negative lifestyle choice that are embedded in the media), to (b) develop critical thinking (e.g. know that messages are constructed by people with points of view and commercial interests, uncover value messages inherent in media, evaluate information for accuracy and reliability), to foster self-esteem (e.g., creatively produce satisfying and constructive messages)” (www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/NIE/medialiteracy/intro.pdf)

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Table 62.1 Definitions of Media Literacy: Citizen Action Groups

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Adams and Hamm (2001)	“Media literacy may be thought of as the ability to create personal meaning from the visual and verbal symbols we take in every day from television, advertising, film, and digital media. It is more than inviting students to simply decode information. They must be critical thinkers who can understand and produce in the media culture swirling around them” (p. 33).
Anderson (1981)	The “skillful collection, interpretation, testing and application of information regardless of medium or presentation for some purposeful action” (p. 22).
Barton and Hamilton (1998) (cited in Margaret Mackey, 2002, pp. 5–6)	They define literacy as “primarily something people do; it is an activity, located in the space between thought and text. Literacy does not just reside in people’s heads as a set of skills to be learned, and it does not just reside on paper, captured as texts to be analysed. Like all human activity, literacy is essentially social, and it is located in the interaction between people” (p. 3).
Hobbs (2001)	“Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms” (p. 7). Hobbs says this definition suggests the following characteristics: inquiry-based education, student-centered learning, problem solving in cooperative teams, alternatives to standardized testing, and an integrated curriculum.
The National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy (Aufderheide, 1993, p. xx)	“The ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms.”
Sholle and Denski (1995)	These authors argue that media literacy should be conceptualized within a critical pedagogy, and thus “it must be conceived as a political, social and cultural practice” (p. 17).
Silverblatt and Eliceiri (1997) in their <i>Dictionary of Media Literacy</i>	They define media literacy as “a critical-thinking skill that enables audiences to decipher the information that they receive through the channels of mass communications and empowers them to develop independent judgments about media content” (p. 48).

Table 62.2 Definitions of Media Literacy: Media Scholars

The writing about media literacy is like a large complex patchwork of ideas. Many of these ideas are truly inspired. But it is difficult to make sense of all these ideas and to grasp the essence of what media literacy means. In characterizing this condition, Zettl (1998) complained that “the plethora of available articles, books, classroom materials, and information on the internet dealing with media literacy does not seem to help very much in answering the question, ‘What is media literacy?’” (p. 81).

Many scholars have had the same feelings as Zettl expressed about the mass of ideas concerning media literacy, and periodically groups of these people have joined efforts to struggle with crafting a definition they can all accept. For example, in 1992, U.S. scholars interested in media literacy convened the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy and after several days of discussion agreed that literacy “is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms” (see Table 62.2). In this chapter, I continue this effort to synthesize a definition of

media literacy from all the ideas contributed in the literature thus far. This synthesis begins in the next section with a highlighting of the key issues that span these writings.

Key Issues

Given the many definitions of *media literacy*, it is important to find the key issues that cut across all this thinking. That is, we need to identify the major themes that emerge from all this definitional work. In this section, I highlight three of these key issues and display the range of thinking on each in the accompanying boxed text.

The first of these issues is “What are media?” When we talk about media literacy, we must clarify which media we mean. As you can see in the following, there is a wide range of perspectives. Some focus on one medium (such as television or computers), some focus on a type of medium (print or pictorial), and others are very broad and include all forms of information sharing.

<p>Which Media?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print media (Scribner & Cole, 1981; Sinatra, 1986) • Television (Zettl, 1998) • Pictorial media of still and moving pictures (Messaris, 1994) • Computers (Adams & Hamm, 2001; Gardiner, 1997) • Multimedia (Buckingham, 1993; Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 1997)
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- All technologies that deliver information (Adams & Hamm, 2001; Hobbs, 2001; Potter, 2008; Silverblatt, 1995)
- All forms (even nontechnological, such as interpersonal) of communication (Johnson, 2001)

What Is Literacy?

Primarily Developing Skills

- Sholle and Denski (1995) emphasize three skills: (1) rereading media—learning how to construct different meanings when viewed in different contexts, denaturalizing the text; (2) affective reflexivity—students need to pay more attention to their own affective investment as they consume media; and (3) rewriting and the vital strategy of authorship—students need to get into the practice of creating counterrepresentations of the messages they see.
- Adams and Hamm (2001) take a broad approach to defining *media literacy* and say that *literacy* is “the ability to read, write, speak, listen, think, and view” (p. vii).
- Alvermann, Moon, and Hagood (1999) say that *critical media literacy* is “providing individuals access to understanding how the print and non-print texts that are part of everyday life help to construct their knowledge of the world and the various social, economic, and political positions they occupy within it” (pp. 1–2).
- Messaris (1998) argues that “a central component of media literacy should be an understanding of the representational conventions through which the users of media create and share meanings,” especially visual representations (p. 70).
- Silverblatt, Ferry, and Finan (1999) say there are five types of analysis of media literacy: ideological analysis, autobiographical analysis, nonverbal communication analysis, mythic analysis, and analysis of production techniques.
- Brown (1998) says that traditionally media literacy “has involved the ability to analyze and appreciate respected works of literature, and by extension, to communicate effectively by writing well. In the past half-century it has come to include the ability to analyze competently and to utilize skillfully print journalism, cinematic productions, radio and television programming, and even computer-mediated information and exchange (including real-time interactive exploration through the global internet)” (p. 44).
- Adams & Hamm (2001) define media literacy as “composing, comprehending, analyzing and appreciating the multiple print and nonprint symbol systems” (p. 4).
- Mackey (2002) argues that the skills used with one medium are applicable with other media. She says, “When it comes to making meaning, strategies can be imported across media boundaries” (p. 6). So children can learn about the shaping of a story by watching television and then use this knowledge when learning to read a short story in a book. “Young people learn about text processing within the broad and complex context of a social, cultural, educational, and commercial textual ecosphere” (p. 8).

Primarily Increasing Knowledge

- Pattison (1982) requires consciousness of the questions posed by language, regardless of the medium that transmits that language.
- Silverblatt (1995) said that there are four keys that people need to interpret media messages. These are the understanding of the process, context, structure, and production values.
- Masterman (2001) analyzed media literacy movement in Europe between 1970 and 1990 and says that there are eight component ideas:
 1. The central and unifying concept of media education is that of representation. This means that media do not reflect reality but represent it.
 2. A central purpose of media education is to “denaturalize” media. This means creating an understanding that media messages are constructions and do not occur naturally.
 3. “Media education is primarily investigative. It does not seek to impose specific cultural values. It aims to increase students’ understanding of how media represent reality. Its objective is to produce well-informed citizens who can make their own judgements on the basis of the available evidence. In so far as media education deals with value judgements, it does so in the ways which encourage students to explore the range of value judgements made about a given media text and to examine the sources of such judgements (including their own) and their effects. It does not seek to impose ideas on what constitutes ‘good’ or ‘bad’ television, newspapers, or films” (p. 41).
 4. Media education is organized around key concepts, which are analytical tools rather than an alternative content. They do not seek to replace “bad” content with “better” content.
 5. Media education is a lifelong process.

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6. Media education aims to foster not simply critical understanding but critical autonomy.
 7. The effectiveness of media education may be evaluated by two principal criteria: (1) the ability of students to apply what they know (their critical ideas and principles) to new situations and (2) the amount of commitment, interest, and motivation displayed by students.
 8. Media education is topical and opportunistic. It seeks to illuminate the life situations for learners by harnessing the interest and enthusiasm generated by media's coverage of topical events.
- Messaris (1998) says, "Media literacy can be defined as knowledge about how the mass media function in society. . . Ideally, this knowledge should encompass all aspects of the workings of media: their economic foundations, organizational structures, psychological effects, social consequences, and, above all, their 'language,' that is the representational conventions and rhetorical strategies of ads, TV programs, movies, and other forms of mass media content" (p. 70).
 - Meyrowitz (1998) argues that there are multiple literacies, so people need a range of knowledge that includes an understanding of media content (understanding of the conduits that hold and send messages), of media grammar (understanding of the language or aesthetics of each medium), and of the medium (understanding of the type of setting or environment).
 - Zettl (1998) says, "We need to know how the basic aesthetic building blocks are used to create and shape our cognitive and affective mental maps" (p. 81).

Combination of Skills and Knowledge

- Bazalgette (2001) talks about the diversity of skills and tasks that fall under the umbrella of the term *media literacy*. She says, "One or more of the following may constitute 'media literacy,' depending on what country you are in and what level of education you are addressing: mastery of a repertoire of semiotics-based techniques for the analysis of visual images; the ability to plan and record/shot (and maybe even edit) a film, video, audio tape, or photo sequence; the acquisition of a range of critical theories from sociology, or cultural studies, or art history, and the ability to redeploy them in relation to media; knowledge and appreciation of certain key texts (usually films) and the ability to speak or write about their aesthetic, dramatic, or moral values; knowledge of the industrial and economic structures of media industries; a general awareness of the economic and ideological functions of media texts and the ability to identify stereotypes and bias" (pp. 73–74).
- The National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy says, "A media literate person . . . can decode, evaluate, analyze, and produce both print and electronic media" (Aufderheide, 1993, p. 79). People also need to know five things: (1) media messages are constructed; (2) media messages are produced within economic, social, political, historical, and aesthetic contexts; (3) the interpretation of meaning-making processes involved in message reception consists of an interaction between the reader, the text, and the culture; (4) media have unique languages, characteristics that typify various forms, genres, and symbol systems of communication; and (5) media representations play a role in people's understanding of social reality (Aufderheide, 1993).
- Hobbs (2001) says that the skills media-literate people need are the abilities to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate. In addition, they need production skills. Knowledge is also important, with the "key analytic concepts" being the following:
 1. All messages are constructions.
 2. Messages represent their makers' notions of social reality.
 3. Individuals negotiate meaning by interacting with messages.
 4. Messages have economic, political, social, and aesthetic purposes.
 5. Each form of communication has unique characteristics.

Purpose of Media Literacy

Improvement of Individuals

- Anderson (1983), in a review of television literacy projects until the early 1980s, listed 11 objectives that he found to be prevalent in those projects. As objectives, this list describes what a literate person should be able to do and think.
- In the United Kingdom, academics and practitioners were able to agree on the following points. Media education should foster "the development of a critical spirit" while encouraging "collaboration with professional people and agencies in both fields" (Huguier, 1992, pp. 222–223).
- Buckingham (1993) points out that television has been regarded, especially in America, as having powerful negative influences on children, such as being addictive, being harmful to mental health and personal relationships, and being the cause of social unrest and disintegration. The purpose of literacy is to blunt the negative effects of television.

The National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy says, “The fundamental objective of media literacy is critical autonomy in relationship to all media . . . including informed citizenship, aesthetic appreciation and expression, social advocacy, self-esteem, and consumer competence” (Aufderheide, 1997, pp. 79–80).

- Desmond (1997) says that people need to be critical consumers of entertainment and advertising fare and they need to have insight and information to enable intelligent viewing.
- Rafferty (1999) says that people need to be critical consumers of ideas and information. This involves interpreting media messages (creating personal meaning from codes and conventions) as well as thinking critically about them.
- Lewis and Jhally (1998) say that “the goal of media literacy is to help people become sophisticated citizens rather than sophisticated consumers” (p. 109).

Teaching

- Grow (1990) reasons that if the goal of media programs in higher education is to educate students to become reflective, self-directed, communication citizens and, perhaps, practitioners, then the process of teaching can be seen as moving students from dependency to self-direction.
- Buckingham (1993) points out that the pedagogical role of television literacy has been for educators to defend those who are believed to be less capable of defending themselves from negative effects. “The ultimate aim of most television literacy curricula is to encourage children to police their own viewing behaviour—if not by reducing the amount of television they watch, then at least by watching it in ways which are assumed to minimize its influence” (p. 21). Furthermore, he challenges those who argue that teaching media literacy can be both proscriptive and non-hierarchical when he says that the aim to “demystify” students while using a “non-hierarchical” pedagogy “clearly places the teacher in a contradictory position—on the one hand, as the bearer of a ‘truth’ that is not available to the students, yet on the other as an equal partner in dialogue” (p. 287).
- The National Communication Association (formerly the Speech Communication Association), which has taken a lead in communication and media assessment efforts, released a set of national standards, with two applying to media literacy:

Standard 22: The effective media participant can demonstrate the effects of the various types of electronic audio and visual media, including television, radio, the telephone, the Internet, computers, electronic conferencing, and film, on media consumers.

Standard 23: The effective media participant can demonstrate the ability to identify and use skills necessary for competent participation in communication across various types of electronic audio and visual media. (Speech Communication Association, 1996)

- The Center for Advanced Technology (1997) says that media literacy is concerned with helping students develop an informal and critical understanding of the nature of mass media, the techniques used by them, and the impact of these techniques. More specifically, it is education that aims to increase the students’ understanding and enjoyment of how media work, how they produce meaning, how they are organized, and how they construct reality. Media literacy also aims to provide students with the ability to create media products.
- Aufderheide (1997, p. 80) believes that media educators hold the following ideas in common:
 1. Media are constructed and construct reality.
 2. Media have commercial implications.
 3. Media have ideological and political implications.
 4. Form and content are related in each medium, each of which has a unique aesthetic, codes, and conventions.
 5. Receivers negotiate meaning in media.
- The Council of Europe Resolution on Education in Media and New Technologies says, “Pupils should be given an understanding of the structures, mechanisms and messages of the mass media. In particular, pupils should develop the independent capacity to apply critical judgement to media content. One means to this end, and an objective in its own right, should be to encourage creative expression in the pupils’ own media messages, so that they are equipped to take advantage of opportunities for the expression on particular interests in the context of participation at local level” (Masterman, 2001, p. 15).
- Masterman (2001) argues that there is a sense that the very act of studying media can help democratize the teacher-student relationship because the act of critiquing is one of “reflection and dialogue” (p. 44). There is even a sense that media literacy demands a different type of teaching that is democratic and nonhierarchical (Bazalgette, 2001; Masterman, 1985, 2001).

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- Masterman (2001) argues that the objective of media literacy is to “produce well-informed citizens who can make their own judgements on the basis of the available evidence. In so far as media education deals with value judgements, it does so in the ways which encourage students to explore the range of value judgements made about a given media text and to examine the sources of such judgements (including their own) and their effects. It does not seek to impose ideas on what constitutes ‘good’ or ‘bad’ television, newspapers, or films” (p. 41).
- Masterman (1985) believes that the goal of media education is to help people understand how media distort aspects of reality as they manufacture their messages and how symbol systems mediate our knowledge of the world.
- The Council of Europe Resolution on Education in Media and New Technologies, which was adopted by European ministers of education says, “Education in the new technologies and media should play an empowering and liberating role, helping to prepare pupils for democratic citizenship and political awareness” (Masterman, 2001, p. 15).
- Brown (1998) says, “A major goal of media education is to help recipients of mass communication become active, free participants in the process rather than static, passive, and subservient to the images and values communicated in a one-way flow from media sources” (p. 47).
- Some believe that the purpose of media literacy education is the same as the purpose of education in general, that is, to educate people to be aware of their place in the world as well as to become empowered citizens and consumers (Blanchard & Christ, 1993; McLaren, Hammer, Sholle, & Reilly, 1995; Sholle & Denski, 1994).

Activism

- Anderson (1983) uses the term *impact mediation* to refer to thoughts or behaviors that are stimulated by social issues that are, in turn, influenced by media content; these issues are things such as violence, materialism, nutrition, body image, distortion in news reporting, and stereotyping by race, class, gender, and sexual orientation.
- Lewis and Jhally (1998) contend that media literacy should go beyond textual analysis into ideological/political economy issues.
- Communities of people who interact in complex social and cultural contexts should be created, and this awareness should be used to decide what textual positions to accept (Buckingham, 1998).

The second issue is “What do we mean by literacy?” Again, there is a wide range of thinking. Some regard media literacy primarily in terms of increasing skills. Other scholars focus on building knowledge. And a third set of scholars take the perspective that media literacy requires both the development of skills and the building of knowledge.

The third issue is “What should be the purpose of media literacy?” Most writers who address this question say that the purpose is to improve the lives of individuals in some way, usually by giving them more control over how media messages will affect them. A considerable number of writers also talk about the purpose of media literacy in an educational curriculum, and some argue that media literacy has a purpose in social activism.

What Is a Media-Literate Person?

As can be seen in the above analysis of definitional work on media literacy, there are many different types of definitions and many positions taken on the three issues of which media, what type of literacy, and the purpose of media literacy. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the scholars who write about media literacy and address it from one

particular point of view do not argue against other points of view; that is, their different positions are not adversarial. Instead, different writers chose to emphasize different aspects of this large, complex phenomenon of media literacy. It is important to keep this in mind as we try to organize all this thinking. Therefore, we need to take a broad view of media literacy—one that tries to take into consideration as many of the ideas as possible in a complementary fashion. To this end, I provide a description of what a person needs to think and do in order to be considered media literate. There are nine characteristics as follows:

1. *Both skills and information are important.* If we have a great deal of information but weak skills, we will not be able to make much sense of the information. The information will be likely stored in our memories, but it will not be evaluated and integrated into useful knowledge structures. Skills are needed to sort through information and organize it. The key skills are analysis, evaluation, grouping, induction, deduction, abstraction, synthesis, and persuasive expression. On the other hand, if we have strong skills but don’t expose ourselves to a range of media messages or real-world experiences, our knowledge structures will be very limited and unbalanced. The key areas for knowledge are media industries,

media content, media effects, real-world information, and knowledge about self. (For more on these skills and knowledge components, please see Potter, 2004, 2008.)

2. *Media literacy is the set of perspectives from which we expose ourselves to media and interpret the meaning of the messages we encounter.* We build our perspectives from knowledge structures. The knowledge structures form the platforms on which we stand to view the multifaceted phenomenon of media—their organizations, their content, and their effects on individuals and institutions. The more knowledge structures we have, the more of media phenomenon we can “see.” And the more developed our knowledge structures, the more context we will have to help us understand what we see.

3. *Media literacy must be developed.* No one is born media literate. Media literacy must be developed, and this development requires effort from each individual. The development is also a long-term process that never ends; that is, no one ever reaches a point of total, complete media literacy. Skills can always be more highly developed; if they are not continually improved, they will atrophy. Also, knowledge structures are never finished because media and real worlds are constantly changing.

4. *Media literacy is multidimensional.* The information in the knowledge structures is not limited to cognitive elements but should also contain emotional, aesthetic, and moral elements. The four types of elements work together such that the combination of any three types helps provide context for the fourth type.

Strong knowledge structures contain information from all four of these domains. If one type of information is missing, the knowledge structure is less elaborate than it could be. For example, people who have a knowledge structure without any emotional information are able to be highly analytical when they watch a movie and quote lots of facts about the history of the movie’s genre, the director’s point of view, and the underlying theme. But if they cannot evoke an emotional reaction, they are simply going through a dry, academic exercise.

5. *Media literacy is not limited to one medium.* The key idea here is that the old idea of literacy was limited to reading and further limited to recognizing symbols. This continues to be the essence of literacy for print media. But media literacy is something much broader, that is, constructing meaning from experiences and contexts (economic, political, cultural, etc.). Media differ in terms of the symbols they use, how they regard audiences, their motives for doing business, and their aesthetics. The more people know about these differences across media, the more they can appreciate commonalities and the more they can understand how messages are sensitive to the medium in which it is delivered.

6. *Media-literate person exhibits an understanding that the purpose of media literacy is to exercise more control over exposures and meaning making.* The purpose of becoming more media literate is to gain greater control over one’s exposures and to construct one’s own meaning from the messages in those exposures. When people do this, they are in control of determining what is important in life and setting expectations for experiences in those important areas. If they do not do this for themselves, the flood of media messages will do this for them in the default condition. Media will not only set the agenda and tell people what to think about, but media will also set the standards for important things in a person’s life—standards for success, happiness, character, and beauty. Media will set impossible standards for how we should live our lives, the appearance of one’s body, the velocity of success in careers, the value of material goods, and the intensity of relationships.

7. *Media literacy must deal with values.* Masterman (2001) argues that media education “does not seek to impose specific cultural values.” He continues, “It does not seek to impose ideas on what constitutes ‘good’ or ‘bad’ television, newspapers, or films” (p. 41). Of course, that position in itself is value laden. Whereas media educators may not be defining bad and good messages, they are implying that mindless exposure to messages is bad and that interpreting the messages actively is good. The issue is not whether this enterprise of media literacy is value laden or not. Instead, the issue is focused on identifying what those values are and who controls them.

8. *Media-literate person increases mindful exposures.* A person who has a strong perspective on media phenomenon has a high potential to act in a media-literate manner. The set of knowledge structures by itself does not indicate media literacy; the person must actively and mindfully use the information in those knowledge structures during exposures to media messages. Thus, people who are more highly media literate spend less exposure time in automatic processing of messages. They are more consciously aware of their goals for the exposure and are consciously making decisions about filtering and meaning construction. This is not to say that highly media-literate people do not spend considerable time in automatic processing; they do. Nevertheless, when they are in the state of automaticity, they are being governed by automatic routines that they have had a hand in forming rather than being governed by routines conditioned almost exclusively by media.

9. *Media-literate people exhibit an understanding that media literacy is a continuum, not a category.* Media literacy is not a category where a person either is media literate or is not. Instead, media literacy is best regarded as a continuum—like a thermometer—where there are

degrees. We all occupy some position on media literacy continuum. There is no point below which we could say someone has no literacy, and there is no point at the high end where we can say that someone is fully literate—there is always room for improvement. People are positioned along that continuum based on the strength of their overall perspective on media. The strength of a person's perspective is based on the number and quality of knowledge structures. And the quality of knowledge structures is based on the level of a person's skills and experiences. Because people vary substantially on skills and experiences, they will vary on the number and quality of their knowledge structures. Hence, there will be great variation in media literacy across people.

People operating at lower levels of media literacy have weak and limited perspectives on media. They have smaller, more superficial, and less organized knowledge structures, which provide an inadequate perspective to use in interpreting the meaning of a media message. These people are also habitually reluctant or unwilling to use their skills, which remain underdeveloped and therefore more difficult to employ successfully.

Conclusion

There has been a great deal of dynamic scholarly activity producing a wide range of ideas about what media literacy should be, its purposes, and the techniques that can be used to achieve it. Nevertheless, all this scholarly activity has not translated into a clear definition that is shared by all media literacy scholars and practitioners. People continue to debate which elements are the most important ones for media literacy.

Across all the thinking about media literacy, there are several themes that underlie a great deal of that thinking. Media literacy must be developed, and that development requires the use of skills to build knowledge structures. These knowledge structures about media and the real world then form perspectives that we use to understand media. Therefore both skills and knowledge are important. Media literacy is not limited to any one medium but instead provides perspectives to understand all kinds of content presented by all media. The purpose of media literacy is to help people develop greater understandings so that they can control the influence of media on them in their everyday lives. Greater control is not simply limiting exposure to media. Instead, greater control begins with the ability to know the difference between those media messages that can enhance one's life and those messages that are likely to be of harm to oneself. This understanding can lead people to use media as tools to achieve their own goals rather than allow media to use them as tools to achieve media's goals. Finally, values are important. People who have a clear

understanding of their own moral, emotional, and aesthetic values will be less likely to accept the values presented in media messages without questioning them.

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PART X

COMMUNICATION AS A PROFESSION

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

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Since ancient times, certain individuals have earned their living as professional communicators. Before the invention of writing, poets and storytellers functioned as entertainers, teachers, and historians, supported by the audience to whom they communicated the community's greatest truths. The earliest forms of written language were developed and used by professional scribes, who continued to play an important role well into the Renaissance. Both society and communication technologies have grown more complex over the centuries, giving rise to specialization among professional communicators.

The jobs of the ancient poet are spread among today's artists, teachers, media celebrities, and motivational speakers. The scribe's legal and administrative functions are now performed by lawyers, accountants, journalists, and legislators. With the invention of the printing press, and to an even greater extent, with the rise of electronic media in the 20th century, entire industries of publishing, journalism, and broadcasting have taken on the job of spreading news throughout the community. Meanwhile, the increasing complexities of contemporary business, politics, and religion have produced specialists to perform, create, and teach communication in virtually every arena of modern society. This chapter will review how communication is used professionally, along with the various skills and practices required of professional communicators.

Professional Communication Careers

It is possible to think of professional communicators in several ways. First, rather obviously, there are some positions

for which *people are hired specifically to communicate*. Writers, platform speakers, Web site developers, customer service representatives, or preachers, for example, perform various kinds of communication tasks as their primary job duties. Second, there are fields of communication—public relations, journalism, filmmaking—in which *individuals might specialize in just one aspect of an entire communication process*. An advertising agency's bookkeeper, for instance, will have expertise in the accounting details of media buys and print production but is unlikely to get involved in the creative aspects of advertising design. These individuals might be less likely to call themselves "professional communicators," but they would certainly think of themselves as working "in communications" as a professional career choice.

A third way to think of professional communication is the *way in which communication is carried out in a professional field*. For example, a medical doctor can learn how to communicate with patients from a specialist in medical communication or health communication. Both the doctor and the specialist could be described as experts in the professional communication involved in the medical field, one as a practitioner and the other as a scholar.

Of course, nearly anyone who works for a living will need to communicate as part of the job, and a fourth way to think of professional communication involves the standards and expectations of the workplace. Communication skill is consistently ranked by both employers and workers as one of the top factors in gaining and keeping employment, in doing the job, and for getting ahead in a career. As a result, professional skills can also be thought of as *those communication skills that are required to be successful in a professional setting*.

Professional Specialties

Because there are several ways to think of professional communication, there are a large number of communication specialties that could usefully prepare a person for a professional communication career. The focus of preparation will differ somewhat with the sense in which professional communication is defined, as will the kind of communication responsibilities that will be part of the day-to-day job.

Developing Expertise:

Communication for Special Purposes

In those situations in which people are hired specifically to communicate, the professional job will virtually always require the individual to communicate about something specific. That is, a professional writer will more typically be a medical writer or a petroleum industry writer. A professional speaker might be a motivational speaker or a safety trainer. A specialist in electronic media or interpersonal communication will similarly be an expert in an industry, becoming a sports marketing Web site developer or a cancer patient counselor.

Professional communicators sometimes specialize in one mode of communication, spending all their time writing newsletter articles, for example, designing presentation visuals, or interviewing clients. However, the communication environment of most organizations is becoming more integrated, and the typical professional communicator will generally be an expert in several modes of communication. A public relations professional, for example, would be expected to handle telephone and videoconferencing equipment, create both electronic and printed newsletters, conduct and give interviews, and speak competently at both live and virtual press conferences.

Furthermore, the expectations of contemporary audiences for multimedia messages, the easy availability of software to manipulate both photographic and video images, and the ubiquitous use of the Internet to deliver all manner of messages now require professional communicators to integrate text, visual images, and interactive elements in virtually all their messages. Even when only one communication technology is being used, contemporary equipment generally accommodates a variety of symbolic and artifactual communication elements. The typical writer, for example, is now expected to manipulate graphic images in a document as well as code the text for use on a company Web site. The corporate trainer now combines a lecture with video feeds and computer-based learning modules into a fully interactive course. The graphic artist becomes responsible for selecting, manipulating, and editing both text and images to meet various communication goals. Interviews might be held by way of Web site or video meeting software, requiring the use of both interpersonal and electronic media skills.

Joining an Industry:

Communication and Communications

A few industries engage in communication as their primary product, and it is common to speak of the professional communications fields of journalism, public relations, radio or television broadcasting, or film production. These fields are all covered in more detail in this handbook, but the size and complexity of these industries is such that many individuals make their living by specializing in just one narrow area of expertise.

Rather obviously, someone with a career in broadcast communication might be a photographer, filmmaker, recording artists, or announcer. These jobs are only a part of a much larger universe of professional positions. The production crew will also include carpenters, administrative assistants, cost accountants, and food service managers. The broadcast company will fill management positions in finance, human resources, and law. The newspaper's staff will include purchasing agents, salespeople, and printing press technicians. Each of these positions requires some kind of expertise in the communications industry, but it is essential to combine that preparation with relevant technical expertise to fulfill a specific function for the company.

Many individuals in these communication fields do not identify themselves as professional communicators but rather in terms of their specific roles within the industry. A media lawyer will probably attend law school before specializing in communication law, just as a carpenter, secretary, or accountant would probably gain those skills before putting them to work in a communications industry. Even journalists, who obviously spend much of their time writing, will generally call themselves reporters or editors rather than focus on the more generic communication elements of the position.

Communicating as a Professional:

Communities of Discourse

Attention to the communication that people do within a professional field is a relatively new and multidisciplinary field of communication study. Building on research in linguistics, sociology, psychology, and anthropology, as well as communication, a growing body of research demonstrates how communication practices and patterns define and maintain the unique communities that call themselves professions. Lawyers and doctors, for instance, must communicate daily to accomplish their professional tasks. The ways in which they communicate, however, are not the same. A paralegal, familiar with the communication practices of the legal profession, could be described as communicating like a lawyer—assertive, analytical, and confident—in spite of the lack of a law degree. On the other hand, a bonafide doctor might find himself or herself unable to effectively treat patients because he or she has never

learned the medical communication techniques required to clearly explain diagnoses and procedures to them.

Even within a profession, there will be areas of specialization. Health care communication, for example, would be found in a pharmaceutical sales brochure, in a retirement community's patient advocacy program, and in a developing country's public health education agency, and each context requires a different type of communication. The person training health professionals to be better communicators must understand both the medical profession and the community in which those practitioners will operate. For instance, a public relations specialist for a pharmaceutical company would need to understand both the legal and business environment of medical research and development and the communication norms of the medical profession. The increasing availability of medical information on the Internet adds yet another wrinkle; these days a health communication expert might also be expected to understand the cognitive effects of various media technologies.

While a specialized understanding of context and technique is important, an understanding of the communication necessary in a particular profession goes far beyond learning the technical formats or the jargon of the field. Karl Weick, James Taylor, Elizabeth Van Every, and many others have shown how communication defines and maintains any organization as a coherent whole, and professional organizations are no exception. In fact, critical theorists such as Stan Deetz and Dennis Mumby have shown how the economic and social power of professional organizations is sustained by communication. In a global economy, where large multinational corporations have taken on some of the traditional functions of government, professional associations play a big role in setting the social and governmental policies, and social advances depend on improved communication processes, a communication career in a professional discipline might easily have more impact than a career in politics.

While it is possible to discuss communication in these professional communities in general terms, a key point is that the communication practices in each profession are very different from one another. The effective business communicator, for instance, is typically trying to get a group to act collaboratively, while an engineer might be trying to guide a team through a highly technical discussion of test results or design specifications. Someone with excellent skills as a patient advocate in a hospital might be of very little value as a public relations specialist. Even the communication expertise of a patient advocate in a large teaching hospital might be quite different from that of a patient advocate in a rural program serving an immigrant population.

*Professional Expectations:
Communication in the Workplace*

An increasingly important perspective on professional communication recognizes that in the media information

society of the 21st century, communication has become a critical component of virtually any profession. The ability to communicate well has long been a requirement for success at the highest professional and managerial levels. Increasingly, however, job success at all levels relies on successful communication with clients, suppliers, and colleagues around the globe. The rise of the Internet has intensified the importance of information flow as an element of success for any enterprise, whether it is for profit, nonprofit, or personal. The vast majority of corporate information now flows electronically. Even more profoundly, the emerging paradigm of the "learning organization" places communication front and center as the means by which human beings maintain themselves as productive communities.

With the turn of the 21st century, the U.S. Department of Labor had acknowledged a class of "knowledge workers" as a critical element in a global, information-based economy. Knowledge workers are defined as those who add value to data by analyzing, manipulating, and communicating it to others as information. Not surprisingly, many would argue that any decently paying job in the United States now fits that description. *The Wall Street Journal* recently reported that office workers now spend up to 70% of their time dealing with written material, while manufacturing jobs are now most often organized within teams that depend on sophisticated communication skills to accomplish everything from planning their own work to maintaining production quality standards.

At the beginning of the industrial age, professional communication meant the preparation of business documents. Effective communication now includes the full range of written, presentational, interpersonal, team, and electronic forms that are required for success in a contemporary business, as well as the healthy social relationships, effective critical thinking, and attention to stakeholder audiences that support the enterprise. Almost none of this workplace communication is simple. One researcher notes that workplace writing

is but the end result of a complex set of negotiations between the writer and the writer's real and imagined audiences; between the writer and the text's stated and unstated purposes; between the writer and the beliefs, practices, and constraints of the community. (Matalene, 1989, p. vi)

Similar conclusions have been drawn about the complex interpersonal communication found in a work setting; the sophisticated skills that are required to facilitate problem-solving discussions in large organizations; and the complex cognitive issues that must be solved in designing visually complex Web sites, presentation slides, or document graphics.

Professional Preparation

With such a wide variety of ways to think about professional communication and an equally wide range of potential

career paths, it is impossible to specifically define how one might prepare for a professional communication career. The distinctions among these various ways of looking at professional communication can be ambiguous. It isn't hard to find examples of jobs that seem to cross all these boundaries: Think of a nurse who has gone back to school for a degree in professional writing and now develops Web site content and writes a daily blog as the director of education for a public health agency.

Furthermore, there is very little consistency in the way organizations name or structure their various communication functions. Some companies hire communication specialists; others hire content specialists with excellent communication skills. Some companies see communication as the responsibility of all organizational members, while others look to specialists to facilitate their communication functions. We could conclude that any expertise in communication can be put to use in some professional context, but it is just as true to say that communication skill is never enough, by itself, to reach a professional status. Still, there are a few patterns of preparation that are fairly common.

Developing Expertise

For many, professional communication preparation involves a combination of expertise in two distinct areas. A love of baseball is combined with training in public speaking to land a job as a sports announcer. Work experience in the beverage industry is combined with a degree in marketing communications to qualify for a position designing point-of-sale advertising messages. Excellent interpersonal communication skills are combined with a degree in social work to land a job as a patient advocate in a hospital. Coursework in organizational communication coupled with experience with the payroll practices of an industry might lead to a position as a compensation and benefits counselor. A health communication major might take a position at a hospital, in a public health program, or in an assisted living facility to develop expertise in the issues of that medical context. A degree in interpersonal communication coupled with corporate management experience could lead to a career in executive coaching.

Professional Programs

In a few communication professions, degrees or certificate programs are available. The first specialized professional communication courses focused on writing for specific careers, and it is now possible to study communication as it is used in professional contexts such as journalism, business, training, health care, risk management, science and technology, and agriculture. There now are journalism or broadcast communication programs at virtually any university, and many universities offer programs in filmmaking, photography, graphic arts, public relations,

and so on. Professional preparation could take another route, of course, for the media lawyer or the production company's financial manager, who might get the law or business degree before taking an entry-level position in the industry. In most industries and professional fields, however, professional communicators build their content expertise through extracurricular activities or on-the-job experience.

Communication in the Disciplines

Within any community of discourse, a person could prepare to be a professional communicator in a discipline in two rather different ways. The doctor, lawyer, banker, or engineer who wishes to be successful will need to become comfortable with the methods, formats, and style of communication that mark a professional in that field. Many law, medical, and engineering schools offer communication courses as a formal or informal part of the curriculum. Professional organizations also offer resources so that an individual can enhance his or her communication skills throughout his or her professional career. Alternatively, one might choose to help doctors, lawyers, or businesspeople become better communicators. These specialists in communication are becoming quite common on the faculty of professional schools, and there are many independent consultants and trainers as well. Virtually any communication specialty could serve as the basic preparation for this kind of a career, although education or experience in the specific community of practice would also be required.

The Information Economy

Communication courses of some kind are required for virtually any college degree, although most employers complain that the typical college graduate is not sufficiently prepared to communicate in a "professional" manner. Many companies offer additional training or coaching to their employees, especially for managerial and professional positions. Others expect their workers to develop excellent communication skills on the job. Unfortunately, poor communication skills remain the most frequent reason given for lack of promotion or termination in the contemporary workplace. Any college graduate who plans a career in the 21st century should take care to develop key communication skills, whether they are learned as part of college coursework or developed through extracurricular activities.

How Communication Is Used Professionally

Given the breadth of professional communication, the set of specific skills, practices, and competencies might seem impossibly broad. What could a professional labor contract

negotiator have in common with an advertising agency's media buyer? What similarities could either have to that of the safety trainer for an agricultural co-op, a counselor who specializes in dysfunctional-family communication, or a freelance writer? Do these communication professionals have any skills in common with the professional manager, health care worker, or materials coordinator who spends up to 90% of his or her day in communication activities? Surprisingly, there are several important similarities. Despite systematic differences due to managerial level, functional goals, communication methods, and industry history, professional communication is characterized by (a) the explicit, strategic application of communication principles to meet professional goals; (b) a highly collaborative production process; and (c) a high degree of competence in the use of communication techniques.

Predictable Differences

Beginning with the more obvious differences in various professional communication situations helps us to see the more complex, underlying similarities across various professional communication contexts. Differences in the purpose and content of messages will exist due to the level of managerial responsibility in a given position, with managers typically focusing on abstract, strategic concepts, while lower-level workers communicate technical details. Content across professional functions will vary, with some specializing in technical or mathematical information, while others deal with emotions or personal values. Differences also occur when communicators choose face-to-face versus mediated modes of transmission or choose to speak to a large group versus one-on-one. Finally, the historical development of industries has created variations in the expectations of various stakeholder groups, such that some professional communicators are more focused on customers, others on stockholders, and still others on government audiences.

Characteristics of Professionalism

Despite the many differences across professions, organizations, and industries, the practice of *professional* communication is characterized by strategic application of principles to meet goals, collaborative work environments and production processes, and careful attention to competent performance of the communication method. Each of these elements has a foundation in the practical nature of professional communication. Professional communication does not concern itself with abstract principles or with communication for its own sake. With very few exceptions, professional communication is concerned with accomplishing something within an organizational context, and consistent success in accomplishing a purpose requires that *strategic* communication be accomplished *collaboratively* at a high level of *competence*.

Strategic Communication

While virtually everyone holding a professional position would be expected to do a great deal of high-quality communication, reaching a sufficient level of competence to be regarded as a professional generally requires an individual to also supervise, coach, or train others in communication practices and procedures. These duties require that the professional communicator be able to strategically plan communication, explaining to others what to do, why to do it, and often how to do it—all of which require a conscious awareness of the details of the communication process.

Furthermore, there's a good chance that a professional communicator will be asked to justify the choices he or she has made in targeting an audience, constructing a message, or choosing a communication method. Especially when working in a managerial capacity, the professional will be asked to demonstrate the need to spend money on staff, supplies, or other resources to accomplish specific communication purposes. When things do not work out as planned, the professional will also be expected to explain what went wrong. In short, the professional communicator does not merely communicate; he or she must also be prepared to explain to others how and why communication ought to happen in just that way.

Conscious, strategic choices require the ability to predict the outcome of certain kinds of communicative behaviors, therefore strategic communication necessarily involves the *application of general principles within a specific context*. Strategic communication thus involves four key steps:

1. *Turning Purposes into Goals*: The classical communication professional has been a persuader—the salesperson, preacher, or political operative—and the communication goal is to persuade some audience to act in a certain way, often to buy a product but also to believe, vote, join, or behave in a desired way. Career counselors will often guide skilled communicators toward jobs where persuasion is the communicative purpose: for example, sales, public relations, fund-raising, marketing, advertising, politics, law, and education. Other kinds of communication purposes can require the services of a professional as well. Especially in the media industries, the communicative purpose might be to inform the public about current events or to entertain various kinds of audiences. A health communication professional might be aiming to create better doctor-patient relationships. A science writer might be hired with the purpose of educating and informing. An employee relations director could be focused on creating a generally positive attitude toward the company.

Given a general sense of purpose, the strategic communicator will define specific goals, often within the framework of upper management's overall strategic planning process. The hospital's communication specialist, for example, could define "better doctor-patient relationships"

in terms of goals for “warm, nurturing relationships” or for “effective diagnostic conversations.” Obviously, these different goals would require the effective application of very different communication principles.

It can take considerable skill to translate general communicative purposes into specific, concrete, and actionable goals. The professional will need to fully understand the general purposes of communication as well as the specific needs of the organization and the potentially competing interests of its stakeholders. The health communication specialist who must decide between developing warm, nurturing relationships and providing an effective diagnosis will be making the choice within the framework of the hospital’s overall mission. Is it a small local hospital that stays in business because its patients feel “at home” in the setting? Or is it a teaching hospital that has an overriding purpose to train doctors to be excellent diagnosticians? Even more difficult, do the patients, doctors, board of trustees, and nurses all agree on the priorities?

A further complication arises from the dynamic and complex nature of contemporary organizations. Not only is the professional communicator crafting messages to multiple audiences with conflicting interests, backgrounds, and needs, but the nature of the audience is constantly changing, as are the availability of resources and the constraints of the environment. The more we learn about the dynamics of complex adaptive systems, the more we recognize the oversimplification in the instrumental model of a communicator who sends a message to accomplish a purpose. The reality is often an aggregate of micromessages that lead to adaptive responses—a tacit, invisible organizational learning process that has only a weak link to intentional communication efforts.

In short, setting goals can be considerably more difficult in a professional setting than it might appear from the perspective of a communication classroom. The first step in any assignment is likely to be to define the goal, but it is unlikely that one’s teacher and classmates will object to the goal, refuse to authorize the project, or propose an alternative objective, as one’s professional colleagues are likely to do. Similarly, a communication student is seldom concerned with the budget, staffing, or timing issues that often drive organizational decision making. Nor is anyone likely to question the underlying assumption that any intentional communication will have any appreciable effect at all.

2. Situation Analysis: Once a goal is determined, the professional communicator’s primary work begins. The next task is to decide how to proceed, which requires both a solid understanding of communication principles and a careful analysis of the situation in which the communication will take place. Whether the field is health communication, public relations, politics, or training, the communicator will need to decide the best way to meet the stated goal. The actual work process will vary with the industry and position, but the basic steps are the same.

First, the facts of the situation must be determined. A public health analyst might do surveys to determine the number of cigarettes a group is currently smoking or whether fresh fruits are available to the population or how much sexual activity is normal. Information must also be gathered about the target audience’s needs, motivations, resources, and ability to meet the desired goal. Generally, complete information is unavailable, and for a professional communicator, the ability to extrapolate data and make good guesses is as important a skill as having an excellent research methodology.

Second, knowledge of communication principles will be applied to predict the most effective messages and methods to achieve the desired effect. A knowledgeable advertiser, for example, might predict that a media buy of 20% newspaper, 10% local television, and 70% cable will yield the best response from the targeted consumers. Obviously, a conclusion such as this is always subject to change: Media outlets vary their mix of programs, and audience tastes evolve. Virtually any communication professional will face this kind of dynamic decision environment. The professional is always seeking updated information and an updated understanding of communication options and their likely outcomes.

Finally, any communication that is implemented requires planning of the allocation of resources. Neither the public health professional nor the advertiser can plan a communication campaign that exceeds the available time, budget, or operational staff. The professional communicator must know what a communication effort would cost, in terms of money and other organizational resources, and what the benefit would be in terms of its probable effectiveness. A political operative, for example, might be able to predict the effectiveness of assigning campaign staff to making door-to-door calls and engaging in one-to-one conversations with potential voters. Even so, an analysis of the organizational resources might lead to the conclusion that the same amount of money could be better spent on travel costs to take the candidate back to Washington, where he or she could gain important political points by voting on key legislation.

Developing a resource budget is generally not done alone. The organization probably has other needs to meet, many of equal importance with the communication project, and only a limited set of resources. The professional communicator might be competing for staff, training time, or funds to make outside purchases. A budget might be created quickly in a single meeting, or it might be developed over the course of an annual or a multiyear strategic planning cycle. The process might be collaborative or antagonistic. Generally, creating a plan of action will require the technical skills that allow an accurate prediction of costs and outcomes, along with the people skills involved in successfully negotiating for resources against the competing needs in an organization.

The professional communicator applies some basic principles: rhetorical situation, audience analysis, and resource availability. Each industry or organization represents a

different context, and the professional will have to spend some time gaining expertise in the specifics of communication in that context. Still, any strategic communicator is answering a series of questions that are fundamental to virtually any communicative situation: Given the tools at my disposal, what is the most effective way to accomplish my purpose?

3. *Taking Action:* Peter Drucker, a major influence on contemporary management practices, has said that a primary characteristic of professional practice is the *implementation* of an idea. Politicians and academicians tend to spend most of their time deciding on the right course of action, but Drucker (2004) points out, “For the solution to become a decision, action is needed” in a managerial context. The work of a professional communicator does not end with deciding on the most effective marketing campaign or the most promising way to communicate change to an organization’s employees. The professional communicator must next locate and organize all the resources it will take to implement that decision.

Resources can include everything from employee time to the purchase of printing services to the creative and intellectual resources needed to design a training program or a Web site. In some cases, the resources may have already been secured during the project-planning phase. The communication director may have already hired a staff that includes a graphic designer, a writer, and a publicist. The employee relations manager might be working in a company that already owns server capacity for a large intranet as well as Web site development software. Other resources will need to be located and purchased for a specific project. Either way, a professional communicator will now begin to deal with the issues of actually using those resources to get the communication task done.

Implementation of a plan always requires communicating goals, standards, and plans for those who will be performing the various parts of the overall project. The work involves communicating information and instructions to those who are responsible for the actual performance of the tasks. The complex tasks that characterize a professional environment can involve careful coordination of information, schedules, and resource use among the members of a single work team—or across functional, organizational, and national boundaries. The manager is the lynchpin in a vast network of communications that are required to implement a project. Finally, the manager’s ultimate responsibility is to control the process by setting up feedback mechanisms so that he or she can determine whether the resources are being used as budgeted and the work is being performed to the required standards.

4. *Evaluation:* The final step in strategic communication involves an evaluation of the effort in terms of the original objectives. The evaluation process might be a formal one, requiring sophisticated research skills to determine the reach of an advertising campaign or the impact of a public health

program. In many cases, evaluation is more informal or complicated because of the inability to separate communication from multiple other influences. An executive speechwriter who is aiming for a more positive corporate image, for instance, might not be able to determine the relative influence of the CEO’s speech at an industry conference, the company’s excellent quarterly earnings, or an influential blogger’s recent praise. Whether the evaluation is formal or informal, difficult or easy, an important element of the professional communicator’s job is explaining to others whether or not something was effective and why.

Collaborative Communication

With only a few exceptions, a second characteristic of most professional communication is its collaborative nature. The economic reality of the job market is that only relatively large organizations can afford to hire individuals to focus exclusively on communication functions. That means, in turn, that a professional communicator is nearly always working in a relatively large organization, with all its financial and political realities. The result is that professionals will primarily communicate as members of teams, departments, or organizations. The individual voice of a novelist, the individual graphic eye of an artist, or the individual eloquence of an orator has very little place in a large organization that is trying to reach a collective goal.

Instead, the professional communicator is part of a communicating group, and each act of communication is performing important functions *within* the group at the same time it is serving to reach the group’s goals. Carolyn Matalene (1989) describes the work of professional writers, for example, where creating a document “may have more to do with reaching consensus, setting goals, inventing solutions, revising priorities, or establishing control than the finished pages reveal” (p. vi). The typical professional document is reviewed or revised by three to five people at various levels of management. The typical sales presentation is created by a team that includes marketing and sales staff along with communication specialists. The typical Web site is the result of collaboration among writers, graphic designers, and user interface developers.

As a result of this highly collaborative environment, the professional communicator’s job involves as much attention to principles of interpersonal and organizational communication as it does to the strategic use of communication to accomplish the explicit goals of the position. Effective publicists are not only interested in the effect of a message on external audiences, but they are also equally aware of the effect that the process of creating that message has on the organization itself. A new mission statement, for instance, might be targeted for a spot on the company’s Web site, but in the process of creating that mission statement, the organization will engage in a series of complex communications designed to compare individual perceptions about the organization and discover a sense of shared identity. The publicist who tries to bypass that process, crafting a mission

statement as though it were an individual writing task, is likely to be ineffective on multiple levels. Not only is the statement liable to miss the mark, but the organization will have lost an important opportunity for internal development.

The massive amount of collaboration that can occur in a professional setting has given rise to a set of special technical skills that many professional communicators will often need to master. Even the simplest document, presentation slide, or Web site will be created with software that includes tools for reviewing and tracking revisions, maintaining a consistent template of graphics and format, and sharing files among multiple users. At a bare minimum, the contemporary professional must be able to move and share electronic files and production drafts. In some situations, document control requires compliance with International Organization for Standardization (ISO) regulations. Even in less technically rigorous contexts, collaborative communication activities often involve protocols for formatting, review and revision controls, as well as guidelines for distribution and retention of the messages.

Competent Communication

Perhaps it goes without saying that professional communication is performed at a highly competent level. Anyone who enters a communication profession will probably have received an education in some aspect of communication or technical training with one or more communication technologies. It's probably a reasonable assumption that the professional is thus capable of doing a better job than the nonprofessional. In many fields, competence is very often described as being "highly professional"! Such definitional circles don't really answer the question, however, of what constitutes more "professionally" competent communication or a "better" job of communicating.

It is possible to list the practical consequences of doing communication work on a regular basis in a paid capacity, and three key components provide a fairly good description of what people seem to mean by professionally competent communication.

1. *Attention to Detail:* Professionals are obsessively careful about production details. In part, this is the result of the high cost of creating thousands of copies of a marketing brochure, a television show, or a commercially viable Web site. Production costs alone can be astronomical, making the cost of reprinting an annual report or reshooting a training video simply unacceptable. Sending even a single letter can cost a company a hundred dollars. Making a presentation to just a few key executives will cost the company several thousand dollars to hold the meeting and another few thousand for the presentation team to produce its message with slides, video clips, and glossy handouts. Careful reviewing, editing, proofreading—and then checking the message again—are thus normal in a professional environment.

In addition, professionally produced communication is the only means an organization has for communication

with its various audiences. When an individual makes a small spelling mistake in an e-mail, there are few real repercussions. The reader might also know the person on an interpersonal basis and probably has read many, many perfectly spelled words in previous e-mails. An error is seen as just a minor blemish within a much larger amount of positive information about the person. Just the opposite is generally true for an organization. The company often has just one chance to get its message in front of a customer, potential employee, or prospective shareholder. Errors simply cannot occur. Professional communication, in practical terms, means endless attention to the details of print production, language use, color reproduction, server capacity, and so on to create a perfect output.

2. *Multiple Drafts:* The high cost of error combines with the collaborative nature of the professional context to create a second common characteristic of communication: The message that is sent is *never* the first draft. Obviously, the need for multiple reviews and approvals means that the communication is typically edited, modified, and fine-tuned before it can be considered complete. The strategic and collaborative nature of the term *professional* also contributes to the need for editing and revision.

The strategic nature of professional communication means that there might be several options to consider and the choices are not always clear-cut. Judging the potential effectiveness of communication might involve drafting several possible storyboards or paragraphs. Extensive video footage might be shot so that an editor can choose the scenes that work best together. The navigation on a Web site might be tested with focus groups or a sample of early customers. The collaborative context often requires that team members share perceptions, adjust perspectives, and paraphrase ideas to achieve concordance—a process that involves multiple shared drafts before the communication authentically reflects the views of the entire group.

The result is that multiple drafts are a normal part of professional communication. Some editing is done to catch mistakes, but much more attention is given to testing and refining a message to maximize its effectiveness. Individuals who have worked in such an environment for any length of time will find that audience analysis becomes an automatic part of any writing, speaking, or design task. E-mails are reread to ensure that the tone is appropriate. Letters are rewritten for clarity and style. Slides are reworked to ensure their persuasive and aesthetic impact. Even sticky notes are rewritten so that the handwriting conveys exactly the right mood to the reader.

3. *State-of-the-Art:* A final practical result of the professional context is the degree to which communication methods and mode reflect state-of-the-art technological capabilities. This can include the technology of production—using the latest embedded graphics or animation options in presentation software—as well as the technology of message delivery—video conference rooms or webinar technology to hold a meeting. Sometimes, the focus on the latest "bells and whistles" can seem like a superficial attention to the form of

a message at the expense of content. In most cases, however, there are obvious reasons for professional communication to reflect the state-of-the-art.

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PART XI

JOURNALISM

THE IDEA OF JOURNALISM

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What is journalism in the early 21st century? At a very basic level, one could argue that journalism today is the application of a set of skills that provides current information about the world—news—to the public at large. Certainly, journalism is as much about news as it is about its public. Yet such a simplistic definition of what journalism might be misses out so much of the significance and complexity that pertains to journalism in our society today and historically. Journalism has a history; indeed, it has histories; that is to say, there is no single account of journalism that provides us with a definitive understanding of how what we now recognize as journalism has come about (Curran, 2002). The journalism of the 21st century is what it is not because of a simple linear development of technology and social and political progress, though these factors are no doubt significant. Similarly, news itself, the product of journalistic processes, is not simple to define and requires close investigation of its development and function.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to explore how our present ideas of journalism and news have emerged by looking at a range of factors that have contributed to the development of journalism as we understand it today. It will also reflect on contemporary developments within journalism before contemplating how we might expect our ideas of journalism to change as the 21st century unfolds.

Contemporary thinking about journalism's role and function is not clear-cut and without controversy. Some suggest that journalism has numerous important roles within any democratic society. These include ensuring political accountability as well as enabling public understanding of

the economic, political, and social world. Others suggest that journalism also plays an important role in the cultural life of societies. It entertains and amuses us, but it can also play an important role in shaping and reflecting a range of constituencies and communities in society. In this sense, journalism can add to the fabric of public life by providing the social glue that helps bond communities together and shape our understanding of who we are—our identity (Anderson, 1983). It could be argued therefore that journalism is more a shaper of identity than a provider of news in any objective sense, in that it seeks to connect with and therefore create its audience as a symbolic ritual (Carey, 1989).

More critical analyses of journalism, however, stress the role it plays in helping maintain established positions of power within societies. This is not necessarily the fault of journalists themselves but relates to the context and environment in which they work and the economic and temporal pressures they are under. Journalists have historically worked for highly competitive news organizations, the main purpose of which has of course been the drive for profit. In this sense, journalism can be seen as reflecting particular values that prioritize the interests of those who have the most to gain from the market of news production and dissemination. It has been suggested that such values are in fact a component of the means by which the most powerful in society maintain their position of dominance by framing the role and function of journalism in ways that reinforce and reflect their particular interests (Chalaby, 1998; Herman & Chomsky, 1988). In attempting to ascertain how our present understanding of journalism has come

into being, all these perspectives on journalism shall be explored in this chapter with a view to developing a deeper understanding of how contemporary journalism is as it is and what the future might hold for it and for us.

Journalism and Its Values

In May 2007, the World Journalism Education Congress (2007) set out its declaration of principles; chief among these was the commitment to serve the public in an ethically informed manner. It suggests that “this commitment must include an understanding of and deep appreciation for the role that journalism plays in the formation, enhancement and perpetuation of an informed society” (para. 2). Similarly, the Project for Excellence in Journalism (1997), originally affiliated with the prestigious Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, suggests that “the central purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society.” They continue, “This encompasses myriad roles—helping define community, creating common language and common knowledge, identifying a community’s goals, heroes and villains, and pushing people beyond complacency” (para. 1–2). In Britain, Journalism UK cites Article 19 of the United Nations’ (1948) *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which states, “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers;” and the International Federation of Journalists (1954) suggests that “respect for truth and for the right of the public to truth is the first duty of the journalist.”

Though the specific articulations of the core values and ideals of journalism may differ, as it seems from the examples above, one of the recurring themes is that journalism has a commitment to truth and to inform the public. Indeed, Harcup (2007) suggests that “our job is indeed to get at the truth” (p. 2), while Klaidman and Beauchamp (1987) argue that “just as physicians and lawyers are morally required to be truthful with their patients and clients, journalists are morally obliged to deliver truth to the public” (p. 30). This emphasis on serving the public and providing it with “the truth” is often framed in terms of journalism performing an important political function—acting as an intermediary between politics and the public at large.

Yet to see the history of journalism and its values merely in political terms is to miss much. To be sure, though periodical print culture developed in tandem with the erosion of the ancien regime and the birth of modern democracy, it is far too simplistic to suggest that the precursors of journalism were solely concerned with radically altering the social and political arrangements of their day in the “long march” to democracy. Though, as we shall see, public writing has a strong political history, the

antecedents of journalism were also concerned with other matters that provided much broader cultural and economic functions. The appetite for gossip, rumor, and speculation as well as the spectacular, sordid, and horrific is as evident in the history and ideals of journalism as any political dimension. Truth was not a priority here.

More broadly, as Raymond (1996) suggests, “the desire for news, with its concomitant dangers, has probably been an aspect of most societies through history” (p. 2). Conboy (2002) also highlights the way in which tradition, folk culture, and superstition blended with an emergent commercial imperative to produce popular printed news that went far beyond the confines of political imperatives. As well as providing “intelligence” on matters of import, news also provided entertainment to those who read it. Such entertainment might be in the form of poems or ballads. It might be a gory account of a murder or public execution, or of a natural disaster in some far off land. Indeed, as Winston (2005) suggests, in the 17th and 18th centuries, this type of information was far more common than political news, which could be dangerous to produce.

In all likelihood, the celebrity-obsessed and sensationalist news agendas of today’s tabloids have their roots in the journalistic experiments of early-modern public writing. News was not just dry political and economic information, it was also intended to amuse and entertain. The so-called tabloid genre has always been close to newspapers’ key function to provide entertainment and amusement. Sloan (2001) suggests that the sensational crime story and “human-interest” story have been evident in America since the 1830s, with newspapers such as the *New York Sun* and the *New York Herald* seeking to expose lucrative gaps in the newspaper market with a cheap press that would be both informative and entertaining to the working people of America. These “penny dreadfuls” as they were known would “give the masses some thrills and chills for their money that couldn’t be found anywhere else” (p. 19).

The penny dreadful emerges from a tradition of journalism that has what might be termed a “social conscience” in that it sought to expose and uncover the dark underbelly of society. Most famously, Charles Dickens’s accounts of Victorian England highlighted the plight of the miserable and wretched as well as entertained and amused (see Tulloch, 2007). Similarly, W. T. Stead exposed child prostitution in late-19th-century London in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Harcup, 2007). Yet such stories also performed an important economic function, as Conboy (2004) suggests, given that this form of “New Journalism” imported from America emphasized human-interest stories, gossip, and sensation, as well as devoting a lot of its pages to advertising. Schudson (1978) has described this phenomenon as the “journalism of entertainment,” which would later be exploited by rival news organizations headed by William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer. “Yellow” journalism had arrived, a legacy that continues today (Campbell, 2001). Indeed, the commercial success of popular journalism is a testament to the

ways in which it not only helps construct our sense of national identity through language (Conboy, 2006) but also provides a moral framework within which we might orient ourselves.

Karen Sanders (2003) also suggests that journalism has an important role in contributing to the moral fabric of societies and helps reflect and shape our identity. She notes that “journalists sketch in the contours of our moral landscape. They contribute to the business of telling us who we are, interpreting the world for us, making it intelligible” (p. 9). In historical terms, as Black (2001), talking about journalism in England at the beginning of the 17th century, suggests, “news helped explain life” (p. 3).

So, according to Sanders and Black, journalism can also perform an important moral function in sorting out good from bad, right from wrong. Indeed, if we look at the moral indignation expressed in the pages of tabloid newspapers, we can see at a glance just how this construction of moral norms occurs. As Gripsrud (2000) suggests when talking about the ritualistic nature of tabloid news, “Tabloid forms provide the audience with existential and moral help, and support in the daily struggles to cope with an everyday life marked by the uncertainties characteristic of modernity” (p. 297).

The journalist and scholar Michael Ignatieff (1997) posited that journalism should also be expressive of a deeper sense of humanity in playing an important role in breaking down barriers between different peoples and different cultures. Ignatieff is talking here mainly about the role of objective reporting in national and ethnic conflict. He indicated that what is required is a deeper sense of context that not only helps explain why conflict occurs but should also seek to uncover that which transcends some of the causal elements of conflict—our common humanity (see Plaisance, 2002).

Journalism is also then about making judgments and about comment, not solely about attaining the “objective truth.” Journalism as a literary form, for instance, therefore may be able to tell us more about ourselves and the societies we inhabit than the “factual” reporting of the courts or the local council. One only has to look at the literary contributions from authors as diverse as Jonathan Swift and Daniel Defoe to George Orwell and Martha Gellhorn to see that journalism offers us a rich source through which we can tap into our cultural identity and its history (see Collier, 2006; Keeble & Wheeler, 2007).

So from this brief summary we can see that journalism is not now, nor has it ever been, solely about a political imperative to aid democracy. The historical development of journalistic ideals also emerges from the specific historical contexts in which the practices with which we associate journalism started to become accepted. These in turn are linked to the changing social, political, and economic contexts in which these practices, which became known as journalism, started to emerge. For example, the idea of objectivity in journalism is of course one that is central to

our modern conceptions of what journalism (or at least good journalism) should be about. However, the journalistic ideal of objectivity was not something that was a component of journalism even in the 19th century. Journalistic objectivity is something that has emerged over a period of time in different ways and in different contexts. Some media historians argue that journalistic objectivity emerged because of specific economic tensions between rival news organizations. For example, Keeble (2001) suggested that “as newspapers gradually lost their party affiliations, journalists worked to establish their independence as searchers for objective truth” (p. 129). This emphasis on truth would therefore provide a news organization with a competitive edge over its rivals.

Another interpretation of the emergence of journalistic objectivity stems from an analysis of the technological developments of the telegraph and wireless in the 19th century. Carey (1989), for example, suggests that it was the spatial range of news aided by technological innovation that meant that news had to be “stripped of the local, the regional; and colloquial” (p. 210) and be more in keeping with the language of science with its emphasis on authenticity and accuracy. However, Schudson (2001) takes issue with the economic and technologically orientated approaches to the historical development of the notion of journalistic objectivity; instead, he cites the emergence of a professional culture of journalism, and along with it practices such as interviewing and note taking, that sought to create and maintain a distance from the proprietors of news organizations and their political backers. According to Schudson, journalists also wanted to generate their own sense of “collective integrity,” which would “endow their occupation with an identity they can count as worthy” (p. 165).

Embryonic Journalism

To put a specific date on the “invention of journalism” would be to court controversy and possibly ridicule. Some commentators suggest that journalism, or at least the practices associated with journalism, can be dated as far back as ancient Roman times with the *Acta Diurna* (Hudson, 1873, p. xxix), which provided information about court proceedings and political affairs. Others suggest that journalism has its beginnings in the political turmoil of the English Civil War in the early 17th century (Frank, 1961; Siebert, 1952/1965). It has also been asserted that journalism was “invented” after the onset of the industrialization of the press in the mid-19th century (Chalaby, 1998), when news production became part of a much larger corporate enterprise with specific commercial interests and objectives. According to this perspective, journalism and its values took shape according to the priorities of the market.

If we were to look for examples of “journalism” in history, we would find that its history is relatively brief.

The first mention of the word in English was in the 1830s. However, as Conboy (2004) suggests, many of the “practices and traditions” of journalism were already well established by the time the word *journalism* was adapted from the French word *journalisme*. Therefore, to come to some judgment about a starting point for when journalism began becomes highly problematic. This noted, if we are to look historically at how our ideas of journalism have come about, some discussion of early journalistic writing is warranted as this will, it is hoped, allow for a greater sense of clarity about how, why, and when the ideas and ideals of journalism came into being.

Context, of course, is everything, and the changing economic and political complexion of Europe as it emerged from the “late middle ages” into a new era of global trade and mercantilism is the starting point for our historical overview. Around the 15th century, a new system of proto-capitalism was developing out of the collapse of the Hapsburg Empire, with states jostling for supremacy. Given the political and economic rivalries of the 15th and 16th centuries, economic advantage was seen as a key element in securing the objectives of the new nation-states, and it was information that provided the main ways in which such an advantage could emerge. Up-to-date and accurate information was therefore an essential requirement for those who sought to achieve or indeed retain economic and political power. Information, in this new era of trade and national rivalry, therefore assumed value, in both political and economic terms. Information about trade and economics, information on international affairs, the goings-on in court (though not yet in Parliament), and local rivalries were important to the emerging mercantile class and those individuals of status who had commercial and political interests in receiving such information (Wilson, 2005).

Given the powerful status of news, those in authority considered its control imperative to the maintenance of the status quo. The printing press in particular had made the production and dissemination of news more widespread to the extent that control of its output was perceived as essential.¹ The desire to control the spread of information is evident as long ago as the early Tudor period in England, as the debate about the limits of royal power and the religious orientation of the monarch was prominent in the print culture of the day. As a result, Henry VIII sought to achieve control over all printing to ensure that it conformed to the royal view, a trend that continued through to the reign of Elizabeth I. Such was the fear of print, and its ability to stir up opposition to authority, that various systems of control came into force to ensure that printers were brought into line with authority and the press was controlled. These mechanisms of control wavered in their effectiveness throughout the Tudor and Stuart periods, though they lasted until the English Civil War in the mid-17th century, when the licensing system collapsed, only to be revived during the interregnum (Siebert, 1952/1965).

Such a period of political turbulence, of course, produced many examples of public writing that were intended to serve explicitly political purposes. Officially printed material required licensing by the Stationers Company, which was loyal to the throne and had a commercial interest in restricting the market. It was during this period of political unrest that the print medium was being used explicitly as a political weapon. One of the first newspapers used to reflect unambiguous political ideas was Gilbert Mabbott’s *The Moderate*. Mabbott was inspired by John Lilburne and the political ideals of the Levellers and their radical proposals for democracy. As such, *The Moderate* sought and expounded the virtues of democracy and the political rights of all—“The laws of this land hold out an equal right and common interest to all.”

Another early example of public writing that could be seen as informing modern conceptions of journalism was provided by John Milton (1608–1674), who wrote *Paradise Lost* and, of course, *Areopagitica* (1644/1999). *Areopagitica* was essentially a plea for the repeal of the licensing system, which was being reimposed by Parliamentary rule. Milton’s thinking was shaped by the social and political turbulence of the day, and his arguments about freedom and truth can be seen as emanating from the enlightenment emphasis on human agency, rationality, and, of course, progress. Controls on the press were deemed to hinder such progress and stifle human agency. Licensing meant that open discussion and a progressive movement toward certainty hindered debate, which was seen as the key to greater understanding and truth. However, *Areopagitica* should not be seen as the archetypal liberal argument for press freedom; Milton did advocate the censorship of certain public texts, particularly those printed by Catholics. It would be wrong therefore to call Milton a journalist. Rather, Milton’s ideals influenced our modern conceptions about the power of journalism—the potential that print could have in advancing the “truth” about the world. Other public writers or pamphleteers of this age include William Walwyn, Henry Robinson, and John Lilburne (Siebert, 1952/1965). Following the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, journalism in its early forms began to engage more fully with politics and with its public constituency. This new constituency was the rising bourgeoisie; this increasingly influential mercantile class required up-to-date information on politics and foreign affairs to assert themselves both politically and economically.

In America, news letters had appeared from the mid- to late 17th century, as did a number of English newspapers (Mott, 1941), but arguably the first American journalism in what might be termed the first American newspaper was titled *Publick Occurrences* and printed by Benjamin Harris in Boston in 1690. The newspaper contained both foreign and domestic news but had its first edition banned 4 days after publication for contravening the licensing restrictions. It was these licensing arrangements that ultimately

ended Harris's journalistic endeavors. The *Boston News-Letter*; however, became "the first continually published American newspaper" (p. 11), and other titles soon followed: The *Boston Gazette*; *The New-England Courant*, which sought to provide information on trade, foreign affairs, as well as "human interest stories"—and, as Mott suggests, "with its appearance entertainment may be said to enter the history of American journalism as a definite newspaper function" (p. 16). As the productive dynamics of society were altering, so too did the opportunities to exploit the desire for news. News, because of its ability to reflect both a sense of place and a sense of time, can be seen as very important in allowing people to construct a more coherent sense of place, temporally, spiritually, geographically, and, of course, politically. Given the emerging importance of the idea of news in building a sense of collective awareness of the community and wider spatial and political environments, its commercial potential was soon realized. News became a commodity, and this commodification has had as much impact on the idea of journalism as any political impulse.

It was during the early 18th century in Europe and the later 18th century in America that we get the formation of what Habermas (1989) terms the public sphere—the realm of public, political discourse that both reflected on and sought to influence the changing dynamics of European political and economic life. The bourgeois public sphere then was an arena facilitated by journalism, public debate, and argument which would shape the relationship journalism had to both politics and economics from here on. It was this idea of the public sphere that would provide a guiding sentiment in the political transformation of both Europe and America as the 18th century unfolded. Conboy (2004) suggests that it was at this time that the

story of journalism over the next two centuries was to be an account of the ways in which this class negotiated its central role in society through print culture and the impact that this had on the formation and discourse of journalism. (p. 45)

Moreover, this idea that journalism and periodical print culture contribute to the broader functioning of the political community is of central importance to emergent ideas of journalism, and it is to this political framing of journalism that I will now turn.

Journalism and Politics

Probably the most popular and traditional view of the historical development of journalism frames its emergence in terms of its role as the fourth estate—the so-called watchdog role of the press. Historically, this perspective charts the development of journalism as a struggle between authority—Church and State—and the democratic impulse that had its foundation in the Enlightenment thought of

Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. The idea that journalism and freedom of the press developed as a tool of political emancipation does indeed have a very strong historical basis in the many political tracts that explicitly sought to challenge the political hierarchies of their time. Such political dissent usually consisted of printed material that sought to challenge established positions of power and can be traced from the earliest agitational literature of the 16th century through the "struggle" for freedom of the press in the 19th century to the "watchdog role" that journalism is supposed to have today. According to this history of journalism, the development of press freedom in America on independence from Britain in 1776 and in the mid-19th century in Britain enabled democracy to thrive as the press enabled public scrutiny and therefore accountability of politicians.

Journalism also ensured that the public had information at their disposal with which to make informed choices about who they would want to have in power. In short, journalism was perceived as essential to the effective working of democratic societies. This conventional account is in many ways very convincing, especially in its European and North American historical contexts. According to this perspective, the history of journalism, from Wilkes to Watergate, is littered with examples of brave journalists fighting political corruption, greed, and power on behalf of the people. The idea of journalism here then is that of a servant of the public, acting on their behalf as monitors of power and articulating the voice of the people.

In historical terms, the relationship between journalism and democracy seemed to crystallize following the Wilkes controversy in the late 18th century. Wilkes, an MP, sought to expose political corruption and incompetence via the publication of his pamphlet, *North Briton*. It could be argued that the Wilkes affair was historically important in creating the link between the narrow political constituency of Parliament, whose members were essentially self-interested, and the public at large. It was via Wilkes that it became possible to publish the proceedings in the House of Commons so that the public would be provided with information and intelligence on matters of direct importance to them.

In America, the press was also increasingly used as a means by which political battles could be fought. It was a mechanism through which support for political struggles could be developed, particularly in the battle for independence from Britain. Before the War of Independence, newspapers such as the *Boston Gazette* were pivotal in shaping opinion against the British. Newspapers therefore were being used as a means to undermine the authority of government and to advance alternatives to the political status quo, as Mott (1941) suggests when he notes that "it was a group of local radicals that filled the columns of the *Boston Gazette* with the kind of political articles which eventually prepared the minds of the people for the idea of

independence” (p. 75). Here, in the pages of the *Boston Gazette*, we can see the link between politics and journalism being consistently articulated, primarily in terms of undermining established unrepresentative authority. Such was the power of the press that those in authority sought to counter the arguments made in their own Tory newspapers.

A key figure in the democratic movement of the late 18th century and one who would cement the connection between the press and politics was Tom Paine. Paine (1995) would influence the development of democratic politics in Europe and America with his *Common Sense* (1776), *American Crisis* (1776), *Rights of Man* (1791), and *Age of Reason* (1795). Paine sought to articulate the idea that man had certain inalienable or natural rights and that government should be organized so as to protect and reflect these rights; chief among these were political rights. “A government of our own is our natural right,” he asserts in *Common Sense*, and the democratic sentiment from Paine’s writings influenced both revolutionaries and reformers in America and in Britain. Moreover, in a similar vein to Wilkes, Paine suggested that a free press should facilitate the connection between a democratic government and the people. In America, of course, this sentiment found its expression in the first article of the Bill of Rights.

However, in Britain at the beginning of the 19th century, the press was hindered from serving the people in this way because of the system of taxation, which meant that newspapers and pamphlets could not legally be produced or obtained by the majority of people. Arguments to repeal the taxes were made by both middle- and working-class publicists. These arguments were incorporated into broader movements that looked to establish a wider political franchise, provide a system of education for the poor, and, for the middle-class reformers, free the print market from government taxation and control (Hampton, 2004; Hollis, 1970).

Once these controls were removed in the mid-19th century, it seemed that journalism, independent from government control, could exist as part of a well-functioning democratic system on both sides of the Atlantic.² This connection between journalism and politics has helped forge a set of ethical guidelines for journalists, who, in principle at least, should attempt to open up the executive and the legislature to the gaze of the public. Journalism’s relationship with democracy since the mid-19th century has centered on ensuring accountability and providing the public with sufficient information to enable them to make rational decisions about their political allegiances. This idea that journalism provides people with the means of scrutinizing government lends itself to the notion of the fourth estate—journalism as independent from government yet performing a key function for democracy.

Another way of thinking about the development of journalism is one that is in almost direct opposition to the above interpretation. According to this script, journalism emerged in the middle of the 19th century as an important

element in the constraint, rather than liberation, of the masses. The idea of journalism here is about the expression of political and economic power and the dominant values of capitalism. Perversely, the story in its early stages is somewhat similar to what might be termed the traditional liberal view in that the idea of public communication was seen as progressive and emancipatory. However, it is during the industrial revolution in England, according to this more critical history, that the progressive emancipatory values of journalism started to become undermined by the priorities of profit. Chalaby (1998) suggests that before the end of printing restrictions on the press in the mid-19th century, journalism did not exist. Rather, what existed were popular appeals to the public made by politically motivated publicists in newspapers and pamphlets. Publicists, rather than journalists, provided news and information about the prevailing political institutions and climate; they also commented critically on the political and economic system, which they viewed as repressive and corrupt. According to this view, it was only after the final repeal of the stamp tax in 1855 that the commercial press expanded rapidly, and with it the prevailing views of capitalism and the free market.

Historically speaking, this relationship between the market and journalism has undermined the democratic spirit of journalism and sought to bind us into thinking that democracy and capitalism are synonymous and that journalism itself is of necessity tied to the market to function correctly in its democratic role (Curry Jansen, 1992). Of course, democracy and the “invisible hand” of the market are separate entities with separate histories and orientations.

Debate about journalism’s political function, however, seemed to diverge following the publication of Walter Lippmann’s (1922, 1925) studies of the American public. The essence of Lippmann’s arguments were that political life is far too complex for most Americans to comprehend, and therefore, journalism should contend itself with simplifying political information so as to retain its democratic ethos. According to Lippmann, the job of journalists was to “translate the technical deliberations and actions of political leaders and experts into a publicly accessible language to inform, as best as possible, a citizenry incapable of governing itself” (Haas, 2007, p. 7).

So the function of journalism should be to act as a conveyor of political information to the public in ways that enhance their understanding of politics, which allows for politicians to be held accountable. However, Dewey (1927) held that journalism’s role is not one of conveying a simplified form of political information to the masses but rather of engaging the masses in debate about political affairs. This deliberative model of journalism, then, is in stark contrast to the idea that journalism should convey information in that it adds the idea that journalism should also be an arena of public debate and should stimulate both the thinking and the doing of politics. Such is the essence of public, or civic, journalism.

Some of Dewey's sentiments seem also to have been absorbed by the findings in 1947 of The Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press, which, among other recommendations, asserted that journalism should "serve as a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism" (cited in Hass, 2007, p. 8). However, critics suggest that it is dangerous for journalism to venture into territory that might undermine long-established and effective news production processes (Davis, 2000). Again, we come back to the issue of objectivity in journalism, the ritualistic mantra that is taught in journalism schools around the world. Yet, as Altschull (1997) writes, "objectivity simply does not exist. . . . Objectivity is the mechanism for ensuring the status quo" (p. 148). In other words, the notion of objectivity is anything but objective as it orientates journalists away from serving the public and toward maintaining the far too close relationship between the political and economic elite (Franklin, 2004). The rise in political PR (public relations) and journalism's increasing reliance on such sources also undermines journalism's democratic imperative (Davis, 2008; Lewis, Williams, & Franklin, 2008).

So what is the answer? Does it lie beyond the realms of the physical world, in cyberspace? Contemporary debate about civic journalism seems to have been reinvigorated by advances in information and communication technologies, particularly the Internet. Indeed, the advent of the Internet has heralded new forms of public journalism that not only transcend the commercial imperatives and established institutions of traditional journalism but can also orient themselves toward greater deliberation and public awareness about politics and the wider world. According to some, the era of "alternative" media and alternative journalism is here (Atton, 2003). This is because of the ways in which new information technologies liberate communication, journalism, and its relationship with politics and the wider public more generally. According to McNair (2006), we have shifted from a paradigm of control, in which the political elite have been in a position effectively to censor and stifle public debate about politics, to one of chaos, in which technologies have enabled individuals and journalism to create a genuine public sphere. As McNair suggests, "Where the media have been expected to play a watchdog role over power in capitalism for centuries, the emerging environment provides enhanced means and opportunities for the exercise of that role" (p. 170). McNair also claims that the benefits of this shift are enhanced critical scrutiny of the elites, enhanced critical scrutiny of the media, decentralization and diversification of media production, and globalization of the public spheres (p. 170).

Yet how convincing is the idea that technology liberates us from the control paradigm? Sunstein (2007) has recently suggested that rather than enhancing the deliberative conception of democracy, technology has instead generated channels of communication that tend to limit the

deliberative spirit. Sunstein also suggested that one of the novel features of such technologies is that individuals can tailor information to their specific requirements. From RSS feeds on particular topics to the "blogosphere," where journalists, professional or amateur, can engage with the public on matters of interest to them, users can now manage their own information channels in ways that suit them. This, Sunstein argues, might close down deliberative opportunities rather than opening them up, as people tend to be drawn to material that reflects rather than challenges their political principles and ideals.

Winston (2005) proposes that the promise that technologies will throw open the doors of innovation in journalism is an overstated claim, as much of what appears as online journalism is taken directly from print hard copy. Even though we might be able to navigate through material with greater precision and speed, where is the innovation in that?

Conclusion: What Is Journalism?

So what is journalism, and how are we to understand how our ideas of journalism have developed? This chapter has sought to argue that there is no single idea of journalism. Rather, journalism and its ideals have emerged via historical intersections of political, cultural, and economic factors. Journalism is not just about politics; it is also not just about reinforcing culture. Nor is contemporary journalism necessarily about the bottom line, though market pressure does seem to shape the orientation of professional journalism. The central claim here is that if we are to understand journalism today, we must comprehend the development of journalism across these particular historical planes. Journalism is as much about power as it is about people as it is about profit. Journalism in the early 21st century seems to be a mixture of professionalized cultural practices aligned to political, cultural, and commercial aspects of the social world. Such practices are necessarily constrained within the development of the cultural values that correspond to each of the components above.

The idea that journalists have a responsibility to the wider community is also paramount. This enables journalism to amplify a cultural sense of place that meshes with our sense of identity and helps create common understandings and shared experiences—a sense of community established via a commitment to the public good as well as a commitment to uncovering the truth.

And what of the future? If we are to reflect historically about what might emerge in the future for journalism, we may pessimistically conclude that it is the profit imperative and the ever-increasing framing around technology that will further devalue journalism's core ideals. However, as has been suggested elsewhere (Conboy & Steel, 2007), it is ultimately the public itself that has the ultimate say in where the future of journalism lies.

Notes

1. Winston (2005) suggests that the idea that journalism is a “child of the printing press” is overstated as accounts of events and the gathering and distribution of “intelligence” to the public were provided both in handwritten form and orally, in the form of the ballad, long before the press was used to print the early newsbooks.

2. Though, in Britain, full franchise for all males was not achieved until 1884.

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THE CHANGING NATURE OF “NEWS”

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What Are News Values?

“Man bites dog” is an old newsroom joke demonstrating what kind of event would be considered universally newsworthy to tell any audience, what would justifiably make it to the printed front page or the opening moments in a television newscast. It is a story that has time-honored news values, including timeliness, proximity, conflict, impact, and unusualness.

The story is timely as well as local, and the conflict arises from the notion that a dog is no longer man’s best friend, which has broad implications and consequences. Of course, it is unusual, and if the man biting the canine turns out to be a celebrity, then the story has prominence as well. And if the dog is famous (appears in commercials, movies, or skateboards in a YouTube clip), well, then we have an undeniably newsworthy story with double the celebrity value.

But such simple definitions of news have become splintered and confused in an increasingly chaotic and crowded media landscape. How the local man-bites-dog story is told in the 21st century depends on the audience and the delivery mode—whether it is received as text, digital, or broadcast, or all these combined. The content of the story would not stop at the simplistic text answers to the most fundamental and traditional questions of who, what, where, when, why, and how in an inverted-pyramid-style story of 250 words.

It would be an elective experience for the audience on many platforms and in many shades of intensity driven by personal interests.

Today, a consumer would go to the newspaper’s Web site, see the bulleted brief or a simple headline—perhaps 15 words underlined and in blue, click on it, and watch a video of the man being taken away by the police, perhaps following a car chase resulting in a reality-TV-ready arrest. The bitten dog’s owners would be interviewed on a separate audio podcast, with links to information about the breed, how to report pet abuse, plus a Flash-enhanced timeline of man-bites-dog incidents in history, as well as a photo slideshow with audio of comments from neighbors and coworkers on the “canine-ivorous” man’s recent behavior. A link would be available for a longer text profile of the man who bit the dog, accompanied by a visual graphic of a timeline, explicitly defining the chronology demonstrating how exactly the bite happened, and a separate graphic of the anatomy of a man’s head and mouth compared with a dog’s. A Man Bites Dog blog would be available for readers to post their comments as well as their own video and audio about related stories. Readers/viewers/users would then vote online their preferences for segments of the story they liked most, and pieces of the story would likely become viral through blogging and social network sites such as MySpace or Facebook, with related photos posted on Flickr. This is a case study demonstrating a model of information flow that is more about less.

The newsworthiness of the story would be closely connected to the voluntary behavior of the audience and would shift according to the needs of that audience. The story would then erupt into a user-driven multimedia package with nearly infinite incarnations involving perhaps one

mobile journalist, several staffers and freelancers, citizen journalists, bloggers, and consumers providing different informational pieces of the totally puzzling experience.

Timeliness, Proximity, Unusualness, Prominence, Impact, Conflict, and Human Interest

The definitions of news have altered because the playing field for news has been disrupted, redefined, and sculpted to court and suit a highly fickle audience. It is an audience no longer defined principally by geography but also by social demographics, age, education, ideology, affiliations, behaviors, and specific media use. They can create a self-motivated audience craving more information about fewer topics or less information about more topics. The 21st-century media landscape for news offers the possibility for consumers to delve into topics a mile wide and inch deep or an inch wide and 100 miles deep. They can be mobile and technologically savvy consumers who no longer sit patiently for the delivery of the newspaper on the front doorstep to read the news or who lounge passively in their living room at the appointed time of 5, 6, 10, or 11 p.m. to watch the newscast delivered by two well-paid anchor readers.

These are often consumers who intend to participate in the choice of news stories offered, the gathering of news, public commentary on the news, and the ongoing news choices made by editors and journalists. This is a different approach to the news than we have seen in the previous media age beginning in the mid-19th century of top-down, elitist, editor-driven journalism. So today’s journalism requires a modernized toolbox of news judgment factors. Yes, there is still an audience who waits for the newspaper every morning to enjoy it with a cup of coffee and then unwinds at night with a favorite local newscast. But this is a shrinking audience. The feared extinction of this audience and the necessity for news producers to chase new audiences and capture their attention is why news has changed.

In generations past, “readers needed news and had limited ways to learn about current events,” Michael Hirschorn wrote in the December 2007 edition of *The Atlantic*. “Editors would tell us what to read and we would read it. News didn’t have to be interesting, because it was important, and any self-styled citizen of the world needed to know what was important” (p. 137).

In the 21st century, not only is the reader/user/participant pressed for time and bombarded by more options for information, but the walls between user and news provider have become porous. In many instances, the barricades have fallen completely away as citizen journalists contribute to mainstream media and to their own viable, vetted citizen journalism Web sites and popular blogs. Since the debut of South Korea’s OhmyNews International in 2000 and, later on, domestic citizen journalist hyperlocal sites such as

Backfence.com, Goskokie.com, NorthwestVoice.com, and hundreds more, the formerly passive consumers now want to be part of the journalistic process. They want to participate in stories important specifically to them, but they also require the option to consume stories offered by the mainstream press that they could not otherwise find on their own. The question of access in many instances is still insurmountable for citizen journalists. Though bloggers can get press credentials at a national political convention, citizen journalists are still not granted wide backstage access to the events, drawing rooms, and offices of major newsmakers.

A tolerance for top-down “news you should know” that fits rigidly into the old definitions of news as construed by a finite group of journalists in a closed-door editorial meeting has given way to a consumer push for a breadth of stories told in a variety of ways. These stories can forgo the traditional justifications of timeliness, proximity, unusualness, prominence, impact, and conflict, as long as they can be sheltered by the umbrella of human interest.

And it is that humanistic element, the connecting anecdotal link, the character portal leading the audience into the story, that drives the news consumer’s desire and appetite for news. The overall dramatic shifts in types of stories from text, digital, audio, and video outlets toward a focusing on citizen sourcing and a casual writing style reflect this cultural reverence for the personal story and a revolutionized set of news definitions. No longer will a story be relevant solely because it delivers news such as “The mayor said Monday” edict. The story must be told in a compelling way across a variety of media, illuminating the stories of individuals while personally connecting to the lives of the audience. It is no longer one door the consumer enters that opens onto the news but a series of doors, windows, hallways, and obscured passages that the consumer can choose from.

Just as the audience has become accustomed to changing cable channels in a millisecond, they can instantly click away from the news site and go somewhere else. Logistically, a printed newspaper now is the last to cross the finish line on news. If something is breaking news and is hot, it has already been reported in a video online, recounted on TV and radio, and blogged about on countless sites. Digital media has stolen print’s thunder. So printed news reinforces and reinterprets the news through a different lens, rather than breaking the news first. The consumer already knows that there was a fire in a department store from TV, radio, and Web sites. Now they want to read the longer story of the firefighter who saved the customer.

So many options compete for the news consumer’s time that delivering a relevant story across any and every platform becomes a race to offer the most useful, engaging, and informative content. Never has accurate and keen reporting been as crucial or eloquent and insightful multimedia storytelling been as important to capturing the attention of the audience. As the traditional elements of newsworthiness continue to contribute to the decisions of what stories are

played in print, online, and digitally in broadcast and radio, additional forces factor into news judgment.

News does not have to portray a rigid sense of timeliness; the story can be current, ongoing, recent, upcoming, or merely hypothetical. It can also be any item, individual, phase, trend, or event that was previously unknown to the audience. While the news may be commonplace in one area of the community or the world, it is “new” to this target news consumer. Timeliness has become elastic. Just because an event happened yesterday no longer deems it automatically newsworthy. The notion of yesterday’s news told today or today’s news delivered tomorrow has evaporated as news can be communicated digitally in real time. Traditional timeliness is an antiquated notion left over from an era when citizens would not know of a news item unless it appeared in the newspaper or on radio or television. Because of text messaging, cell phone photography and videography, as well as audio recording on portable digital voice recorders, unfolding news events can often be broadcast live by amateurs on their Web sites. Consider the images and reactions from citizens following any number of recent tragedies; these were urgent, immediate, and raw visuals and commentary that were unfiltered by professional journalists. The lesson of immediacy that was learned in those unfortunate events is that no one has to wait for the reporter to arrive before the “news” is published, disseminated, and absorbed by a wide audience.

Because of the universal accessibility to publishing, a news story is no longer constrained by geographic proximity. A global economy mandates a global information network, so a story about a young girl in Kenya struggling to succeed in school is as engaging and newsworthy as a story about a young girl in Kenosha struggling in school would be to local Wisconsin readers. At a time when we are submerged in the infinite and boundless flow of information online, and Facebook and LinkedIn users swap personal stories across all physical boundaries, it becomes less important to define proximity limited by spatial closeness as a news parameter. Human interest serves as the overarching, inclusive bridge.

The irony here is that being unlimited by the shackles of location in mainstream media, hyperlocal news has built an enormous following in community journalism sites, weekly publications, zoned newspaper editions, newspaper Web sites, and blogs. Traditional media outlets such as newspapers, magazines, and the local television or radio station no longer have exclusive rights over local news. A single community blogger can succeed in informing a local audience of local city council votes or even the latest scores in middle school football. An audience can be built around a garden club, alumni group, or local transportation issue, offering news that would no doubt be ignored by the larger press.

“What does it mean to me?” is still a question the news consumer wants answered in his or her media. While the impact, importance, and consequence of a story for the consumer can be subjective, it remains influential as a factor in news judgment. But the interest quotient has

shifted from the flat response “Now I know” to “What can I do about it now?” The news user in this current 21st-century iteration wants to take the information from a simple story told and apply it elsewhere, transforming facts into action, perhaps, and using this story as a springboard for deeper examination, reflection, active feedback, involvement, and possible advocacy.

For instance, at the end of the 20th century, a simple text story of 10 or more inches in the metro section of a newspaper reporting on a city council vote to increase property taxes in a suburb or city would quote only council members on their official comments during the meeting. Now, however, that simple story evolves into a multimedia package telling citizens what action they can take, how to contact council members, and how to have a home’s value reassessed, providing profiles with photos and audio of each council member and the mayor, along with a podcast of the meeting, a video of citizen reaction to the vote, an avenue for bloggers to post suggestions, as well as photos of homeowners and their homes affected by the property tax hike. Still, the news of the tax increase may be the same, but the manner in which the news is delivered is a thousand times more complex, urgent, and democratic. The rationale for that delivery has morphed into a more layered and faceted portrayal of the news guided by the consumer’s needs. News gathering has become much more complicated, enhanced, some say, by the technology of multimedia tools, while others claim that the multimedia options have only burdened the consumer with unnecessary bells and whistles that dilute the impact of the message, distracting the consumer from the core news itself.

While unusualness still holds true as one undeniable factor in defining the focus for news; the story must be more than just odd, such as the man-bites-dog story. As the media reaches far beyond the boundaries of town, city, county, state, country, and continent, what is unusual for one audience group is commonplace for another culture, and not even a distant culture. What is understood as an everyday occurrence in the far western suburbs of Chicago may be unheard of within the city limits. Is this a story that for the main audience would be unknown or inaccessible without the journalist’s intervention? Is this a trend, event, or person so little understood or examined broadly that an illuminating and enterprising story informing the audience would be edifying and useful to the consumer? Or is the consideration of this as unusual merely a reflection of the journalist’s myopic view of the community and the broader world? And would publishing this as news alienate part of the audience and only underscore the notion of the traditional ivory tower editors making decisions disconnected from the broader consumer’s interests? The element of unusualness must be viewed through the lens of diversity and inclusiveness, as news gatherers must embrace a higher sensitivity to all groups whether they are defined by age, race, gender, religion, ideology, disability, geography, education, income, or behavior. Because a news item is personally unfamiliar to the journalist or editor, this does

not grant it unusual status. In the sweeping reach possible with 21st-century media, a narrow view of newsworthiness may render the news itself irrelevant.

An individual’s celebrity or prominence can control decisions of newsworthiness, but who is labeled a celebrity in the transaction of news has changed. While webzines, blogs, television entertainment news shows, and gossip columns in the mainstream press have maintained an obsession with the comings, goings, arrests, births, deaths, and outrageous acts of a handful of Hollywood and MTV royalty, the culture’s celebration of the amateur has invited a new brand of individual into the spotlight. A college student can become globally well-known for a clever YouTube clip, while a diligent inventor can be vaulted into googledom for an ingenious solution to a universal problem, such as a prescription bottle that easily opens or a coffee mug that does not spill. Just by inclusion in the story itself, the individual secures his or her own celebrity and prominence. Being listed as a source in a reaction story run on a popular Web site can turn the average Jane Doe into an oft-quoted and sought after expert on even the most obscure topic.

Conflict is a historically traditional sustained news value and is a fundamental component of human nature. A 2007 study in *Newspaper Research Journal* of Yahoo! News found that both producers and users of news ranked conflict as the news value occurring second most often in more than 1,000 news stories, ranked only behind impact. It appears that no matter how the news changes in content, style, or sourcing, the drive to understand conflict, whether it is political, social, professional, interpersonal, or more general, influences decisions to present news and information that contain these dramatic human elements.

Economic Factors Affecting the News

The first decade of the 21st century was tumultuous for the traditional media. Newspaper closings, layoffs, downsizing, revenue slides, bankruptcies, and sell-offs of major chains such as Knight Ridder and Tribune Company seemed to further erode a wounded industry scrambling for identity, relevance, and profitability. Declining circulation among the majority of the country’s newspapers had been in effect for more than 20 years, and circulation was only stabilizing or gaining in a few markets. The former editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, Paul Steiger, reminisced on his 40 years as a journalist in a *Journal* column in December 2007:

The cornucopia of national, international and business news, sports and especially opinion available free on the Web is rich beyond historical parallel. Anyone with a fact, a comment, a snapshot or a videoclip can self-publish and instantly compete with the professionals. . . . What happens next? Change, rapid and largely unpredictable. Nearly every company in the industry needs major new revenue, big cost reductions or a healthy dollop of each. (para. 8, 47)

As readers fell away from traditional print news, and advertising revenues migrated online, with newspaper Web sites accounting for nearly 34% of local online advertising in 2007, news consumers also moved online, but not exclusively. Consumers did not report reading only the newspaper or only going online for news. According to the Project for Excellence in Journalism in the 2007 *The State of the News Media* report, about 92 million people around the country get their news online, compared with about 51 million Americans who buy a daily newspaper and 124 million who read the printed newspaper. This number accounts perhaps for all those copies left on tables in Starbucks and dental offices across the country as some single copies of newspapers have several readers. In 2007, 90 newspapers in this country had a reach of 64% of adults in their communities each week. In spite of closings of papers such as the *Cincinnati Post* and the threat of closing at the *Chicago Sun-Times*, as well as layoffs and firings at the *Los Angeles Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and others, there were more than 1,450 newspapers in the United States as of 2006, some with healthy and slightly increased circulations.

In a January 2008 opinion column in *The Washington Post*, the writer David Simon, executive producer of the HBO series *The Wire*, wrote,

Isn’t the news itself still valuable to anyone? In any format, through any medium—isn’t an understanding of the events of the day still a salable commodity? Or were we kidding ourselves? Was a newspaper a viable entity only so long as it had classifieds, comics and the latest sports scores? (para. 6)

The answer is no, a newspaper is more than that, and news is more than ink on paper. But the notion of what is considered the news of the day has changed. And how the news is delivered previously molded the content, but now content must be adaptable across delivery modes. The reality is that news outlets can no longer be considered in separate silos, as entities of printed text, digital text on a laptop, video on a screen, or audio from a car radio. Newspaper companies have succeeded in presenting a multitude of online formats, as radio stations also present slideshows, photo galleries, video, and text on their Web sites. While the talk of convergence journalism has been prevalent since the start of the 1990s, what is necessary in the first part of this century is to view the news media industry as one in flux, at the cusp of emergence journalism.

Few consumers exclusively read the newspaper or check news online; there is crossover, there is a hybrid consumer who gathers information from a variety of sources—print newspaper, multiple online sources, news magazines, niche magazines, radio, television—as if he or she is building a dinner plate at a salad bar. One would think that the consumer is not just heaping vanilla pudding or green beans on his or her plate over and over but, instead, sampling from many different sources and delivery modes to build a well-rounded information flow. A 2006 Pew Internet and American Life study reported that

71% of broadband users in this country got their news online daily and 43% of Americans get their news from reading the physical newspaper. Additionally, the study showed that 32% of those surveyed reported that they get their news online from the Web site of their local paper.

The nearly limitless offerings of news and information and the many transformations of news outlets has succeeded in creating a monster of an audience—at once demanding, disloyal, fleeting, and capricious—who can easily be misunderstood. News companies and news purveyors may have initiated their brands as a print product but know that they must continue to offer an expanded online presence, no longer limited to stories “shoveled” onto the site after they have been printed. A print news company’s Web site will also offer audio, video, photos, interaction, expanded graphics, as well as value-added text in an effort to differentiate the products and to make the experiences of reading a newspaper and the news company’s Web site distinctive and separate.

For instance, a news Web site from a traditional newspaper company such as *The Washington Post* or the *Chicago Tribune* will daily offer photo slideshows related to stories or existing on their own without print support, as well as opportunities for the news consumer to add comments in a blog or contribute his or her own media. The *Tribune* newspaper refers to online-only offerings, and the Web site is not a reproduction of the paper. For instance, on January 25, 2008, the *Tribune* Web site listed no full stories but rather little text, more than 50 headlines, photos that clicked onto videos, photo galleries, and links to columnists, sections, and options to “share your thoughts” and “post your photos.” Aside from the headlines, only the lead news story with the largest photo had text, and that was limited to about 20 words. What story could be read in toto was completely the choice of the user and required action by the user. Having a headlines-only home page also suggests that the reader was already familiar with the stories, needed no explanation, and was only clicking for further enlightenment on a story he or she already was aware existed. This is the practice of many newspaper Web sites, from *boston.com* to *USAToday.com*, which can offer sometimes more than 100 links to text and multimedia on the homepage.

Changes in Content, Style, and Sourcing

The end delivery mode or presentation of the news information changes how the news is gathered, who gathers it, and who is the intended consumer. Just as the definitions of news have been reshaped, so have the outlets for the news. No longer involved in a monogamous relationship with print readers or a reliable partnership with broadcast viewers, news companies have been forced to reinvent their presentation of news in content, style, and sourcing. The physical news hole or space available for news on paper has been literally shrinking on many major newspapers in an effort to cut costs without taking a more aggressive machete

to the newsroom payrolls. Smaller paper dimensions mean fewer stories. Fewer stories may be the result of shrinking newsrooms and restricted budgets. But the online product is still limitless.

News providers then are struggling with brand identity through content. If the content now is received primarily as text on paper, how will the content change if it is received by phone or on a screen on the back of a train seat? Perhaps a recorded interview can be used as an audio podcast and also referred to as quotes in a text story, but repetition would make the story redundant, and new content must be delivered in each platform. If the journalist covering the story has been trained in producing text only, how will the job of that journalist change to accommodate the needs of the news consumer? How will journalists be trained for new roles, or will there be instant turnover to enlist a new staff with multimedia skills and no history as news gatherers? If news providers can make this transition to a cross-platform, multidimensional gaggle of content fluid and easy for consumers to understand and participate in, then the news industry will have succeeded in reinventing itself.

That reinvention will also have to include an adaptive, modernized media business model, one not limited by department store display ads and classified ads for used cars and garage sales. Revenue has been rapidly diminishing from traditional media online, and more inventive models need to be established for content to be available for the consumer. “When people think of the ‘media business model,’ they usually just think of advertising,” wrote Chris Anderson in January 2008 on his blog, *The Long Tail*, named after his 2006 book, *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business Is Selling Less of More*. He added, “That’s a big part of it, to be sure, but as those of us in the media business know, it goes far beyond that.” Anderson went on to describe the possibilities for media revenue in cost-per-click ads, banner ads, lead generation, subscriptions, subscriber list sales, brand licensing, syndication, and many more.

But just as the advent of television was falsely heralded as the death of radio and the airplane was feared to signal the death of train travel, the Internet is not the single cause predicting the extinction of print news. It is a complement and supplement to it and vice versa. What is changing is how consumers opt to receive their news and the kind of news they elect to experience, and it is these changes in information flow that are forcing revenue models to be adjusted and redirected. The market for online news offered by traditional print companies is robust: On December 2007, *The New York Times* reported more than 17 million unique visitors to *nytimes.com* in 1 month, with *USA TODAY* reporting close to 10 million unique visitors for the same period.

Cultural Factors Affecting Content

Everyone knows and understands that the days of waiting for the newspaper to arrive to see who won yesterday’s football game are long gone. Consumers already know the

news before it appears in the newspaper the next day. Because of so many competing outlets of information, the newspaper is no longer a time capsule of the day before; it is a more general, personalized account of what is happening now, happened recently, or happened in the distant past, with a new twist. Unless it is an enterprise story—and that is usually a feature—or an investigative reporting exclusive, the odds of the news in the paper being first-time news to readers is slim. The audience already knows what happened because they got it online, from radio, or from TV. So people need a different approach to the same event. They need humanistic stories. They need to deliver to the audience a friendlier product that goes into more depth, answers why, and emphasizes who. The what, when, and where they likely already know. They want more information about the who.

Journalism is not just the rough draft of history; rather, it articulates how we expect and demand delivery of information and what kind of information we seek. Journalism has shifted to become an anecdotal companion to history in the 21st century. As a culture, recently, we have altered the priorities in news to revere personal story over official commentary, which can represent a democratization of news and an implied mistrust of official sources. This change from paradigmatic knowledge to a quest for narrative information controls the kind of story and content. The content is predominantly more narrative and emotional than factual and staccato regurgitations of events in a “he said, they said,” format. The notion that consumers of information prefer news to be slower at times and more in-depth, personalized, and humanistic than news told in factoids and bullets tells a lot about how we allow ourselves to be informed as citizens.

More news today than ever before revolves around an individual’s personal take on events. This is a reflection of how contemporary culture sanctifies the roles of non-celebrities in society. The flip side is also a cynicism with regard to information offered from official sources. We experience the signs of this reverence for the individual voice throughout the culture. Product Web sites selling everything from Botox injections to White Castle hamburgers, Hanes underwear, diamond rings, and Volvos solicit posts, video, photos, and text from users about their own stories of interaction with the brand. Citibank urges consumers in magazine ads to disclose their own personal anecdotes: “Whatever your story is, your Citi card can help you write it. What’s your story?”

It is undeniable that real stories of real people saturate the media landscape both editorially and noneditorially. We’re not seeing celebrity spokesmen so much anymore; we are seeing real people tell their stories of car insurance, home sales, makeup, and jeans. This is marketing by anecdote and personal testimony, a move parallel to telling news stories by anecdote and unofficial commentary. It can be a confluence of events that contribute to this sanctifying of personal stories—the paranoia that official sources spin or lie; the need to connect with individuals and feel

empathy and compassion for their stories; the belief that reading about others’ lives will bring a deeper humanistic understanding or some brand of redemption; and as a result of globalization, a realization that stories of real people offer connection and meaning to our own lives.

The plethora of reality TV shows accordingly reflects this worship of the amateur. Whether it is a show about wife swapping, nannies, or home makeovers, millions tune into the dramas of average citizens relishing their life details, anecdotes, and stories. The formerly voiceless are given voice in a variety of formats for a growing, responsive, and welcoming audience. The popularity of shows such as National Public Radio’s *This American Life* or *The Story* demonstrates a cultural appetite for democratic narrative and information shared through the eyes of the individual. The rise in documentaries as film, shown on television, and through podcast or online on current.com also exemplifies a cultural need to understand events through the voices of individuals. News information has gone from a push-down to a pull-up model.

Whether information and news are offered in print, online, or through broadcast, you are more likely in the 21st century to experience news through the portal of a character or an unofficial observer or participant than you are to understand news information through the eyes and ears of an expert or administrator with a title. For example, a news story on a presidential campaign speech will likely begin with an unrehearsed, spontaneous reaction from someone in the audience. With citizen journalism and a higher degree of participation in mainstream journalism from a previously passive audience, the profession has evolved to tell in greater detail the stories of the common man and woman, the person on the street. When you read a story about changes in city services, it will likely begin with an anecdote of a resident who can’t get his or her garbage picked up on time. Consider a story about a local parade. A journalist, blogger, or citizen journalist can report the news by talking to everyone standing on the curb waving flags, the spectators and the participants, getting their reaction and focusing on their anecdotes. The end result will be a decent reaction story. These kinds of sources are necessary in stories because they add color, humanity, and depth. So unofficial sources are a good thing, but that does not mean that official sources are bad or immaterial. To be accurately informed, the consumer needs to know with authority how much the parade cost, how many floats were in it, and how many people attended. Unofficial commentary is valuable, but accuracy and correct information still uphold solid journalism. This is not information you can get from the Cub Scout leader on the Snoopy float.

To qualify as fair journalism, the reporter needs to get the final, authoritative word from the head of the parade or a city official, so journalism needs both official and unofficial sources in stories. The shift toward greater prominence and use of unofficial sources should never be at the expense of all official sources. Reliable journalism needs a

balance of both sources in its content. Otherwise, journalism runs the risk of turning into Chicken Little Journalism, or the musings of individuals convinced that they know the truth (the sky did appear to be falling even if it just was an apple falling from the tree) but who are, in fact, spreading untruths and urban myths.

Just as youtube.com changed the face of video, this kind of “younews” is a concept that is changing the tone and content of print journalism. What I call such younews grants a higher significance to stories of ordinary people. Studies from Northwestern University’s Readership Institute quantify the attitudes of consumers who decide that they want to read stories about people, not just concepts, facts, and interpretations but stories about real people offering reactions to information they want to know, which makes them smarter and keeps them informed. Perhaps it is the fragmentation of society and the breakdown of genuine in-person communication that creates a craving for storytelling about individuals and a need for community building through narrative. If we can’t talk to real people, at least we can read the stories of real people.

Matters of Style

The inclusiveness of this kind of citizen-friendly content breeds a casual tone that has also influenced the style of news writing. The immediate and off-the-cuff approach of blogs has made journalistic style less stiff and formulaic because readers have become accustomed to a less formal top-down approach to their news. While some blogs are merely outlets for rants and personal attacks, or what can be called “blog-bys,” the conversational approach embraced on thousands of viable, intelligent, and information-packed, insightful blogs has forced mainstream media to oblige by making the writing style in text, online, and through broadcast more casual and less like “the spokesman said Thursday” kind of news. Blogs are based on opinion and the individual stories of everyday citizens. Bloggers demand that their voices be heard, and newspapers want to be more inclusive of these unofficial voices. So news delivery outlets mimic this voice, the immediacy and accessibility conveyed through a more approachable and understandable style.

Recent history also has played a role in the change of news writing style. Much has been written about how the events of 9/11 have changed journalism. But when viewed with more distance and objectivity, it is easy to see that perhaps the entire industry did not change its practices, but instead a change in tone was manifested in the reporting of more humanistic and emotional stories. The terror that was born that day in New York and Pennsylvania, and echoed throughout the world, contributed to an alteration of the approach to daily journalism. The raw reporting of the day’s events allowed a more intimate tone, resulting in writing that was more descriptive and infused with opinion and

insight rather than being strictly a rehashing of events through exposition and colorless quotes. It was preferable to tell the stories from the street, using the voices of the people directly affected, speaking about emotion and heartfelt dismay, mainly because the official sources had little to no information. From that day continuing forward, media outlets concentrated more often than previously on description, observation, and direct reaction to the day’s events, telling the story in a more personal, humanistic way.

The impact of *The New York Times’s* bold “Portraits of Grief,” brief, anecdotal profiles of the fallen of 9/11, on how all news would be written in the future was enormous. News could be informative as well as evocative. No longer was a mainstream media provider expected to be unbiased and straightforward telling just the facts, but rather, a eulogistic tone and reverence for the individual was expected. And because consumers became accustomed to reading the kinds of personal and emotional stories from the weeks and months following 9/11, they did not want to go back to strict hard news. Rather, they began to show a preference for interpretive, descriptive, immediate, personal, and emotional narrative stories as a vehicle for news. It would be like expecting a theatrical audience once invited to view a performance from the main floor of the auditorium before the orchestra pit to go back to the third balcony and rely on opera glasses to absorb the action of the play. Once consumers became accustomed to such softer news deliveries of stories, it would be difficult for them to regain an appetite for news briefs.

The narrative movement in journalism was not born as a result of the events of 2001, but rather, the genre of narrative became more emphasized in more newsrooms in the 21st century than in previous generations. Narrative had been practiced by maverick writers, such as Joan Didion, Tom Wolfe, Hunter S. Thompson, and Gay Talese, in the 1960s and 1970s under the genre “new journalism.” However, the cultural reverence for storytelling and what can be considered evangelism for bringing the narrative form to daily journalism was energized in the 21st century.

Narrative made the format of news more about craft and style than the objective delivery of news. That is not to say that the masters of the craft, from Tracy Kidder to Alex Kotlowitz, Katherine Boo, and Anne Hull, were not solid reporters making painstaking efforts to be accurate, fair, balanced, and ethical in their stories. But the methodology of narrative writers—applying the craft of fiction writers to the coverage of news events—was widespread and encouraged more often than other forms at the start of the 21st century. It is a form of news storytelling that is highly rewarded by editors and by prize committees, with 73% of the news stories receiving Pulitzer Prizes in 2005 told in the narrative form.

The most talented reporters and writers are granted time to write enterprise stories and given the space to translate assignments into narrative masterpieces, which can be the result of months of investigative reporting and meticulous

writing. The problem is that not everyone is good at writing narrative news and delivering simple information in the narrative form. Not every news story deserves a narrative approach, and not every story should be 50 inches long. As Ken Fuson of the *Des Moines Register* said, "Sometimes there is no universal truth. Sometimes it is just a parade."

What Is News Now and Going Forward?

Contemporary culture has succeeded in altering our perceptions of newsworthiness, forcing us to redefine what is news, away from the time-honored and perhaps outdated news values of unusualness, timeliness, proximity, impact, prominence, consequence, human interest, and conflict.

Many cultural and economic influences have helped us create a demand for information that is conveyed in a different way or in a multitude of platforms, meeting a different set of news value requirements. This is news with an emphasis on individual and unofficial voices, relayed in an intimate style of narrative that conveys information as story, turning newspapers into storypapers and stories into reinforcements of a media company's brand. The author Doris Lessing said in her Nobel Prize acceptance speech in 2007, "It is our stories that will re-create us, when we are torn, hurt, even destroyed." Storytelling is such a powerful tool in our culture and used in the mainstream of news in the 21st century that the recounting of individual stories may serve as a mechanism for readers' understanding of the immediate and larger world of our culture today and for generations to come.

Even with the changing definitions of news and news values, it may well hold true that the man-bites-dog story forever remains newsworthy, captivating us with the base unusualness. And then what could be truly worth waiting for is an exclusive interview with the dog.

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REPORTING, STORY DEVELOPMENT, AND EDITING

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Telling a good story is the heart and soul of journalism; however, you can't tell a good story without doing a good job of reporting—gathering information to share with your audience. Identifying important and interesting issues, events, and people to report about is a critical part of the reporting process. In addition, carefully editing the semifinished product to ensure that it fits the allotted time or space and to ensure accuracy, plus to check for proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style, is necessary to increase the chances that audience members will find the story interesting, informative, entertaining, and thought provoking.

Story Selection

Selecting interesting and/or important aspects of life to report about would seem to be a relatively easy thing to do, but declining readership, listenership, and viewership for many of the traditional news media clearly contradicts that assumption. The key to identifying and developing compelling news stories is always to keep in mind what's likely to be relevant to audience members (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen, & Ranly, 2008, p. 4; Hansen & Paul, 2004, pp. 31–39). What people, places, things, and issues are audience members interested in, and what do they care about the most? Perhaps a time-honored prescription about what is good journalism sums it up best: “Make the important story interesting and the interesting story important.”

Years of practice and research in journalism have identified a number of factors that play a part in the process of achieving that critical goal. Among these are the “uses and gratifications” (see also Chapter 56, this volume) that people associate with news media messages; the news values/elements/qualities used by journalists to help them select which issues, events, and people to report about; and the traditional five Ws and the H—who, what, where, when, why, and how.

Uses and Gratifications

People have told researchers that they become news consumers for a variety of interesting reasons. They have a number of “uses” for the information they obtain, and they obtain a number of “gratifications” from consuming such information (Levy, 1978; Levy & Windahl, 1984; Vishwanath, 2008). By knowing about and understanding such uses and gratifications, reporters can begin to build a framework for their information-gathering mission. Among the major uses and gratifications are surveillance, reassurance, intellectual stimulation, emotional fulfillment, and diversion.

Surveillance deals with simply keeping up with what's happening in your town, city, state, region, country, and world. Reporters who can find interesting information about the important happenings of each day will be successful.

Reassurance deals with information that helps people feel better about themselves, the decisions they make, and their lives in general. Examples include providing the views

of experts, providing good examples and bad examples, providing how-to advice for helping deal with the common problems in life, plus including information about alternatives that might make life better.

Intellectual stimulation deals with information that causes people to think and provides them with opportunities to compare their views with those of others. Getting experts, celebrities, and even lay people to illuminate, praise, criticize, explain, analyze, synthesize, and speculate often can provide such information.

Emotional fulfillment deals with information that helps people relax, smile, cry, feel good or bad about something, and feel some empathy. Delving into historical or back-story-type elements, how people cope with problems, achievement-related statistics, and acts of courage/heroism often can provide such information.

Diversion deals with information that helps people forget about their problems (at least for a little while), reduce stress, and decompress after a tough day. Searching for humorous anecdotes, off-beat developments, unusual outlooks, and strange incidents often can provide such information.

News Values/Elements/Qualities

News values/elements/qualities include significance, prominence, proximity, timeliness, conflict, oddity, achievement, sex/romance (Brooks et al., 2008, p. 6; Campbell, 2004, pp. 104–125; Reese & Ballinger, 2001). Significance deals with how many people will be affected and how deeply they will be affected. An adage holds that the greater the scope of the impact, the greater the chances that events and issues will become news. Prominence deals with the status and/or notoriety of the people involved in an event or issue. The more well-known a person is, the more likely it is that whatever he or she does will be judged newsworthy. Proximity deals with the “localness” of the events and issues. The nearer events and issues occur to the target audience, the more likely it is that the events and issues will become news. Timeliness deals with how recent events and issues are. The more recent the events and issues, the more likely they will become news. If conflict exists in connection with events and issues, it’s more likely they’ll become news. The more unusual, out of the ordinary, strange, and off-beat events and issues are, the more likely they’ll become news. If events and issues feature elements of setting records and establishing standards of excellence, the more likely they’ll become news. If events and issues contain elements of sex, romance, and affairs of the heart, the more likely they’ll become news. In addition, if events and issues feature emotional aspects that tug at the heartstrings, have humorous or at least amusing aspects, serve as examples of good things to do or bad things to do, include acts of heroism or selflessness, or have an animal associated with them, the more likely they’ll become news.

The Five Ws and the H

The five Ws and the H provide more scaffolding for the process of selecting what issues and events will become news (Gibbs & Warhover, 2002, pp. 102–117; Hansen & Paul, 2004, p. 55). Who is involved, what’s going on, where it’s all happening, when it’s happening, why it’s happening, and how it’s happening normally are important considerations in the news decision-making process. The five Ws and the H are important parts of the reporting process, too, of course, but they often are used in an effort to select the events and issues that will be reported about.

Generating Story Ideas

Ideas for stories can come from a variety of sources (Harower, 2007, pp. 66–77; Hansen & Paul, 2004, pp. 37–39; Quinn & Lamble, 2008, pp. 15–28). The life experiences of journalists, their family members, friends, neighbors, associates, acquaintances, colleagues, advertisers, and audience members are typical sources. The joys and heartaches of everyday life, coping strategies, successes, and failures can all be fertile ground for story idea generation.

Other traditional sources for story ideas include localizing regional, state, national, and international events and issues; following up on stories done by competing news organizations; and investigating the issues associated with breaking-news events. If something interesting happens miles away in another town, city, state, or country, is there a local angle that can be explored? Were local people, companies, agencies, or departments involved in any way? If so, the local angle might be developed into a local story. Even if no locals are involved, perhaps a check with local officials, companies, and experts to find out if something similar has ever happened locally, or perhaps could happen locally, might lead to a good local story.

If a news organization reports a story one day, it’s not uncommon to see follow-up stories on subsequent days by competing news organizations. Different angles and elements typically are reported about in such stories, and different sources of information are consulted.

A variation of the follow-up story is an examination of the issues associated with a breaking-news event. For example, after reporting about a major traffic accident at a local intersection, a series of stories might be done that examine ways to improve traffic safety, that explore techniques that help increase survival chances when involved in a traffic accident, that analyze proposed legislation to force automakers to build safer vehicles, or that provide a historical evaluation of the most dangerous intersections in your city.

Story ideas can come from periodic checks with agencies, departments, and groups that regularly are involved in news-making events and issues. So-called beat checks are

conducted with law enforcement agencies, legislative departments, nonprofit organizations, military representatives, and other public and private groups to determine if anything newsworthy has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur. Such checks often are conducted at least once a day and often several times a day.

Many story ideas come from public relations, public information, or public affairs practitioners (“Journalists Rely on PR Contacts,” 2007). In fact, research has shown that between 50% and 75% of the news stories reported by traditional media organizations have some sort of public relations connection. By using telephones, fax machines, e-mail, Web sites, blogs, text messaging, printed news releases, audio news releases, and video news releases, organizations can inform journalists about newsworthy events, issues, and developments. Such efforts are designed to generate favorable media coverage and gain publicity for clients, but with good reporting, such promotional, advocacy-oriented information can be turned into valid news stories.

Gathering Information

No matter where story ideas come from, to ensure quality journalism, it is critical that solid reporting follows. The gathering of accurate, complete, balanced, and interesting information provides the raw materials that journalists use to produce news stories that inform, educate, entertain, help set public policy, help promote social change (or the status quo), and monitor the activities/decisions of government officials and business leaders (Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 8–10; Hansen & Paul, 2004, pp. 44–45). Information can be gathered in a multitude of ways, but most fall into four major categories—reading, interviewing, observing, and experiencing.

Consulting Documents, Databases, and Web Sites

Much information is obtained by reading documents, databases, and Web pages (Alysen, Sedorkin, Oakham, & Patching, 2003, pp. 103–131; Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 95–114; Harrower, 2007, pp. 71–73; Quinn & Lamble, 2008, pp. 59–102). Books, academic journals, trade publications, newspapers, magazines, news releases, faxes, letters, memos, annual reports, case files, posters, billboards, microfiche, and e-mails are read regularly. Databases associated with government agencies, consumer groups, industry organizations, academic institutions, and think tanks are analyzed regularly. Web sites for groups, organizations, departments, agencies, institutions, businesses, and individuals are visited regularly. Blogs are another favorite information source for many journalists (Quinn & Lamble, 2008, pp. 29–41; “Survey,” 2008). Not everything you read in a document, database, blog, or Web site is true, of course, but it’s important to consult a variety of such sources as part of the reporting process.

It’s critical that reporters evaluate the quality of documents, databases, and Web sites. Who are the authors, and what are their qualifications? Who paid for the information to be made public? What’s included, and what’s excluded? Why is information included or excluded? How current is the information? Is attribution clear and sufficient? Any grammar, spelling, or punctuation mistakes? By answering such questions, reporters usually can feel confident that the information they’re sharing with the public is accurate, timely, fair, and balanced.

Talking to People

Interviewing often is the main information-gathering technique used in news reporting (Alysen et al., 2003, pp. 101–117; Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 42–60; Gibbs & Warhover, 2002, pp. 183–204; Hansen & Paul, 2004, pp. 94–111; Harrower, 2007, pp. 76–79). Talking to people, having conversations with people, is a good way to obtain answers to important questions. In addition, it’s an invaluable tool in achieving one of the main goals of journalism—to get people to explain why they believe what they believe, why they value what they value, and why they do what they do. What better way to accomplish this critical part of the journalistic mission than to get the information directly from the people involved in significant events and issues?

Interviewing can be done face-to-face, on the phone, via regular mail, via e-mail, and via text messaging. Face-to-face interviewing is preferred because it allows the interviewer to make note of nonverbal communication and environmental factors, but sometimes it is difficult, if not impossible, to meet with sources, and it takes time to make appointments and travel to interview locations. Phone interviews lose the observation component but retain some of the “human communication” aspects of face-to-face meetings and can be an effective way to gather timely information. Regular mail takes time, and the interviewer loses some control over who actually answers the questions. E-mail and text messaging can produce quicker results than regular mail, but again, some control of the interview scenario is lost, and, as with regular mail, spontaneity is not what it could or should be. Sources have plenty of time to plan their responses to make themselves and their organizations look as good as possible.

Getting people to talk about their beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors is not always easy, especially if they’re shy, stressed, grieving, in shock, fearful, distrustful, embarrassed, guilt-ridden, angry, or annoyed. Most of the time, most people are cooperative and willing, if not eager, to be interviewed; however, when people are reluctant to speak to journalists, several techniques can be employed in an effort to persuade the hesitant person to agree to talk. A journalist might attempt to develop a rapport with the person. A brief chat about the weather, sports, popular culture, or some other relatively nonthreatening subject can help calm an agitated or suspicious person. A journalist might start an interview with relatively innocuous questions before delving into the tougher, more threatening subjects.

A journalist might offer anonymity or confidentiality to a reluctant interview subject. Sometimes, a person will provide information if he or she knows that his or her name will not appear as part of the news story. The use of anonymous or confidential sources can damage credibility and sometimes results in the passing along of inaccurate information, so offers of anonymity or confidentiality normally are given as a last resort when all other methods to convince a person to talk have failed.

Effective, efficient interviewing truly is an art. You can enhance your chances of conducting artful interviews by following a few, basic guidelines. If time permits, and most often it does, it's critical to do as much "backgrounding" as possible prior to meeting with your interviewee(s). Backgrounding involves finding out as much information as you can about the person(s) and subject(s) you'll be dealing with. The benefits of such efforts include being able to ask better, more pointed questions; being able to better understand what the person is talking about; being able to gather useful information that you won't have to waste valuable interview time gathering; and being able to establish a better rapport with your sources by having greater knowledge and insights about what they have done and are interested in. Backgrounding can be done by surfing the Internet, consulting databases, reading books, reading magazines, reading newspapers, reading news releases, visiting libraries, checking your news organization's archives, talking with your colleagues, talking with friends of interviewees, talking with family members of interviewees, and talking with associates of interviewees.

Once you've gathered an appropriate amount of background information, you can begin to finalize the process of developing specific questions to ask your source(s). It's a good idea to prepare a list of questions, a long, complete list. Creating a list helps build confidence, provides a roadmap for the interview, and gives you something to fall back on if memory fails or a source refuses to answer your first couple of questions. Don't be too tied to your list, though. Be ready to depart from the list if the interview takes off into new, interesting, and unanticipated territory. Be flexible, and ask spontaneous or follow-up questions when appropriate. Always be on the lookout for unique angles and information. If they come up, explore and develop them. They'll likely be more interesting and/or important than what you had planned to explore.

You won't be able to pick up on unexpected interview paths if you don't listen to what sources say in response to questions. Too often, reporters really don't listen to what sources say in response to questions. This is especially true if the interview is being recorded. No matter what the situation and what technological assistance you have, listen carefully and analytically. Ask follow-up questions. Ask for clarifications and explanations. Take notes, too. Taking notes is a good form of feedback for the source. It shows that you care enough to write down what he or she is saying. If you're interviewing a source over the phone, let him or her know that you're taking notes. Taking notes can save you time

when it comes to preparing your final product (you won't have to listen to the entire recorded interview over again), and you never know when a recording device might fail you.

Be sure you're talking to the right people about the right things, events, and issues. If you're reporting about renewable energy sources, talk to experts on that specific subject. You also might want to talk with experts in related fields, but your main focus should be interviewing on-point, on-issue experts. Ordinary people who are or who likely will be affected by or who are associated with the issues can provide useful information, too.

Strive for a balance among your sources. It's traditional that journalists attempt to include all (or as many as possible) sides of an issue. That means talking to proponents *and* opponents *and* those on the fence. In addition, it's critical to balance sources on as many dimensions as possible, including age, gender, race, occupation, educational attainment, political party, income levels, geography, and religious affiliation. You won't always be able to achieve complete balance for every story, but it's a good goal to have, and over time across the variety of stories you're likely to do, it's an important one to achieve. Society needs and deserves as complete a picture and understanding of the beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors of its members as possible. It's the job of journalists to provide that picture and help in developing that understanding.

Good interviewers use a variety of approaches to elicit information from sources. Being flexible in your approach is the key. Sometimes you need to be a source's "friend." You need to be a sympathetic listener. You need to let the person vent and/or unburden himself or herself. At other times, you need to be more aggressive and assertive, perhaps even demanding and/or threatening. Your job is to gather information. Your job is to get people to give you information by answering your questions. Within reason, you need to do what is necessary to persuade people to answer your questions. Use your interpersonal skills to judge the situation and to get a "read" on the people you need to interview. Most of the time, a courteous, respectful, calm, and straightforward approach works best and is the most professional. Most sources generally will respond favorably to such an approach. Occasionally, when people who should talk to you are reluctant to talk to you, a more forceful, adversarial approach is necessary. Remember that nobody *has* to talk to you, but public officials and regular newsmakers normally ought to talk to you. The public doesn't have an absolute right to know absolutely everything, but it does have the right to know as much as possible. Journalists can help make that happen if they do their jobs as information gatherers well.

Quite often, it's a good idea to let your interview subjects know what you want to talk to them about before you actually go to conduct the interview. If you need to gather specific statistics or acquire specific historical information, let your sources know what you need and give them enough time to find it. A prepared interview source normally is a good interview source. There are times when

you want more spontaneity in your interviews. In such cases, you might want to be a bit more general in your request for an interview. Perhaps you don't want your sources too prepared or too rehearsed. You might want their "top-of-the-head" responses. This is especially true when you're dealing with sensitive, embarrassing, or incriminating evidence.

Going Where the Action Is

Observing the activities of people and animals, how machines and technologies operate, plus what environmental factors exist often can provide important bits of information that can be used in news stories (Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 369–370; Gibbs & Warhover, 2002, pp. 208–221; Hansen & Paul, 2004, pp. 72–84; Harrower, 2007, pp. 72–73). Carefully noting who does what to whom and with what effect, plus where it's done, when it's done, and why it's done, is critical. Noting the sights, sounds, actions, smells, and textures associated with environments helps journalists get a better feel for what the people involved in newsworthy events and issues are dealing with. It can help provide important clues for why people believe what they believe, value what they value, and do what they do.

Normally, journalists observe participants without actually participating themselves. Participant observation involves going to where the participants are and noting what they do and what they say. Generally, information is gathered rather unobtrusively, with the journalist remaining relatively passive, a sort of "fly on the wall." It is critical that the journalist avoid doing or saying anything that might cause the participants to act significantly differently than how they normally act. Eventually, of course, a journalist will need to ask questions and become a bit more intrusive, but early on, it's usually best simply to observe and take note of what takes place. If it becomes necessary, advisable, or desirable for a journalist to become an actual participant, care must be taken to avoid behavior that might cause participants to become self-conscious or to act "abnormally." Becoming an actual participant is fraught with ethical dilemmas and other problems, so in "hard news" situations, it's best to get involved only if participation seems necessary to earn the confidence and/or cooperation of the participants. In "soft news" or feature-reporting situations, becoming a participant can be an effective way to gain a greater understanding of what participants face. It can be an effective way to tell their story.

Just Do It

Journalists can gather valuable information by experiencing things for themselves (Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 369–370; Gibbs & Warhover, 2002, pp. 208–221; Hansen & Paul, 2004, pp. 72–84; Harrower, 2007, pp. 72–73). They can wear a fat suit to see how overweight people are treated during an average day. They can get a job as a fast-food worker. They can go back to school and become a student again. They can try to hit a fastball from a professional baseball pitcher. They

can do just about anything, of course, but do they do it as an announced journalist or do they go "undercover" in a type of covert "sting" operation?

In most cases, it's more professional for a journalist to identify himself or herself as a journalist, but sometimes a journalist can obtain more valuable, more accurate, and more revealing information if he or she goes undercover. Again, such extreme information-gathering methods normally are used only as a last resort when the more common and acceptable methods of information gathering have failed.

While observing participants or actually participating, journalists should be on the lookout for any written materials that might help them with their stories. Official documents, flyers, brochures, catalogs, memos, letters, contracts, bulletin board announcements, salary schedules, files, evaluation forms, diaries, journals, annual reports, Web site content, and mission statements can all provide useful information for the public and help journalists gain a greater understanding of the issues facing the participants.

Typical News-Gathering Situations/Stories

There are five typical news-gathering situations/stories that confront journalists on a regular basis—advance stories, scheduled/expected events, unscheduled/unexpected events, follow-up/reactive stories, analyses/commentaries, and enterprise stories (Harrower, 2007, pp. 66–87). Advance stories include pre-meeting, pre-speech, pre-news conference, and any other pre-event coverage. Often, such stories are designed to let people know if attending an event is worth their time, energy, and money. Such stories also can provide preview examinations of critical issues, help put things in perspective, and help develop needed meanings associated with events. The five Ws and the H come into play, of course, but good reporters go beyond the basics and seek out expert evaluations and insights about the critical issues likely to surface during the upcoming events.

Scheduled/expected events include meetings, speeches, news conferences, concerts, demonstrations, and sports events. In such situations, reporters need to keep in mind that many other journalists will be in attendance, so it is important to look for unique, or at least different, angles to report about. All the basic information should be gathered, of course, but an effort must be made to find something that can serve as a unique focus for your story. Such things often can be found by gathering anecdotes from participants, taking special note of environmental factors/features, concentrating on causes/effects/alternatives, and simply asking participants what's different about this particular event or the subjects talked about during the event. Another thing that good reporters do is to supplement the information they obtain from "official" sources—spokespeople, handouts, agendas—with information from people who are or will be affected by what takes place during scheduled/expected events. Such events should be *part* of the information-gathering process, not the end of the process.

It's important to learn as much as you can about the people and issues associated with scheduled events prior to attending the events. By doing a good job of backgrounding, journalists increase their chances of doing more meaningful, insightful event coverage. Other tips include arriving early and staying late; sitting up front; taking notes; making sure you keep the names straight of who says what; noticing environmental factors; noticing audience reactions to comments and decisions; noticing non-verbal language; asking questions of the participants; asking questions of audience members; asking questions of people who will be affected by what happens during the event; asking follow-up questions if you don't get an adequate response to a question; asking follow-up questions to other reporters' questions if necessary; analyzing why the event was scheduled; and finding out what the organizers hoped to achieve and whether they achieved it.

Unscheduled/unexpected events include traffic accidents, plane crashes, fires, robberies, murders, hostage situations, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. Once again, it's likely that many journalists will be reporting about the same events, so, after getting answers to all the basic who, what, where, when, why, and how questions, good reporters look for unique angles to differentiate their stories from their competitors' stories. Humanizing the story—telling it by focusing on one person, family, or small group—is one common technique used.

Follow-up/reactive stories include “day-after” reporting of major events, getting responses from people affected by major governmental or big business decisions/developments, and finding related information when a competitor has a story you don't have. Follow-up/reactive stories almost always deal primarily with issues. It's important to get a variety of reactions from the people involved in events and issues, but it's also important to get a variety of comments from sources who have expertise in the areas being explored but who do not have any real stake in what is taking place or has taken place. These so-called “referee sources” include lawyers, doctors, professors, and officials outside the geographic area covered by a local news organization.

Analyses/commentaries include more personalized, in-depth explorations of events and issues. Such stories require detailed information gathering. Reporters need to find information that will help them create a greater understanding of the five Ws and the H among audience members. In many cases, reporters need to find information that will help them persuade audience members to change their beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors. Such efforts require consulting multiple sources of information, conducting numerous interviews, and making extended observations.

Enterprise stories include investigative reports, in-depth features, and unique-lifestyle explorations. Such stories require voluminous information gathering. Reporters must search through numerous documents, conduct numerous interviews, use a variety of observational techniques, and *verify, verify, verify* (Ettema & Glasser, 1998, pp. 139–153). Very often, the reputations of important people and influential

organizations are involved. Reporters must take great care that the information they include in their final products is as accurate, complete, balanced, and fair as possible. Reporters generally get much more time to produce enterprise stories, so they are expected to discover new sources of information and to explore such sources more fully so that they can produce stories that break new ground and reveal little-known facts about the important people and institutions in society.

What Interests Audience Members?

In any news-gathering situation, it is critical for a reporter to take into consideration the topics and things that people are interested in and care about (Brooks et al., 2008, p. 6; Campbell, 2004, pp. 104–125; Hansen & Paul, 2004, pp. 31–35; Harrower, 2007, p. 17). Attempts should be made to obtain as much information about such topics and things as possible in the time available prior to the deadline. News values/elements/qualities help in this area, too, but there are many more topics and things that people find interesting.

People are interested in events and issues that affect them in some way. They are interested in what well-known people say and do. They are interested in knowing about timely “breaking news.” They are interested in conflicts between people, groups, organizations, and countries. They are interested in achievements and the setting of records. They are interested in acts of courage and heroism. They are interested in sex and romance. They are interested in what animals do. They are interested in money. They are interested in what things cost and what benefits are associated with such costs. They are interested in winners and losers, pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages, causes and effects, impacts and meanings. They are interested in what has happened in the past and what will or might happen in the future. They are interested in what alternatives may be available to deal with current problems and situations. They are interested in timetables and the timing of events and issues. They are interested in the size of things, the number of things, and the frequency of things. They are interested in steps, procedures, and processes. They are interested in requirements, limitations, and parameters. They are interested in demographics—age, gender, occupation, educational attainment, religion, politics.

One of the worst things that can happen after a news story has been printed, broadcast, or made available online is for audience members to say “So what?” or “Who cares?” An important goal of every information-gathering effort should be to obtain information that will answer such questions. Normally, such information surfaces as part of the reporting process, but if it doesn't, a reporter must revisit sources or develop new sources to be sure that impacts/meanings are clear and that important stories are made interesting and interesting stories are made important.

The five Ws and the H provide a good framework for information gathering (Gibbs & Warhover, 2002, pp. 102–117; Hansen & Paul, 2004, p. 55). Of course, there are many more Ws than five and many more Hs than one. In fact, for most

stories, the Ws and the Hs are just about endless. They include the basic *who* is involved, *what* has happened, *where* did it take place, *when* did it take place, *why* did it happen, and *how* did it happen? They also include the following:

Who was involved?	When has it happened?	Where has it happened?
Who will be involved?	When will it happen?	Where will it happen?
Who could be involved?	When could it happen?	Where could it happen?
Who should be involved?	When should it happen?	Where should it happen?
Who is affected?	When will we know?	Where do we go from here?
Who was affected?	When should we know?	Where could we go from here?
Who will be affected?	What will happen?	Why will it happen?
Who pays?	What could happen?	Why could it happen?
Who has paid?	What should happen?	Why should it happen?
Who will pay?	What might have happened?	Why do people need to know?
Who benefits?	What is the significance?	Why will people care?
Who has benefited?	What has been the significance?	Why should people care?
Who will benefit?	What will be the significance?	How should this happen?
Who wins?	What is affected?	How could this happen?
Who has won?	What has been affected?	How much?
Who will win?	What will be affected?	How many?
Who loses?	What causes the situation?	How often?
Who has lost?	What has caused the situation?	How easy?
Who will lose?	What will cause the situation?	How difficult?
Who is at fault?	What is being done?	How high?
Who has been at fault?	What has been done?	How low?
Who will be at fault?	What will be done?	How big?
Who is guilty?	What does it mean?	How small?
Who was guilty?	What has it meant?	How well?
Who will be guilty?	What will it mean?	How poorly?
Who is innocent?	What is the result?	How fast?
Who was innocent?	What has been the result?	How slow?
Who will be innocent?	What will be the result?	

If reporters get answers to as many of the five Ws and the H questions as possible, it's unlikely that audience members will be able to say "So what?" or "Who cares?" after reading, listening to, or watching news stories.

Getting Access to Information

Freedom of the press is a relatively empty freedom if information gatherers are prohibited from obtaining the information they need to satisfy the public's right to know about significant events and issues (Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 390–393; Garrison, 1992, pp. 249–251). No person can be forced to speak to a reporter, but thankfully, most sources are either relatively willing to speak to journalists or at least can be persuaded to talk. Sunshine laws protect the right of journalists to attend meetings of public groups, and freedom-of-information laws protect the right of journalists to obtain copies of public documents. There are exceptions, of course, but most of the time, journalists have the right to sit in on meetings and official proceedings and the right to examine reports and other documents produced by governmental agencies.

Accurate, Balanced, and Fair Information

Before reporters introduce information in their stories, they should be convinced that the information is accurate, balanced, and fair (Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 10–15). Normally, this can be accomplished by getting the same information from multiple sources. Confirming information, validating it, and vetting it are critical steps in the reporting process. It's especially critical when dealing with sensitive, revealing, embarrassing, or incriminating information. Most news organizations require that a reporter have at least two sources, preferably three sources, that contain or that have offered the same, or very similar, information. Double-checking and triple-checking facts, figures, quotes, allegations, assertions, perceptions, and opinions must be a regular part of any legitimate, quality news-reporting effort.

Legal and Ethical Problems

Failing to confirm and validate information prior to sharing it with the public can lead to a variety of legal and ethical problems (Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 464–513; Campbell, 2004, pp. 126–152). Over-the-top, overly aggressive, out-of-control, mean-spirited, biased, and revenge-motivated reporting can have the same result. Typical legal and ethical problems include libel, invasion of privacy, copyright infringement, fabrication, plagiarism, sensationalism, and conflicts of interest.

Libel occurs when journalists report false information that damages a person's reputation. Invasion of privacy can occur when journalists use hidden microphones/cameras, go onto private property, falsely attribute information or endorsements to people, or give a false impression of a person to the public. Copyright infringement can occur when journalists "borrow" information from printed sources without providing proper attribution.

Fabrication is one of the major taboos in journalism. Information and quotes should never be made up. Plagiarism is another taboo. Taking the work of another writer and passing it off as your own should never be done. Embellishing and/or exaggerating information to dramatize and sensationalize the news have limited initial benefits—higher ratings and circulation, but in the long run, such tactics usually lead to audience dissatisfaction, distrust, and disbelief. Conflicts of interest can result when reporters have a stake in the topic on which they're reporting. They might have a financial interest in a piece of real estate or own stock in a company that they're asked to report about. They might be asked to report about a group or organization to which they or their family members or friends belong.

Legal and ethical problems can lead to a loss of credibility for a news organization. Since credibility is one of the major things that news organizations "sell," any loss of credibility can lead to a reduction in ratings, readership, or circulation. Reporters must do everything they can to ensure that the information that reaches the public is as accurate, complete, balanced, and fair as possible. Deadlines and difficulties associated with gathering all the information that's needed can sometimes result in some inaccurate, incomplete, unbalanced, and unfair information reaching the public, but such instances can be kept to a minimum if reporters do their jobs well and care about informing and educating the public.

Editing Improves Quality

Careful, rigorous editing by reporters, editors, and news managers can help avoid many of the legal and ethical problems that often plague journalists (Alysen et al., 2003, pp. 132–148; Brooks et al., 2008, pp. 73–79). Editing can improve accuracy. It can remove redundancies. It can increase preciseness and conciseness. It can eliminate

grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. It can help ensure consistency in style and tone.

The editing process begins when reporters check, double-check, and sometimes even triple-check their facts. Fact checking also is done by editors and news managers. Some news organizations even have designated "fact checkers." Everyone's goal is to avoid passing along inaccurate, misleading information. One technique that helps ensure that information is accurate is to perform simple mathematical calculations whenever numbers are involved in a story. "Do the math" and/or "Check the math" are common commands/expectations in newsrooms (Alysen et al., 2003, pp. 132–148; Harrower, 2007, pp. 84–85). By adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing numbers, journalists can catch their own mathematical mistakes and those of their sources.

For example, a reporter writes that a local business has 10,000 customers and takes in an average of \$5,000 each day. Simple division results in an average expenditure of 50 cents per customer. Since nothing the business sells even costs 50 cents or less, clearly an error has been made. It might be that the reporter transposed the numbers or misunderstood the business's accountant. It might be that the accountant misspoke. In any case, the inaccurate information should not be passed along to the public. A call, e-mail, or visit to the accountant should be made to determine the correct figures.

Another common editing practice is to look for "red flag" words, phrases and constructions. For example, whenever the word *there* is used in a story, reporters, editors, and news managers need to consider whether the use of *there* is correct or whether the word should be *their* or *they're*. In addition, is the correct word to be used *it's* or *its*? Is it *to*, *too*, or *two*? Is it *who* or *whom*?

Other editing concerns include the following: Do subjects and verbs agree in number? Does the copy flow? Are more transitions needed? Are there any awkward or confusing spots? Are quotes inserted and punctuated properly? Is more attribution needed? Does more information need to be gathered and presented? Has proper style been used?

The Associated Press Stylebook (2008) is a good resource for reporters, editors, and news managers. It includes recommended guidelines for abbreviations, numbers, capitalization, punctuation, and other typical content-related issues. It even includes tips for handling polls and surveys, plus how to avoid libel and ethical problems.

Conclusion

One of the fundamental keys to successful journalism is the ability to "tell a good story." No matter what medium has been used, is being used, or will be used in the future to convey information to people—print, radio, television, online, cellular, holographic, journalists—if they're to be successful, have to present interesting and important

information in an attention-getting, entertaining manner. Identifying important and interesting people, events, and issues to report about is the first part of the process. By doing so, journalists play a key role in keeping the public informed, educated, and entertained.

Doing quality reporting—gathering important and interesting information—is the second part of the process of telling a good story. Finding out what people believe, what they value, and what they do, plus why they believe what they believe, why they value what they value, and why they do what they do helps us all gain greater understanding of our own culture and the cultures of others. Gathering information in a legal and ethical manner is important, too.

Editing the story to ensure accuracy, completeness, clarity, fairness, and balance; to improve grammar, spelling, and punctuation; and to improve the flow and readability of the story is the final part of quality storytelling. In most cases, the entire process—coming up with an idea, reporting and editing the final product—must be completed in less than 24 hours, and often the process must be completed within an hour or two. No matter how much time a journalist has to develop and present a story, the goal is still the same. Make important people, events, and issues interesting, and make interesting people, events, and issues important.

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INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

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From the perspective of many established investigative journalists and some other thoughtful commentators, very great changes are taking place in the media ecology of the Anglosphere, of which developments in investigative journalism are merely an epiphenomenon. In the course of these changes, the name, if not the substance, of investigative journalism is being co-opted into mainstream media, rather as the worker demonstrations of the 19th century were transmuted into party rallies in the 20th century. Because of this, those who wish to preserve the essence of investigative journalism need to invent another name, another site, another rationale for it. As to why this is the case and on what grounds it is being argued, we shall return to it later.

Meanwhile, at the outset, we describe the status quo ante: the idea of investigative journalism, its conventional role in the process of reporting the news, and some of the techniques used by investigative journalists. The illustrations used in support are mostly from the United Kingdom, but what is termed investigative journalism in the Anglophone countries is increasingly found in many other societies, from China to Italy, from Brazil to Russia.

There is a widespread premise that an investigative journalist can be defined as a person whose profession it is to discover the truth and to identify lapses from it in whatever media may be available. Literary and filmic representations of investigative journalists are mainly Anglophone, and they are represented in general as lonely crusaders for virtue. John Grisham's novel and film *The Pelican Brief* and the film *The Insider* are typical; factual books also play up these aspects, as in *The Typewriter Guerrillas* (Behrens, 1977) and *Raising Hell* (Chepesiuk, Howell, &

Lee, 1997). However, other cultures do not necessarily see investigative journalists in this way (de Burgh, 2005).

Acts of investigative journalism are contrasted with apparently similar work done by the police, lawyers, auditors, and regulatory bodies in that they are not limited as to target, are not legally founded, and usually earn money for media publishers.

Investigative journalism is distinguished from dissenting journalism, although they are often closely connected. It is a long-standing feature of Anglophone societies that they, relative to most other polities, tolerate disagreement with authority, and it is a tradition that has been fought for, since at least the 17th century. Campaigns on behalf of this or that oppressed party, polemics for a better way of doing things, and divergence from the accepted line are usually permissible. Wartime has always been an exception.

One of the most cogent critics of investigative journalism ("the lowest form of newspaper life") believes that it is not a discipline but a cast of mind that is typical of arrogant, privileged, and sneering journalists in current affairs. Bernard Ingham (1991, p. 363), who was Chief Press Secretary to former British Prime Minister Thatcher, has diagnosed a number of journalists' diseases, of which the first is pertinent to investigative journalism: "the conviction that government is inevitably, irrevocably, and chronically up to no good, not to be trusted, and conspiratorial. This is known as 'le Carré syndrome' and so sours and contaminates the judgment of otherwise competent journalists as to render them pathetically negative, inaccurate, and unreliable. In this context, Watergate has a lot to answer for here—and across the world" (Ingham, 1991, p. 363).

Aside from the justice of investigative journalism, or its right to exist, some challenge its competence to undertake the task of scrutinizing authority on the basis that where this task is necessary, there should be legislation to create offices sufficiently skilled and resourced to do that work properly (Kedourie & Mango, 1988); this is an interesting critique that deserves to be examined further. Another view of investigative journalism is represented by Charles Moore, a former editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, who sees it as “a distraction from the proper functions of journalism, which are to report and to analyze” (Page, 1998, p. 46).

Investigative Journalism and the News Agenda

News journalism has a broadly agreed set of values, often referred to as “newsworthiness.” The news journalist makes his or her selection from a range of conventionally accepted sources of information, sources that are in effect the providers of the “news agenda” and whose regular production of information is diarized; selection from them is made according to these and other criteria of newsworthiness.

The multitude of factors that tend to condition the journalist’s acceptance of sources as bona fide and the way in which he or she treats the information have been extensively studied and are reviewed in Shoemaker (1996) and McQuail (1994), among others.

Investigative stories are different in that they may not be on the same agenda. They involve a subject that the journalist has to insist is something we should know about, in effect, by saying, “Look at this, isn’t it shocking!” But the basis of the insistence is a moral one. To some, this is the essence of all journalism, and the term *investigative journalism* only came about when most journalists had given up or forgotten what their purpose was, on account of the increasing domination of the news by the entertainment industries, job insecurity, and the greater detachment of journalists from the general population because of changes in industry organizations (de Burgh, 2008, p. 13).

Relationship to Reporting and Analysis

News reporting is descriptive, and news reporters are admired when they describe in a manner that is accurate, explanatory, vivid, or moving, regardless of medium. Analytical journalism, on the other hand, seeks to take the data available and reconfigure it, helping us ask questions about the situation or statement or see it in a different way. Clive Edwards, of the British Broadcasting Corporation’s (BBC) flagship investigative current affairs program *Panorama*, argued in 1999 that even though his program is not always investigative in the sense of resulting from long-term investigation and revelation of the hidden, in some sense, every week’s *Panorama* is telling you about things that you do not know enough about. Even a relatively

innocuous subject such as house prices will be treated such as to show you the way they are affecting society and to bring to your attention the problems caused by the situation that most people take for granted. Investigative journalists are trying to get to the bottom of exactly what is happening, and the forces behind it.

Going further than this, investigative journalists also want to know whether the situation presented to audiences is the reality. They further invite us to be aware of something that we are not hearing about at all or to care about something that is not being cared about. At its furthest extent, investigative journalism questions the basis of orthodoxy, challenging the account of reality that the powers-that-be wish us to accept.

Definitions of Significance

Whereas news deals very rapidly with received information, usually accepting what is defined for it by authority (ministries, the police, the fire service, universities, and established spokesmen) as events appropriate for transformation into news, investigative journalism is expected to select its own information and prioritizes it in a different way. The distinction is not by any means absolute, and neither are news editors as passive nor investigative journalists as active as this simplification suggests. Moreover, there are great differences between commercial and public media, national, regional, and local ones.

Taking the events supplied for them, news journalists apply news values in prioritizing those events; investigative journalism picks and chooses according to its own definition of significance. What are those definitions? Investigative journalism comes in so many shapes and sizes that it is not easy to generalize. That stories affect many is the criterion of one journalist; another is content to reveal what has been done to only one victim. There is, though, always a victim and, even if it is collective, always a villain to blame. Usually, there is a failure of the system, whether that of the administration of justice, of bureaucratic management, or of the regulatory bodies of this or that sphere. The villains may be so because they stand to make money, because they are brutal xenophobes, or because they are ignorant and deluded.

All the villains want to stop the story from coming out—or at least wish to control its presentation. A common definition of investigative journalism is “going after what someone wants to hide,” although not everything that someone wants to hide is worth going after.

The Moral Impetus

The urge to get at the truth and to clarify the difference between right and wrong is most clearly evident in stories about the miscarriage of justice, where every possible trick has to be used to encourage the audience to see an event as a contradiction of equity and where the audience, if anything,

must be presumed to be skeptical of claims of innocence by murderers and thieves. In the revelations of misconduct over the promoting and conduct of the invasion of Iraq, the context of wars in which extreme suffering was taking place has been used to demonstrate the moral dimension to what would otherwise have been merely commonplace dishonesties by people in power.

Usually, investigative journalists appeal to our existing standards of morality, standards they know that they can rely on being held by people they know will be shocked by their violation. In this sense, they are “policing the boundaries” between order and deviance. The fact that much investigative journalism ends with legislation or regulation being promised or designed is not therefore an accident.

Even if investigative journalists are less autonomous in identifying wicked things and inspiring moral umbrage than popular culture might have us believe, they may nevertheless be expanding our ideas of what we should think or care about, making us think in a certain way about an event or an issue. Moreover, the claim that they are reaching for “the truth” is not necessarily rendered absurd by the acknowledgment that there is no truth, in the sense of an absolute hard fact against which to measure their own versions, because what the investigative journalist is after, as is the historian, is a more complete version of the truth. Our minds can move toward a more complete truth by collecting good evidence and by corroborating the accounts of people, who can be shown either to be disinterested or to speak from different vantage points.

When asked what skills are of most importance to the investigative journalist, it is the desk skills that journalists mention first. By this, they mean the thorough knowledge of information sources and types and the rules that govern them, the ability to read documents for significance, and an understanding of statistics. Also needed are the empathy that will get people to talk; the ability to take account of potential impediments to truth, such as false memory and question formulation; the gall and wit to doorstep; and the ability to efface oneself sufficiently to go undercover if necessary.

Motivations

What are the aims of investigative journalism? With clash after clash between journalists and government during the 18 years of Conservative rule in Britain (1979–1997), it was an understandable assumption made by some that investigative journalism was merely a tactical weapon of the Left. The then government was very happy to fuel this prejudice in order to justify its resistance to criticism; however, there is no reason to assume that investigative journalism is a prerogative of the Left.

In fact, investigative journalists function as agents of change, in that they want to affect the way we see events or to make us care about something we have not thought of before; tell us what is and is not acceptable behavior; champion the weak; or accuse the guilty.

Investigative journalists attempt to get at the truth where the truth is obscure because it suits others that it be so; they choose their topics from a sense of right and wrong, which we can only call a moral sense, but in the manner of their research, they attempt to be dispassionately evidential. They do more than disagreeing with how society runs; they point out that it is failing by its own standards. They expose, but they expose in the public interest, which they define. Their efforts, if successful, alert us to failures in the system and lead to politicians, lawyers, and policemen taking action even as they fulminate, action that may result in legislation or regulation.

Investigative Journalism in the 21st Century

There seems to be much more investigative journalism, and a wide variety of topics is dealt with; celebrity investigators and undercover operations are more in evidence than ever before; how much of investigative journalism really qualifies as such is open to question, following a spate of revelations of dishonesty or error; it is argued that some of the most important stories are avoided.

Below are some examples of the kinds of investigations that have been undertaken in a variety of areas.

Business

Although in recent years there have been many examinations of politicians' affairs, there have been relatively few on business.

A business investigation that hit the headlines was “Ryanair: Caught Napping,” transmitted February 13, 2006. Ryanair is Europe's largest low-cost airline, operating 270 low-fare routes to 21 European countries. As the network's Web site recounted it,

Two Dispatches undercover reporters spent five months secretly filming Ryanair's training programme and onboard flights as members of the cabin crew. The reporters reveal what really takes place behind the scenes: inadequate safety and security checks, dirty planes, exhausted cabin crew and pilots complaining about the number of hours they have to fly. (www.channe14.com/news/microsites/R/ryanair_caught_napping)

Seroxat is an antidepressant drug that had for a number of years first been prescribed for adults and then for children. “Secrets of the Drug Trials: Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK),” transmitted in 2007, claims to show not that Seroxat is unsafe, because an earlier BBC *Panorama* program had already done that in 2006, but that the system supposed to monitor the drug companies is inadequate and that research supposedly written by respected academics can be ghost written by drug company researchers and their PR officers.

David Leigh and Rob Evans's work is available on www.guardian.co.uk/baefiles. In August 2008, their latest allegation was that BAE Systems, a British aerospace/defense company, secretly paid Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia more than £1 billion in connection with Britain's biggest ever weapons contract.

Welfare

Interrogation of Britain's health and welfare provision has increased. Goaded first by the promises of reform made by successive politicians and then by the spectacle of those politicians preferring, apparently, to pour huge sums into public services rather than properly to reform them, British journalists have been unflinching in pointing out the failures of the health and welfare systems.

Cruelty and neglect in care homes for the elderly have been revealed by both a BBC *Panorama* investigation and several newspapers. *Panorama*'s "Please Look After Mum" (transmitted February 12, 2007) exposed shocking abuse, as did the *Sunday Times* investigation "Exposed: Filth and Abuse in Care Homes" (Newell, 2007), which contrasted the huge profits made from care homes with the squalid conditions of their residents. *The Observer* revealed "errors and negligence" in UK hospitals "that result in stillbirths or disabled babies," following a tradition of investigating hospitals.

Another much discussed topic was adoption. Davies (1997) brought in a new angle by showing how a way of ensuring that children born to women who, often with regret, could not bring them up might be given a stable home has turned into a business in which young women are encouraged to supply babies. While childless couples benefit, so too do lawyers and commercial adoption agencies; the agencies are accused of providing material incentives for and applying moral pressure to vulnerable young women to provide more product, that is, babies.

Foreign Affairs

It used to be a truism that only a tiny minority of British people cared what happened abroad. Now, apparently, this is not so for English audiences. Kevin Sutcliffe, head of investigations at C4 TV thinks that the events of September 11, 2001, made a big difference. Among the programs he has been able to commission as a result are a series on what has been going on inside Iraq, such as *Iraqi Death Squads*, which claims to be a revelation of how Iraq is really run today—by gangsters who happen to be the police. The program shows us the trigger-happy thugs at work and secretly films inside an illegal prison.

Public Policy Issues

The burgeoning power of the state in Britain, and the accelerating privatization of functions and their removal

beyond public oversight, is a phenomenon widely identified. Increasingly, journalists look to the making and implementation of public policy in representative areas of state activity.

There have been many programs on immigration, but one of the most arresting was when *Panorama*'s Richard Bilton went to the southern town of Slough to find out the effects of immigration on the citizens and on the local council's finances. He found out not only that at least 10,000 Poles had moved in in 3 years but also that central government no longer had any idea at all of the numbers, that local government was overwhelmed, and that earlier immigrants were frightened of the implications for the community of the waves of new arrivals. *Immigration: How We Lost Count* showed in microcosm what was happening in many other towns and cities, but the investigative element was the revelation of the incompetence of the government.

Environmental Concerns

To "whitewash" something means to cover something with a coat of white paint so that you cannot see the "reality" underneath. In the program *Dispatches: "Greenwash,"* the reporter reports on how government and companies pretend that they are pursuing "green" (beneficial to the environment) policies whereas in fact they are not. For example, a car manufacturer pretends that its cars are environmentally beneficial, whereas only a tiny number of their cars are; the government introduces regulations on housing construction but does not police their implementation, and so on.

Corruption

It has seemed, over the past 10 years, that there has been a new revelation almost every week. The first to hit the public consciousness was the Ecclestone Affair, when the eponymous racing promoter paid millions to the Labour Party in the belief that his company would be exempted from new legislation. The one that is probably indelibly dyed into the consciousness of the British public is the investigation of Prime Minister Blair over selling seats in the Upper House of Parliament, which dragged on until, at about the same time, politicians managed to squash the inquiry and Tony Blair resigned both from office and from Parliament.

When is a work of journalism investigative and when "merely" analytical or even polemical? This question has often been asked of the work of, for example, Peter Osborne, who has produced three books that tell us a great deal about how Britain is run; the most powerful of them, *The Triumph of the Political Class* (2007), was produced just as we went to press. In Osborne's work, it is the factual revelations that shock, as much as the arguments derived from them. He, and others, have theorized about the rise of a political class in Britain as representing a complete rupture with the politics to

which we are accustomed, retaining only sufficient of the outward forms of past politics to deceive us into thinking that the content remains.

Mere polemic would not back his assertions with more than cursory evidence, but Osborne has assembled a good deal of evidence and examined it within the perspectives of recent past practice in British politics and political theory, so it is much, much more than polemic. He treads a path first marked out by Bob Franklin, when he identifies the ways in which the 1997 government sought to politicize the civil service, and by Ivor Gaber and Steven Barnett and in several books by Nicholas Jones, when they described the government's misuse of the media. Osborne goes further, showing how there has been a change in the nature of government and showing the development of a culture of bullying and manipulation as well as a subverting of normal procedures, which has had disastrous results.

Some of Osborne's best work is his analysis of the behavior of the Standards and Privileges Committee of the House of Commons, where he revealed how Standards Commissioner Filkin was persecuted and discredited, the techniques used by the leadership to nobble members, and the different standards applied to the cases of compliant and well-connected MPs regardless of political party and those not protected. The complicity of the three parties appears to make clear that the adversarial system of government is in abeyance.

Osborne goes further, too, when he shows how, to an unprecedented degree, leading members of Blair's government (1997–2007) abused their positions to enjoy sexual favors, enrich themselves, and provide gifts to their friends at public expense; to use civil servants for personal, and sometimes demeaning, tasks; to break rules of conduct that if broken by a civil servant would have resulted in sacking; to extract free holidays and other personal advantages; and routinely to lie about their transgressions. Furthermore, it seems at least plausible that British foreign policy was carried out under the influence of the only man willing to support Blair's greedy lifestyle on retirement, Rupert Murdoch, with an eye out for Blair's future earnings in the United States. Unfortunately, Osborne's researches stop there; he asks, as have others, why the clandestine and suspicious relationship between Blair and Murdoch has not been investigated properly.

The Media

Investigation of the media themselves seems to be a new excitement. BBC Radio 4's Document "Letters to *The Times*" reveals how the BBC had been complicit in government propaganda; it had sacked journalists who were skeptical about the European Union on the recommendation of a (British) Foreign Office propaganda unit.

The *Sunday Times* investigated in "How the BBC Dances to an IRA Tune" (McDonald, 1997) the demonization of the Irish Protestants and sympathy for IRA. In

another examination of the BBC, a thorough piece of investigation done by a senior BBC executive on sabbatical reported that in one particularly tendentious and influential documentary, the journalist reporting on a particular group was an outright, active opponent of those on whom he was reporting, who chose his evidence partially, excluded facts where they did not suit his case, misused statistics, selected case studies so as to mislead, distorted arguments, traduced interviewees, misrepresented the opinions of interviewees, uttered false statements, and made damaging accusations without giving opportunity for rebuttal.

To conclude this brief survey of topics, investigative journalism has covered an ever wider variety of subject matter, although its critics suggest that it avoids the really difficult, though potentially most rewarding, subjects, such as the recent prime minister's financial affairs, the governing party's relationship with postal unions, the quangocracy, local government, and the doings of all but a very few major businesses.

Format

Looking back to the 1990s, it is now clear that a new phenomenon had come about—the investigative reporter became an actor, an entertainer, much as the earnest gumshoe of yore. It started with Roger Cook, a pioneer. By the early years of this century, others had taken his ideas much further.

We see those ideas, for example, in Cook's (1993) "Bird Bandits," an investigation into the illegal export of peregrine falcons, an endangered species. The birds were sold mainly in the Arab world, where they are used in sport. The team films robbers of birds' nests and secret meetings with prospective Arab buyers. But the tease emphasizes Cook the magician. In part of the program, Roger Cook disguises himself as a wealthy and be-robbed Arab to trick thieves into selling him the birds. This is trailed heavily at the start, where Cook is shown being made up and having a false beard attached.

Soon we have other players in this game. Whereas Cook exuded a certain authority, a certain moral gravitas, the younger Paul Kenyon, of *Kenyon Confronts*, hams up a "chirpy chappie" image, making clear that he is just any old bloke, with no more skills than you and I or Maureen by the slot machine might have. He's just employing his citizen wits in "Bogus Marriage Gang Exposed" (BBC, 2001), and his hectic activity is made part of the story. The issue is serious; it seems that there are many tens of thousands of marriages that are false, in the sense that they are undertaken by strangers so that one side can gain the UK citizenship of the other. Some of the women—they are usually women—have been married in this way many times and earn a good living at it. He checks out the marriage registers to see who is pretending to a false address; treks around the streets knocking on doors to locate the

couples he wants to check up on; videos weddings to show how dodgy they are; pretends to be a wedding photographer and, scattering confetti, and calls out for the grooms to kiss the brides.

From cheeky chappie to sex symbol: Donal MacIntyre of *MacIntyre Undercover* shows off techniques and torso. In the trailer, you see him stripped off to wire himself up for recording, unshaven chin exuding maleness, the deep voice that of the seducer. The *MacIntyre Undercover* series have covered many different subjects, including football hooligans; homes for subnormal children, and the European fashion industry, where MacIntyre found that the people responsible for taking care of young models were both getting them hooked on drugs and enjoying them sexually. At the start of each program, he introduces himself: "I'm Donal MacIntyre, and I'm a reporter for the BBC." He then reviews his recent achievements, over clips of himself in dangerous situations with thugs, rapists, and gangsters. You know that with Donal, you're in for something juicy: violence, sex, corruption, cruelty. It's like those old-fashioned horror films that start with the vampire sticking his teeth into the virgin's neck at the very start. Shudder, and enjoy!

By contrast with the butch style, ITV, in August 2007, introduced Nina Hobson, the *Undercover Mum*. Hobson is given to us as "an ordinary mum with two children. She used to be an undercover police officer investigating everything from rape to robbery." In a three-part series, Hobson investigates family issues: children's food, teenage drinking, and families that are going thousands of pounds into the red to fund their lifestyles.

Techniques

The key skill required in investigative journalism is research. The journalist needs to know how to get information, how to analyze it and how to evaluate it. But whereas a few investigations tell you how they go about that—as does the film *Erin Brockovich*, there is more and more emphasis on the entertaining aspects:

- Infiltration
- Impersonation
- Secret filming
- Dramatization
- Reconstruction

Infiltration

Perhaps the most famous British infiltration of the period was Mark Daly's, reported in BBC's *Secret Policeman* in 2003. He joined Greater Manchester Police as a trainee and spent 5½ months posing as a probationary constable.

He secretly filmed at the national training center in Warrington, Cheshire, recording commonplace racism among police recruits. He was arrested in August and accused of getting his salary by deception. Immediately

after the transmission of the program, several police officers were dismissed, but the then minister responsible for domestic security criticized the program and suggested that the BBC intended "to create, not report" a story.

In *C4 Dispatches*: "Undercover Mosque," a reporter joins various Muslim communities and claims that he proves that "an ideology of bigotry and intolerance is spreading throughout our country, with its origins in Saudi Arabia." The Muslim Wahabi sect of Saudi Arabia is training young imams and activists, then sending them around the world to replace more moderate, peaceful, imams. These imams are taught to believe that all non-Muslims are enemies, that Muslims should overthrow, or at least undermine, non-Muslim states. The documentary secretly films imams stirring up hatred against non-Muslims and advocating war against them. It also finds hidden Web sites and DVDs for children spreading hatred and encouraging martyrdom. The documentary later came in for criticism from West Midlands Police, which made a formal complaint to Ofcom, the regulatory body, claiming that it was "distorted." This was rejected by Ofcom.

Impersonation

Zaiba Malik, working for *Guardian Weekend*, spent a month undercover as a hotel cleaner. She described the exceedingly hard work, poor pay, low standards of sanitation, and rough working conditions, in particular of those cleaning luxury hotels (Malik, 2006).

A black Englishman goes to Africa to experience the journey that an illegal immigrant must make if he wants to get to the United Kingdom from Africa. In *Dispatches*: "Living With Illegals," he is sometimes accompanied by (an invisible) cameraman, sometimes not. We see him, for example, after he has been smuggled to Spain from Africa, trying to earn some money by selling flowers on the street and trying to find somewhere to sleep in bank lobbies.

Secret Filming

You can trick the audience into thinking that they are watching something of some weight, of some importance by putting some secret filming in, perhaps using a couple of doorsteps, so using all the old tools that we would have used to do serious investigations, and the bonus of course for the TV companies is that it's an awful lot cheaper. So you can easily get a house and attract some dodgy plumbers in there, and you could probably turn that around in a couple of weeks and put it out on some prime time slot, and it will cost you a tiny amount. Whereas we know that a serious investigation would normally take at least a year to do depending on the subject matter. It's become increasingly less viable to do long-term investigations like that, and I believe they have been supplanted by some of the broadcasters by things that give the appearance that a lot of work has been done when it hasn't really. (Kenyon, 2007)

More and more undercover operations are being undertaken. Technology has been a major factor.

Now your reporters are carrying more or less undetectable and certainly very small pieces of technology that can record for a very long time. That has had an impact on what people expect of investigation—people want to see things now. Whereas before a reporter would tell you things, now often a piece of investigative journalism gets noticed because it's showing you things. (Sutcliffe, 2007)

Although traditionally we had done secret filming for gun crime and serious criminal practice, commissioners realized that viewers come in as soon as they see secret filming because they think it's going to be intriguing. So I think the bar was dropped very much lower to the point where they said, "Look, we can actually do dodgy builders and dodgy plumbers and dodgy estate agents, and we can do all that kind of things, bring in a very good audience; we use all the same tools that we used to use for serious investigative journalism, now we use it for this kind of watchdog area, consumer affairs type journalism," and I think they realize it's an awful lot cheaper. (Kenyon, 2007)

C4 Dispatches on postal workers in May 2004 was fiercely criticized by the postal workers union as an unfair and misleading representation of post office workers as lazy, dishonest, and inefficient. However, the company itself, Royal Mail, was fined £11.7million in February 2006 for "disastrous failings," which were discovered as a result of investigations by PostComm, the industry regulator. These inquiries were undertaken after the revelations made in the *C4 Dispatches*.

Reconstruction

It is unusual to have more than a few seconds of dramatic reconstruction in a documentary, but *Panorama*: "A Fight to the Death" is almost entirely dramatic reconstruction. Here it was considered necessary because very few of the events it reveals and analyses could be filmed. The subject is a very sensitive one—exactly what happened over the Kelly Affair, when the government scientist Kelly killed himself after he was quoted by the BBC reporter Gilligan as having said that the British government knew that its reasons for the war in Iraq were false. There followed an inquiry by a senior judge, at which Prime Minister Blair had to defend his behavior.

Dramatization

The film *Ghosts* illustrates a new trend—investigative journalists using what have traditionally been considered quite separate media. A number of them have recently branched into comedy, putting on satirical shows based on in-depth research; others have written plays for the theater.

C4 Ghosts is a drama film of 96 minutes. The reporter Nick Broomfield is famous for his observant documentaries. This time, he chooses to tell the tale of a group of Chinese cockle-pickers who drowned off the Norfolk coast

because their gangers did not tell them about the dangers of the sea tides. He wanted to show the dark side of illegal immigration, using this story as a case study. The trailer shows the deaths of the cockle-pickers, desperately crying out for help as the waves engulf them. The young woman in the party uses her cell phone to call her little son in China for the last time, and we then find ourselves in southeastern China a few months earlier, as the same young woman is making the momentous decision to buy her way to the West so that she can earn the school fees her child will need. We see the whole process, from being sucked in by the promises of a local broker to the appalling journey, smuggled like contraband goods; the tragic squalor of living with other desperate people and the misery of being unable to communicate; the succession of short-term jobs, from the pay of which her Chinese master lifts his share. It is deeply moving but also well researched.

Another drama based on current affairs investigation that deserves note is Tony Marchant's *The Mark of Cain*, transmitted on C4 in October 2007. Struck by the nonchalance by which a young British soldier had, when home, handed in to be processed a roll of film of the abuse of Iraqi detainees, he decided to try to understand how youths can become so insensitive. He and a colleague investigated the case, as it became, of abuse by the Royal Fusiliers and the trial of the soldiers. By the time the drama was transmitted, two further cases of atrocities by young British soldiers had been revealed, such that his drama, highlighting the contrast between the high moral sentiments of the commanding officers and the culture of brutality in the ranks, seemed vindicated as a cameo interpreting what appeared suspiciously as if it might be a common phenomenon.

Conclusion

With the huge increase in media of many different kinds that has followed from digitalization, all have to compete for attention, such that the stories have to be more gripping so that they compete with drama and the cutting has to be faster to compete with commercials. All these factors make for more investigative journalism, or apparent investigative journalism, more rapid work and more risk. Thus is investigative journalism affected by market developments.

There are other changes. Issues and stories are personalized to conform to the culture of human interest that now permeates most journalism. Celebrity culture, or the giving of prominence to individuals because they appear to be glamorous or powerful, requires that journalists too need to compete, so they promote themselves.

Increasingly, journalists are more assertive; they take moral positions and step forward with their own ideas instead of merely reporting or interpreting events. Events in Georgia and Ukraine in particular bear this out. Connecting with all these changes is the fact that journalism is increasingly "globalized," at least in the limited sense that it is influenced by the international.

Not only does the Internet pervade all we do, with the potential that it provides both for international research and for cooperation, but journalists are ever more educated by international educators or by their own travels abroad. They are little by little forming an international community of like-minded people. On the one hand, this may make them more detached from their own countries and publics. On the other, it may also give them valuable contacts and a certain independence. This may result in outcomes such as journalists abroad helping journalists to expose what cannot be revealed in their own country, as in the case of the revelations of SARS in China and other notable stories.

Anna Politkovskaya's bringing to light the shameful behavior of the Russian military in Chechnya is an important example. Her book, *A Small Corner of Hell: Dispatches From Chechnya* (2003), was published a few months before she was murdered. She received worldwide encouragement, and her audience was bigger outside her own country than it was within it.

Globalization may simply give a wide audience to something that might in the past have been restricted in its diffusion—Seymour Hersh's stories, for example. This veteran American reporter, famous for his influential reports of the My Lai massacre of the Vietnam War, revealed the torture at the Abu Ghraib prison during the second Iraq War.

Or it may permit hundreds of journalists working together to produce a book such as Stephen Grey's (2006) *Ghost Plane*. He relied on his international colleagues to help track the international story of how prisoners from Iraq were being transported all around the world to be interrogated.

All these developments have intensified the relationships between government and investigative journalism, as the number of books dealing with these relationships, and cited here, bears witness. The UK studies I have cited suggest that while something is indeed wrong in the relationship between the media and politics in Britain, to blame the media is to fail to look at the forces framing and driving those media. Politicians get the media they deserve: Only they can get us out of the mess they have got us into, perhaps by attending to the forces that influence the media. Why is there sensationalism and chicanery? Why are corporate and political interests so powerful as to stymie important investigation? The legislation that provides the framework, that drives the competition and sets the standards, is at least partly to blame.

From an international perspective, the idea that the media in Britain have become the enemies of democracy is a curious one, since elsewhere they emancipate, even where they do so against great odds. All over the world, the media are acquiring new functions and demonstrating new types of influence over society and politics. Institutional and technological changes that are global combine with local political and cultural circumstances to hand the media new powers.

And the most powerful development in investigative journalism may only be just starting to show itself: blogging. As the conventional media is less and less trusted to investigate certain areas and as the exposure of marginal areas of life are undertaken using techniques so that they can be claimed to be investigative journalism, it may be that we turn to specialist Web sites and blogs to provide what the critics say is missing from the mix. Yet meanwhile, the mix still offered by the conventional media is varied and contains much that is well worth revealing. Investigative journalism remains a powerful force and an essential counterbalance to the pretensions of those who have power over the rest of us.

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MAGAZINE AND FEATURE WRITING

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Magazine articles and newspaper feature stories in the United States have been somewhat closely related journalistic forms since the 1800s, when the newspaper feature story first appeared as a genre distinct from the breaking news story. The history of the relationship between the magazine article and newspaper feature story is extremely murky, but there is some evidence that magazine article writing in the United States began to be significantly influenced by newspaper feature writing style beginning in the late 1800s, and that the two related styles essentially merged in the late 1990s. The few differences existing now are largely explained by the differences between magazines and newspapers, as well as by their significantly dissimilar operational practices. As magazines and newspapers develop more extensive Web sites in the 21st century and gain more profit from those sites—at the expense of the traditional printed product—articles and feature stories appearing both online and in print in magazines and newspapers will become more important, more prevalent, and much more similar if not essentially identical.

History

Magazines historically have been storehouses of a variety of reading material and usually have been published infrequently enough to permit generous deadlines for their writers and—in the past 50 years—rigorous fact-checking for accuracy. In addition, in most magazines, article paragraphs are longer than are their newspaper counterparts, and stories, in fact, are much longer.

In the United States, general-circulation magazines coexisted with magazines with more narrow audiences from the 1800s until the middle of the 20th century, when general-circulation magazines such as *Life* and *Look* began to vanish. These large-circulation, general-audience magazines gradually were replaced after the 1950s by a tidal wave of specialty publications, ranging from magazines for cat owners to publications for airline travelers using a specific carrier to magazines for owners of specific types and brands of computers.

As a result, articles for U.S. magazines today typically are aimed at a carefully targeted readership rather than a large number of undifferentiated readers. Magazine publishers and editors usually know exactly who their readers are, including their gender, age, income, and lifestyle, and these editors insist on articles carefully targeted to those readers. At the same time, magazines, which historically have had small staffs compared with newspapers with similar circulation, and find their staffs shrinking even more, must rely more than ever on freelance writers and photojournalists to meet these article needs. The freelance process, by the way, begins with a written article proposal called a *query*. If an editor accepts the query, the article is written. When the article is accepted or published, the writer is paid.

Newspapers, too, have historically been storehouses of a variety of material, but those stories have been produced under a daily or weekly deadline for a broad audience, with modest fact-checking, if any at all. Paragraphs are short, and stories in print are short, too. In addition, newspaper feature stories are usually staff written, and only newspapers with large feature sections or Sunday publications purchase significant amounts of freelance material. Staff photographers usually provide the photographs.

By the late 1990s, as noted, magazine articles and newspaper features began to look similar, separated mostly by the magazine's need for a highly targeted story and the newspaper's desire for a story of interest to a more general readership. Magazine and newspaper online article and feature story versions often are quite similar if not identical in structure.

Comparison of Newspaper and Magazine Feature Forms

The 21st-century magazine article and newspaper feature story share a common overall structure, whether published online or in print.

Although there are many literary forms used to begin a feature, articles and features often begin with a number of *descriptive* sentences or paragraphs called a *lead* or *lead block*. Here is a typical descriptive lead block from a magazine story about a major earthquake destined to strike Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, and Tennessee by 2050. The “giant” in the lead paragraph is the New Madrid Fault and the resulting temblor.

The first people to feel the wrath of the giant are driving south from Blytheville, Arkansas, on Interstate 55.

Near the Burdette, Arkansas, interchange, about seven miles south of the city, the highway pavement begins to shake and roll. Drivers, already straining to see in the twilight of an early December afternoon, struggle to keep their cars on the heaving, buckling road.

At Arkansas Northeastern College, south of Blytheville's main business district, students walking to class lose their balance and fall to the ground while glass shatters around them.

In the Blytheville business district, the shaking lasts for what seems like a full two minutes.

When the earth finally stops moving, downtown is burning rubble. The giant has turned multistory buildings into piles of masonry and wood. The giant has also wrenched and partially collapsed single-story buildings. Live wires dance across the torn, buckled pavement of Highway 61 south of downtown.

Throughout the city, fires fed by broken gas lines send flames 40 feet into the air. Water from smashed pipes spurts skyward, then cascades down the sides of broken buildings and across the city's cracked streets.

In residential areas, the giant has torn many homes from foundations. Walls are cracked, ceiling fans are pitched to the floor, and bookcases and furniture are overturned.

In some parts of town, structures sink into the now-jellied earth, and the ground, in turn, forces some objects, including septic tanks, to the surface.

The giant, of course, is an earthquake, long awaited and long dreaded by area residents, and long predicted by geologists. The quake is of an intensity geologists would call “moderate,” measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale.

Unlike a newspaper news story, in which the lead is usually only a paragraph or two, the magazine article or

newspaper feature story lead may be many paragraphs and as much as 10% of the entire story. That is, in a 5,000-word magazine story, the lead could be 500 words. The lead above is 275 words, or about 11% of a 2,500-word story. The final lead paragraph, of course, leads the reader into the middle and largest part of the article, which traces the history of earthquakes in the Mississippi River Valley, the geological causes, the probable destruction, and suggestions for the preservation of people and property.

Between the lead and the ending, the typical article or feature is usually *highly descriptive* and laden with direct, partial, and indirect *quotations*. Magazine articles and newspaper features also often have an easily discernable *point of view*, and for that reason, they are often described as *subjective* rather than objective.

An online or printed newspaper and magazine feature story is typically *structured* with a distinct beginning, middle, and end. The most common linking structure is *chronological*, although many articles and feature stories present a *problem* and then end with a *solution*. More rarely, articles and features will present a concept in the lead and then *repeat* it through the story until the end.

Finally, articles and features often end with descriptions or quotations that link readers back to the beginning of the story. This is sometimes called a *tie-back* or *circle technique ending*. On occasion, articles and features will simply *summarize* the essence of the story. This is in contrast to the traditional online or print breaking-news story that simply stops, having reached the least consequential part of the story.

Online versions of the same magazine article or newspaper feature story that are simultaneously or later published in a printed magazine or newspaper often appear to be a little shorter, but only because of embedded links that lead readers to small related chunks of the story called “sidebars” or to external Web sites that provide additional details.

Story Topics

There is no standard list of magazine article and newspaper feature *story topics*. Most newspaper feature and magazine article writers cannot even agree on what to call some common feature forms, and there are many variations in these forms. To be sure, however, there are at least 10 *story topics*:

1. *Anniversary* stories, which recall persons or events
2. *Business* stories
3. *Decalog* stories, which depend on a 10-best or 10-worst list
4. *Explanatory* stories, which show how processes such as earthquakes occur
5. *First-person* stories written about events that happened to the writer

6. *Historical* stories about people, places, or events
7. *Medical* stories of afflicted people, disease processes, or pending cures
8. *Profiles* of people, places, and events that are interview intensive
9. *Travel* stories, which often incorporate other story types
10. *Unusual occupation* stories, which focus on individuals with strange jobs.

Examples of Blended Forms

Both magazine and newspaper feature stories are often blended in several ways. A story written for a magazine may appear essentially unaltered in a newspaper, and a newspaper feature story may appear in a magazine, although perhaps with somewhat longer paragraphs. In addition, both magazine articles and newspaper features—while now almost indistinguishable—often incorporate blended elements such as leads, structure, endings, and topics.

For example, the leads may be blended. For example, here is the *descriptive* lead used in the earlier example blended with a *quotation* lead:

“I knew I was going to die,” John Clark says. Clark, of Fayetteville, Arkansas, was one of the first people to feel the wrath of the giant. He was driving south from Blytheville, Arkansas, on Interstate 55.

Near the Burdette, Arkansas, interchange, about seven miles south of the city, the highway pavement began to shake and roll. Clark and other drivers, already straining to see in the twilight of an early December afternoon, struggled to keep their cars moving down the heaving, buckling road.

In addition, the narrative structures may be blended, as when a *chronological* narrative is combined with a *problem-and-solution* structure.

Endings can be blended, as can *story types*. For example, a magazine travel story about Los Angeles may use *decalog* story characteristics in listing the 10 most interesting mammals at the Los Angeles zoo or the 10 most dangerous street corners in Los Angeles. If the story is aimed at amateur historians, the story type might be a blend of the *decalog* story type and the *historical* and *travel* story about the 10 most famous locations used in Hollywood motion pictures made in the 1930s.

Superb examples of the blending of the magazine article and newspaper feature forms—structure, including lead, structure and ending, and story type—are exemplified by the winners of the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing. The Pulitzer contest, which is for newspaper entries, is extremely prestigious; the competition is intense; and the judges’ actions are closely scrutinized. More important, unlike most Pulitzer contest categories, feature writing is judged more on the basis of literary quality than whether the subject was previously covered. The Pulitzer Prize board notes that the feature writing award is “for a

distinguished example of feature writing giving prime consideration to quality of writing, originality and concision, in print or in print and online.”

The Pulitzer Prizes, created with money left by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and *New York World* publisher Joseph Pulitzer, were first awarded in 1917. Prizes are given for fiction, nonfiction, drama, history, biography or autobiography, poetry, music, and journalism. As of 2008, journalists competed in 14 categories, ranging from reporting to photojournalism to feature writing. Each journalism winner (except for the Public Service winner) gets \$10,000.

Many biographies have been written about Joseph Pulitzer. Among the best known are Barrett (1941), Brian (2001), Granberg (1965), Juergens (1966), and Seitz (1924).

Books about the Pulitzer Prize award process and its history include Bates (1991) and several books by John Hohenberg (e.g., 1959, 1974, 1997).

A 25-year history of the Prize winners reveals distinctive magazine article and newspaper feature story forms in the 1970s, a slow turn toward blended forms in the 1980s, and examples of feature stories by newspapers after that in the mid-1980s that are almost indistinguishable from what would have been published in a magazine.

Beginning in 2007, the Pulitzer Prize feature story entries could and did include online components, which further muddled the differences. By the time the 2008 winner was announced, about one in five Pulitzer entries across all journalism categories had significant online components, and some included significant new material published only on the newspaper’s Web site. In fact, the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for feature writing, a *Washington Post* magazine story about a world-class musician playing for pennies in the District of Columbia subway system, featured numerous online video segments and a musical segment that significantly contributed to the story’s impact. Structurally, the 2008 winning feature story entry also was a blend of the best qualities of a magazine article and a newspaper feature story.

For these reasons, an examination of the Pulitzer Prize winners in a writing-intensive category such as feature writing is particularly helpful in explaining the varieties of feature story leads, structures, endings, and topics available.

Detailed Findings

The Pulitzer Prize board created the feature-writing category of the Pulitzer Prize awards in 1978, and the first Pulitzer Prize for feature writing was awarded in 1979. David Garlock, in his 2003 book, *Pulitzer Prize Feature Stories*, wrote that Pulitzer Administrator Seymour Topping noted that there was no information in the board minutes regarding the reason for creating the new feature category. Many journalism categories were similarly created, merged, or modified over the history of the contest.

An examination of the Prize-winning feature stories between that year and 2003 reveals 45 separate stories over two decades, though there were a few anomalies. Some

sources cite only 41 separate stories in 25 packages. This is because the Pulitzer Web site and other sources indicate that the 1980 winner, Madeleine Blais of *The Miami Herald*, won for a single story called “Zepp’s Last Stand” (1979), a profile of an elderly man who felt that he had been unfairly given a dishonorable discharge from the Army in World War I and who took a train from his home in Florida to Washington to plead his case. In undated 1986 correspondence to the author of this entry, however, Blais said that the *Herald* entered five stories in the contest:

The stories that won include an essay on friendship, a profile of Tennessee Williams, and two portraits of two families with peculiar afflictions as well as a story about an 83-year-old man who felt he had been unfairly dishonorably discharged from the army in World War One because he had been denied conscientious objector status and who took a train from Florida to the Pentagon to plead his case,

she wrote. Because the nomination package then was limited to as many as three long stories or five short stories, the Pulitzer Prize jury and/or the Pulitzer Prize board may have ignored Blais’s other stories. Blais, by the way, worked for *The Boston Globe* and *The Trenton Times* before writing for *The Miami Herald*.

Numerous books about the journalism winners cover decades of awards by each Pulitzer category or by news organizations. In addition, at least one book deals with winners who work from a specific region of the United States. For example, see Beasley and Harlow (1979). For biographical information about all Pulitzer winners, see Brennan and Clarage (1999). This book provides reliable, but not necessarily complete, information about all Pulitzer Prize winners from the first awards until 1998.

Although a writer at a weekly (Teresa Carpenter), a wire service (Saul Pett), and a newspaper magazine (Alice Steinbach) each won the feature Pulitzer, winning stories were typically produced at large-circulation newspapers, with 18 of the 23 awards won by dailies captured by *The New York Times* (4 awards); *The Evening Sun* or *Sun* in Baltimore and the *Los Angeles Times* (3 each); and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch*, the *St. Petersburg Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal* (2 each). Large-circulation newspapers produced many of the winners because most of the Pulitzer Prize-winning stories—at least 18 of the 25 winners—were the result of long-term projects supported by publications with vast staff and financial resources. Of the 45 stories, however, 27 could easily have been published in a magazine instead of a newspaper, and all but a few of the stories written since 1990 were essentially magazine articles published in a newspaper.

It is instructive to look at the stories of the winners who weren’t from large-circulation newspapers, however. Teresa Carpenter was a writer with *The Village Voice*. Carpenter won for freelanced *profiles* about the murders of a suburban New York housewife, a popular political

activist, and a *Playboy* model. The best known of Carpenter’s three stories is the profile about the model, “Death of a Playmate” (1980), which was the basis for the motion picture *Star 80*. Carpenter had reported from Hawai‘i for a Japanese business magazine and a New Jersey monthly before beginning her freelancing career. The freelancing encompassed *The Village Voice*, and she became a *Voice* staff writer just before she won the Pulitzer.

Saul Pett was an Associated Press (AP) special correspondent. In his 60s when he won the award, Pett won the Prize after a news career that began with a job as a copy boy for the New York *Daily News*, followed by a 6-year reporting stint for another wire service and more than four decades with the AP. Pett took nearly half a year to research and write his winning entry. His story is a 10,000-word explanatory story of the U.S. government called “The Bureaucracy: How Did It Get So Big?” (1981). Pett’s papers covering his career with the AP between 1940 and 1993 are housed in the Library of Congress Manuscript Division and include correspondence, interview notebooks, stories, and other materials.

Alice Steinbach was a Baltimore *Sun* feature writer. Steinbach’s profile, called “A Boy of Unusual Vision” (1984), is about a blind Baltimore boy who, she writes, “rides a bike, watches TV, plays video games and does just about everything other 10-year-old boys do.” Steinbach, like Blais and Carpenter, freelanced for newspapers and magazines before joining a newspaper staff.

In the first 25 years of awards, winning stories shared many common characteristics. Although 25 packages containing 45 separate stories (including many multipart series) were winners between 1979 and 2003, 35 of the 45 stories were *profiles* or variations of profiles. Leads varied significantly, but the most common profile structure was *chronological*, and the favorite type of ending was a *summary*, in which events or attitudes or reactions were summarized. *Explanatory* stories were the second most common type of winner. Multimedia versions of the stories, complete with extensive commentaries by the writers and interactive Internet electronic links with the story subjects, routinely appeared beginning with the 2007 winner.

A paper by Jeanie McAdams Moore and Chris Lamb in August 2003 to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication provides additional analysis of Prize-winning features. “Angels and Demons: A 20-Year Analysis of Pulitzer Prize-Winning Feature Stories” identified several trends, including domination of the Pulitzer Prizes by writers working for large-circulation East Coast newspapers and numerous stories that followed subjects through problems or conflict. Stories with Christian references also were common, the authors concluded.

For example, the first Pulitzer for feature writing was awarded to Jon Franklin, a feature and science writer for *The Evening Sun* in Baltimore. Franklin, who specialized in explaining science and medicine, wrote about a woman named Edna Kelly, who had brain surgery to try to stop the

growth of a tumor she called “the monster.” The two-part story, later known as “Mrs. Kelly’s Monster” (1978), is a blend of the explanatory and medical feature categories, and by structure, with extremely short sentences and paragraphs, it is clearly a traditional newspaper feature story.

On the other hand, J. R. Moehringer, the *Los Angeles Times* Atlanta bureau chief, won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for feature writing with “Crossing Over” (1999), a 10-part, 9,600-word *profile* of a woman named Mary Lee Bendolph and her Alabama hometown of Gee’s Bend. Moehringer visited Gee’s Bend over a full year. Moehringer had a good deal of experience to help him report and write this story: He began his newspaper career as a news assistant at *The New York Times*. In 1990, he became a reporter for the *Rocky Mountain News* in Denver and then moved to the Orange County edition of the *Los Angeles Times* 4 years later. Three years later, he became Atlanta bureau chief for the *Los Angeles Times*.

Through Bendolph’s eyes, Moehringer describes the possibilities of a proposed ferry for Bendolph’s isolated river community and its population. In a story stylistically similar to a magazine story, Moehringer effectively reduces the struggle for equal rights in the United States to the relationship between the people of a rural African American community and the residents of the nearby, predominately white community of Camden, Alabama.

The backgrounds of these writers varied more than their stories, by the way. Winning the feature Pulitzer typically was a midcareer accomplishment. Winners ranged in age from 27 to 64, with an average age of 40.5 years. Similarly, winners had full-time journalism experience ranging from 4 to 42 years, with an average of 17.3 years of experience. Most of the winning writers held journalism degrees. Twenty-two of the 25 winners had undergraduate college degrees, with 12 holding degrees in journalism and 10 with degrees in other areas, mostly English. Nine had master’s degrees, with seven of the winners holding graduate degrees in journalism. In all, 19 of the 22 winners with degrees had either undergraduate or graduate degrees in journalism. Many Pulitzer winners also freelanced articles to magazines before and after winning the prize, and most also wrote books after winning.

In all, the story of the Pulitzer Prize for newspaper feature writing since the 1980s also is the story of a profound blending of newspaper and magazine article forms as well as an adaptation to the needs of the Web.

Writing Newspaper Features and Magazine Articles

Developing a Newspaper Feature

Most newspaper feature stories are written and photographed by staff writers and staff photojournalists. Feature stories may be either assigned by editors or developed by writers as enterprise stories. Many stories, however,

are written as a result of news stories. If, for example, a newspaper reported a minor earthquake on a Monday, an editor might assign a writer to report and write a short feature for Sunday publication about how readers could prepare their homes for a more serious quake.

Reporting a Newspaper Feature

Reporting precedes writing. Reporting is, of course, simply gathering information, and the feature writer reporting an earthquake preparedness story likely would interview disaster management experts in the community to determine the probability and severity of an impending earthquake. Based on that information, the writer would seek information and recommendations from local, state, and national sources regarding preparations for apartments and homes. The writer additionally would interview home improvement and specialized contractors to establish a range of costs for earthquake preparedness and also would contact state government insurance sources to determine how many readers within the circulation zone of the newspaper carry earthquake coverage, which is almost always an optional and ignored extra-cost item for renter’s and homeowner’s policies.

Writing a Newspaper Feature

With the story assigned on Monday and reporting requiring 2 days of telephone calls and interviews, it is safe to assume that writing would not begin until Thursday morning, with a Friday evening deadline looming for a Sunday print and online publication.

Depending on the publication, the writer might create a print version first and adapt it for online publication, or the writer might create an online version first and adapt it for print. In the early part of the 21st century, it is more likely that a long print version would be written first and that modification for online use would follow.

Writing techniques vary with the writer, of course, but there are two general approaches. The first approach is to complete the reporting and then write the story in one long sitting, without checking quotes, facts, punctuation, or even spelling. After the first draft, the writer would then verify the quotes and facts and perfect the punctuation and spelling. This type of writer usually takes the story through a third draft, which purges unnecessary language and tightens up the entire story. At this point, sometimes the writer also reorganizes the story for better effect. This rearranging is often done by printing the story, numbering the paragraphs, and then playing with the order on a bulletin board until an effective structure is achieved.

The second writing approach is to visualize the entire story and then write each sentence perfectly, with the expectation that there will be no revisions. A second draft, if necessary, may result in minor editing and rearrangement, but the clean draft writer rarely changes much of the story after it is written.

After the print version has been written, the writer tackles the online version. The main body of the online story is shorter, and parts that would appear in the main print body are set aside for linked sidebars or supplements. In addition, the writer will identify document links and key those to the story. If audio was recorded during the interviews, the writer would edit the audio for additional sidebar use. The photojournalist probably would prepare a gallery of pictures beyond those used in the print story and may provide video segments as well. Both the writer and the photojournalist would collaborate on additional gallery segments that would include both audio interviews and photographs in an online show.

The stories and photographs and other elements, of course, are then submitted to print and online editors, who check the material for accuracy, completeness, and balance and also further check the elements for spelling and grammar.

Publishing a Newspaper Feature

At some news organizations, the online story would be released before the printed version. At other organizations, the printed version would appear first and refer to unique online segments. At others, both versions would appear simultaneously and refer to one another.

In particular, the online version would include a reader feedback loop in which comments could be posted. The writer and photographer also might participate in a virtual discussion room for interested online readers.

Developing a Magazine Article

A freelance magazine writer working with the same topic of earthquake preparedness would approach the topic differently. There is little point in reporting and writing a magazine story if there is no market for it. (Magazines employ very few staff writers. Freelance writers provide most of the content for most magazines.) As a result, the freelance writer needs to research the market to find a magazine appropriate for the general topic of earthquake preparedness and then hone the topic to the particular magazine. For example, an insurance company magazine might be interested in a story on the topic, but the magazine writer would need to determine if the insurance company sold homeowner's insurance and if the magazine circulated in areas with active earthquake fault zones. If the magazine readers were at risk for earthquakes, the writer might have to write several versions of the story for each edition of the magazine, and each version would be linked to an individual geologic fault zone.

Selling a Magazine Article

The magazine article sales process begins with a *query* letter—either mailed or sent by e-mail depending on editor

preferences—to the magazine editor. The letter must be preceded by expert research about the magazine. Does the company offer earthquake coverage? If so, in what parts of the United States? What are the active fault zones in those parts of the country? What are the destructive expectations for these earthquakes? Minor damage? Devastation?

The writer's query letter serves several purposes. It interests the editor by presenting enough of the story for the editor to learn whether the article might help his or her readers. The letter also gives the editor a taste of the writer's style and provides the editor with information regarding the writer's writing and educational credentials. The query letter is rarely more than one page, but the best ones are usually as well-written as the articles that follow.

Reporting a Magazine Article

If the editor agrees to buy the article, either as a direct assignment or on speculation, the writer begins work reporting and writing the article. A direct assignment means that the writer will be paid if the article meets the general terms outlined by the editor. A speculative assignment means only that the editor has expressed interest and will buy the article if it meets the magazine's needs when it is submitted.

Reporting often takes weeks if not months. Writer and editors frequently exchange e-mail notes regarding progress.

Writing a Magazine Article

Writing the magazine article is somewhat like writing the newspaper feature story, but deadlines are usually both longer and more flexible. Great care must be given to matching the story writing style to the magazine writing style. Magazines often fact-check articles, and so the accuracy of the story—particularly a scientifically based story such as one about earthquakes—must be exceptional.

Depending on the agreement with the writer, several versions of the story may have to be written. In addition, if the magazine has an online site, an online version of the article with multimedia may have to be created.

Magazines often pay as much for photography as for the writer's words, and so if the magazine writer is a photojournalist, it may be possible to double the freelance fee.

Publishing a Magazine Article

Magazine lead times are long, and the writer must understand that the article pitched in January may not appear for 18 months. That lead time requires avoiding contemporary references that might change in a year. In addition, some magazines pay on publication, which means that the check will not arrive until several months after the long-delayed publication. Magazines that pay on acceptance are preferred. Fees vary, of course.

Future Directions

Just as magazines and newspapers are becoming more similar by publishing for audiences on the first available platform—usually simultaneously in print and online for magazines and usually on their Web sites first for newspapers—magazine articles and newspaper feature stories have become more similar.

The model for the magazine article and newspaper feature story of the early 21st century likely will be an article written twice. The print version likely will be long and have a sidebar or two, and perhaps several printed links to the Web for readers interested enough to pursue the story to drill down into a database mentioned in the story. On the other hand, the Web story will be sliced into multiple parts with a few paragraphs per Web page. Within those paragraphs will be links to sidebars, and within those sidebars will be additional links to database and original sources, including the feature writer's notes about how the story was reported, written, and edited. Beyond the source, links will be rich with multimedia journalism: video interviews with key sources, galleries of photographs that took up too much space for the print edition, portable document files (pdf) of source materials, and audio segments. Beyond the multimedia will be numerous Web enhancements, such as a chat room for readers and the writer and a place for readers' comments.

Conclusion

In summary, U.S. magazines in the last decades of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century typically were weeklies and monthlies targeted at a narrow audience and written by a few staff writers and an army of freelance writers and photojournalists whose work was completed under generous deadlines and also was typically carefully fact-checked by editors. In contrast, the typical late-20th-century and early-21st-century newspaper was a daily publication aimed at a general-circulation readership. Its feature articles were written and photographed by staff writers and staff photojournalists working on extremely tight deadlines. Because of this, newspaper feature articles often used fewer sources than their magazine counterparts did, and fact-checking was limited. Despite minor differences, the magazine article and newspaper feature story forms were rather similar between the late 1880s and the late 1990s, after which they became essentially identical except for the magazine world's targeted audiences and more generous deadlines.

It can be argued that the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing exemplifies the best in the form and the most recent Pulitzer Prize-winning feature stories are as much magazine articles as newspaper feature stories. The profile of a winning feature Pulitzer story is a nondeadline, multipart profile suitable either for a newspaper or for a magazine

and that uses a *chronological* structure and ends with some sort of *summary* of events, attitudes, or reactions. Multimedia became a storytelling factor beginning in 2007. The typical winner of the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing in the first 25 years of the award's existence was a 40-year-old journalist with 17 years of experience. The award-winning journalist held a journalism degree at either the undergraduate or the graduate level and worked for a daily newspaper with a circulation of more than 250,000 copies per day. Many also wrote for magazines as freelancers.

With feature stories for magazines and newspapers now essentially similar, the forms probably will completely merge in the early years of the 21st century, but with the added benefit of multimedia journalism. That will bring new forms, perhaps involving readers as citizen journalists. Done well, the 21st-century magazine article and newspaper feature story will provide a significantly richer experience online and in print for readers.

References and Further Readings

Hundreds of trade books offer guides to magazine article and newspaper feature writing and are too numerous to list. There also are a few widely read university-level textbooks in use for decades, including the ones by Friedlander and Lee, and Garrison. Books about the craft of feature writing include the two classics by Blundell and Franklin. The following list includes landmark newspaper stories as well.

- Barrett, J. W. (1941). *Joseph Pulitzer and his world*. New York: Vanguard Press.
- Bates, D. (1991). *The Pulitzer Prize: The inside story of America's most prestigious award*. New York: Carol.
- Beasley, M. H., & Harlow, R. R. (1979). *Voices of change: Southern Pulitzer winners*. Washington, DC: University Press of America.
- Blais, M. (1979, November 11). Zepp's last stand. *The Miami Herald*.
- Blundell, W. E. (1988). *The art and craft of feature writing: Based on the Wall Street Journal Guide*. New York: Plume.
- Brennan, E. A., & Clarage, E. C. (1999). *Who's who of Pulitzer Prize winners*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Brian, D. (2001). *Pulitzer: A life*. New York: Wiley.
- Carpenter, T. (1980, November 5). Death of a playmate. *The Village Voice*, p. 35.
- Franklin, J. (1978, December 12–13). Mrs. Kelly's monster. *The Baltimore Sun*.
- Franklin, J. (1994). *Writing for story: Crafts and secrets of dramatic nonfiction by a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner*. New York: Plume.
- Friedlander, E. J., & Lee, J. (2004). *Feature writing for newspapers and magazines: The pursuit of excellence* (6th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Chapter 6 of the Friedlander and Lee text discusses newspaper feature story leads, structures, and endings. The discussion also is applicable to magazine articles. Chapter 8 provides variations for magazine articles.

- The Best American Magazine Writing* series (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007, and other years) offers numerous examples of award-winning magazine writing in the United States. Pulitzer Prize-winning entries for feature writing offer examples of award-winning writing for both magazines and newspapers. Prize-winning examples for the first 25 years of the award are reprinted in the following book edited by David Garlock:
- Garlock, D. (Ed.). (2003). *Pulitzer Prize feature stories: America's best writing, 1979–2003*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.
- The most recent Pulitzer Prize-winning examples are available from the Pulitzer Prize Web site at www.pulitzer.org. In addition, the *Best Newspaper Writing* series (Washington, DC: CQ Press), edited by faculty at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies and issued each year, also has many examples of award-winning newspaper feature writing.
- Garrison, B. (2004). *Professional feature writing* (4th ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Granberg, W. J. (1965). *The world of Joseph Pulitzer*. London: Abelard-Schuman.
- Hohenberg, J. (1959). *The Pulitzer Prize story*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hohenberg, J. (1974). *The Pulitzer prizes: A history of the awards in books, drama, music, and journalism, based on the private files over six decades*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hohenberg, J. (1997). *The Pulitzer diaries: Inside America's greatest prize*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Juergens, G. (1966). *Joseph Pulitzer and the New York world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Moehring, J. R. (1999, August 22). Crossing over. *Los Angeles Times*, p. 1.
- Moore, J. M., & Lamb, C. (2003, August). *Angels and demons: A 20-year analysis of Pulitzer Prize-winning feature stories*. Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Columbia, SC.
- Pett, S. (1981). *The bureaucracy: How did it get so big?* Associated Press.
- Seitz, D. C. (1924). *Joseph Pulitzer: His life and letters*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Sims, N. (2007). *True stories: A century of literary journalism*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Sims provides a thoughtful history and analysis of the blending of newspaper feature writing, magazine article writing, and narrative nonfiction. The roots of the contemporary magazine article and newspaper feature story structure are obscure at best. For a plausible history, see pp. 43–86 of Sims's book. Sims believes that modern newspaper feature stories first emerged in the United States in newspapers from Chicago and New York and other urban centers during the late 1880s as variations of an earlier literary form called the "sketch." The sketch, which has essentially disappeared from the U.S. newspaper journalism scene, was a creatively written article of varying length that often was entirely or partially fictional but with an authoritative author's voice. Sims suggests that editors' demands for sketches that were both accurate and objective forged the contemporary newspaper feature story by the late 1880s and early 1890s. (He also argues that the contemporary newspaper opinion column content and structure has roots in the sketch.) The newspaper feature form, he suggests, became common in U.S. magazines a decade or two later.
- Although there is some debate, most observers agree that variations of these 100-year-old literary forms now dominate the U.S. magazine article and newspaper feature structure, whether online or in print. As a result, it follows that most if not all of the Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper feature stories are descendants of the 19th-century sketch, and most of them also are models for magazine article content and structure.
- Steinbach, A. (1984, November). A boy of unusual vision. Baltimore, MD: Baltimore Sun.

PHOTOJOURNALISM

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Photojournalism Defined

Photojournalism is first and foremost making pictures that tell stories. Initially, photojournalists used still-photography cameras and film to do this work. Today, they use digital still cameras, video cameras, and computers. The key is this: They are working to do nonfiction storytelling that informs a wide audience about their community and the world.

For the professional, the essence of photojournalism often means covering news. Definitions of news can include what people want to know or need to know. News has also been described as what people are talking about.

News coverage often includes events in the local community where the photographer lives. Local festivals, parades, and county fairs might qualify as local news, since they are often daily events and are of interest to people in the community. The resulting pictures often fall into a picture category journalists call soft news or features, since the content of the pictures is often interesting to the viewers but less dramatic than pictures from major news events.

News pictures also could be about events of national or international importance near where the photographer lives or in locations where the photographer must travel to provide coverage.

At certain times and for certain media outlets, select topics come under the news heading. These include sporting events, award shows (Academy Awards, Grammys, Emmys, Tonys), and coverage of things such as fashion week in New York or a large automobile or electronics trade show. Certainly, when companies such as Apple

Computer or Microsoft introduce new products, there is the chance this information will dominate some portion of daily news or business coverage.

Unfolding Events

There are some similarities to all these events. First, they often show reality in that what happens is beyond the control of the photographer. The event or activity unfolds in front of the camera, and the photographers record what they see to the best of their ability. Photojournalists do not direct what happens during the coverage of a fire, an accident, or a war. Even during the cleanup after a fire or parade, photographers only have the opportunity to see and record, not control the events. Generally speaking, photojournalists do not have and do not want to control what happens in front of the camera. Their ethic is, life happens in front of them, and they record it.

Portraits: An Exception to Arranging Pictures

Portraits are an exception to the preceding guideline. From time to time, members of the public, politicians, and business leaders are not able to give extended, in-depth access to their lives. However, they might have a few minutes to sit for a portrait. Photojournalists are often trained to make excellent portraits. Such work is often done quickly, with strobe lights or by making the best of available light somewhere near where they meet their subject. While some people might come to a studio for such a picture, more often than not, photographers go to the person, taking the lights

and necessary equipment with them. The resulting picture is often made in less than 5 minutes, sometimes in a minute or two, and often with excellent results if the photojournalists have prepared themselves for this type of work.

Publishing Outlets

Traditionally, photojournalists have worked for newspapers, magazines, and similar publishing enterprises. This might be as staff photographers, which means that they are full-time employees of the company. Under such arrangements, the employing company often owns their photographs. Freelance photographers (i.e., independent contractors) may also work for these organizations if the company occasionally wants their services. For many years, most magazine photographers have been freelancers. This tradition continues today.

Often, freelancers own their photographs unless they agree to other arrangements with the hiring company. Companies frequently seek some form of work-for-hire agreements with photographers. Such arrangements give the company ownership of the photographer's work. Today, many publishing outlets seek to own the photographs or even the freelancers who work for them. Many freelancers believe that such work-for-hire agreements are counter to their best interests and when possible seek to negotiate some other arrangement. By owning their work, photographers build up their own collection of photographs, which they can resell later to other clients. Retaining ownership this way provides photographers with income in future years.

The Relevance of Video

Today, photojournalists include photographers who shoot video. In some organizations, video photographers may be called videographers. They might work for local television stations, the television networks, or the Web. They may be staff employees or freelancers. With the blossoming of video on the Web, there are now more freelance still and video photographers than ever.

Citizen Photojournalists

The traditional definition of a photojournalist blurs more each day with the use of tiny point-and-shoot cameras and cell phones by amateurs to shoot digital still pictures and video. This allows everyone with such a device to record pictures and video at any moment. Invariably, from the most remote parts of the world or at the most insignificant events when a prominent person is present, a citizen is taking a still photograph or video and is recording an event of significance or embarrassment. Photo agencies and wire services often want to distribute these images. We live in a time when everyone might well assume that they are on camera at every moment.

Consequently, news organizations are using still pictures and video captured by citizens who happen to be on the scene. And while professional photojournalists may be at the location of an incident, the presence of many other cameras operating from dozens of points of view may mean that citizen journalists get the most interesting or compelling pictures of any one significant moment. Television networks have started assigning video photographers (called "imbeds") with high-quality small video cameras to cover major political campaigns as a way to acquire material beyond what their staffers and freelancers gather.

High-Definition Video

The technical evolution of video into the realm of high-definition (HD) video has altered the profession. These cameras produce video images of exceptional quality. In addition, there is enough information in each HD video frame to allow traditional print publishing organizations to frame-grab an image and publish a picture of sufficient quality in a newspaper or magazine. Consequently, some organizations have started to phase out the use of digital still cameras, since their photographers can obtain both video and still images from HD video cameras.

Photojournalist Versus Spectator With a Camera

If every photojournalist has a camera, why is everyone with a camera not a photojournalist? There are some distinctions that move the storyteller with a camera into the professional ranks.

The first is that the motivation of the photojournalist is to make an accurate visual report of what is happening in the world. While it may be impossible to show capital-T "Truth" with a camera, visual storytellers can work to show what is actually happening and can bring back an accurate visual report of events.

The ethics of journalism also dictate that stories and pictures be an accurate, unmanipulated representation of events. This means that photographs are not faked, just as reporters' quotations from people in the news are not invented. And while devices such as computers are at the heart of still and video digital editing, professionals are expected to use them to assemble an accurate representation of events. While these same tools can be used to construct images and stories from scratch, such techniques are most often left to the narrative storytelling of Hollywood and others who work in that style, a different form of storytelling from photojournalism.

Another element that separates the professional journalist from others is a review process known as editing. At a minimum, this is a second set of human eyes that examines the writing or photography before it is presented to a wide audience. In large media organizations, there are multiple editors who examine the material for accuracy and ask questions to make sure that the communication is clear and honest.

On the other hand, the material that bloggers and personal Web sites generate and post for worldwide consumption is often written, reviewed, and posted by one person only, often without a formal understanding of basic journalism practices. Even the most careful writer or photographer would benefit from a review by at least one other knowledgeable person.

Storytelling: The Heart and Soul of Photojournalism

The purpose of photojournalism is to tell stories. This can be done through one or more still pictures as well as video. Projects of varying length extend all the way to theatrically released feature documentaries.

The drive of the photojournalist or documentarian is to tell a story. One key to such stories often is finding a subject that is unusual or offbeat in some way.

The word *drive* is important because often in photojournalism there are considerable obstacles to getting a story or project completed. People may not want a story told. Journalists spend considerable time thinking and talking about how to get access to the people and subjects they want to cover. Successful journalists find a way to get access. This may also mean that journalists invest significant amounts of time and personal funds to get a project accomplished. Journalists can learn from Hollywood filmmakers, who understand that they may have to invest 10 years of their time to bring a narrative film to the screen.

Another challenge facing the journalist is to understand the nature of a story in considerable depth. This comes from doing the reading and research necessary to comprehend all aspects of the story. National Geographic photographers often say that their assignment is like a graduate course in the topic to which they are assigned. Solid research does not always lead directly to pictures. However, if fortune favors the prepared mind, then learning everything possible about a topic can set up photographers for ultimate story success.

Preparation: To Attend College or Not to Attend College

Often, photojournalists get their fundamental training through studying for a university degree. While this is not necessary, it is a common path into the field.

Self-trained photographers have always found a place in photojournalism. There have always been considerably talented individuals who learned photojournalism on their own. There are those who can look at pictures, look at the books of those who came before them, and get the essence of what it takes to make a picture, to tell a story. As long as they can tell a story in pictures, they may not need more formal education than they get from life.

Whatever path photojournalists take, today their preparation, whether in college or on their own, must include the multimedia world. This means that, besides an understanding of the still photograph, photographers need to have an idea of audio, picture sequencing, and ultimately video storytelling. Audio can be the first step on this path as skills are added incrementally over time. But photographers should start wrestling with these topics in school or early in their careers. Few organizations are looking for someone who only has still photography skills. Employers want visual storytellers with at least an understanding of audio. They probably want video shooting and editing skills as well.

Similarly, training through formal or informal apprenticeships or seminars may be all the training a photographer needs. Taking a workshop from time to time may enable photographers to grow at their own pace over time.

For those who attend college, the option is to study photography and journalism or instead to pursue some other unrelated subject. Photography and journalism programs can certainly give students a wide range of training in the essentials. These opportunities in college can give students considerable time to shoot pictures and tell stories. As students, photographers have the opportunity to experiment, to make mistakes. Such experience can prevent them from making grave errors that can bring their professional career to a quick end.

Another strong contingent among working journalists are those who say, “Don’t study journalism in college. Study something else.” They encourage students to skip journalism training to concentrate on learning about the world through a study of liberal arts, the humanities, and the social sciences. Studying political science, international relations, foreign languages, history, English, psychology, economics, or a variety of other subjects can train one about the world journalists will cover.

Whichever path one chooses, it is necessary to get trained and learn about the world. How that happens is less important than that it happens. No two photojournalists accomplish this in the same way.

Business and Marketing

Whatever training photographers pursue, in a world full of independent contractors, global economies, and a rapidly changing media landscape, it is crucial that photographers understand something about business practices and marketing. It has been suggested that at some point in their career, most photographers will go through a period as freelancers. The best protection of a photographer’s business enterprise comes from knowing something about the business environment.

Students in college can easily take business courses as electives or as the minor for their degree. Community colleges, adult education programs, and community centers often offer one-off business courses. Key topics could include how to

develop a business plan, marketing principles, business law, finance, taxation, and accounting. Students and others who serve assistantships (mini-apprenticeships) can start to learn these skills under the direction of a working professional before they start their own business and have to compete with veteran photographers with established businesses.

Professional societies also do some training in the subject of business practices and photography, either for their members or for nonmembers who have an interest. The National Press Photographers Association (NPPA, www.nppa.org) has a business practices committee that addresses this subject. Similarly, the American Society of Media Photographers (ASMP, www.asmp.org) has long been a strong advocate, urging photographers to understand the ins and outs of the marketplace. It has a collection of books on this subject and offers seminars from time to time. An online group formed to address business issues is Editorial Photographers (EP, www.editorialphoto.com). Their online discussions answer many questions.

Making the Work Visible: Portfolios and More

In the past, photojournalists showed portfolios of slides or prints to obtain work. Those days are over for the most part—unless an editor asks for pictures in this form.

Today, photojournalists' portfolios are more likely shown as pictures on Web sites. Photographers put up their best work in a way that shows their photographic strengths and interests. This makes it easy for editors to review a body of work quickly before deciding whether or not they wish to contact the photographer for further discussions.

One alternative to a Web presence is for photographers to put their portfolios on CD-ROMs or DVDs. The latter are particularly important for those showing video as part of their presentation. These can be sent to interested editors. In addition, they can be carried to an interview and are easily left in the hands of hiring managers at the end of the interview.

Seeking Critiques

Even in the digital age, it is important to get feedback on one's work. The long tradition in photojournalism of photographers having editors and photographers provide feedback about a portfolio is still valid. Traditionally, these conversations have been face-to-face. This tradition continues today largely at workshops and seminars. In place of prints and slides on light tables, the pictures are often shown on a computer.

Workshops and Seminars

Another way photojournalists get their work reviewed is by participating in workshops. When photographers convene, there is always an opportunity to have work

reviewed. Sometimes, the workshop organizers build time for portfolio reviews into the workshop program. On other occasions, photographers can request reviews informally and privately from photographers and editors at a workshop.

The additional training available from workshops and seminars comes in a variety of forms. The time involved can be a day or a week. The cost can be nearly negligible or quite substantial. Some travel and adventure workshops visiting other countries on cruise ships accompanied by high-profile photographers can run to several thousand dollars. Some of the best information about workshops comes from photographers who have attended these programs in the past.

All this brings photographers to the key question: What do I want to learn from a workshop? Where am I in my career, and what workshop will help take me to the next level I want to achieve?

If workshops are low cost, it does not necessarily mean that these workshops are of low value. An inexpensive workshop with the right instructor can be a life-changing experience.

For a longer description of all kinds of workshop possibilities, see this link: www.sportsshooter.com/news/1586.

Contests and Competitions

If one challenge in photojournalism is to build credibility and to become known to editors, one of the most powerful methods photographers use to do this is by participating in the various annual photojournalism competitions widely recognized by the industry. Like taking home an Oscar or a Grammy, photographers who win the Pulitzer Prize or the top award in World Press Photo or are anointed with one of the photographer-of-the-year titles become widely known by editors across the country and around the world.

Competitions such as the Best of Photojournalism (<http://bop.nppa.org/2008>), Pictures of the Year International (www.poy.org), the W. Eugene Smith award (www.smithfund.org/aboutfund/overview), the Robert F. Kennedy award (www.rfkmemorial.org/legacyinaction/journalismawards), and the Overseas Press Club award (www.opcofamerica.org) can add significant clout to an eager photojournalist's resume and portfolio. College students can enjoy a similar impact at the start of their career by doing well in the College Photographer of the Year competition (www.cpoy.org/?s=Home) or the Hearst Journalism Awards Program (www.hearstfdn.org/hearst_journalism/index.php).

Writing: Necessary or Not?

Photojournalism has traditionally been referred to as telling a story with a camera. It is a demanding profession, requiring one's full attention. The written story has often been left to writing journalists—people who devote themselves full-time to the written word.

That said, photojournalists are nearly always responsible for the written captions that accompany published photographs. Since they are the journalists on the scene, traditionally photojournalists have been expected to gather the facts about the events shown in the photographs. This often includes the basic information of journalism, summarized by the questions who, what, where, why, when, and how. In some publications, photojournalists write the captions themselves. In other organizations, their captions are rewritten or are written by word journalists from the information the photojournalists provide.

Even today, photographers must learn how to write basic caption information. This information should accompany their pictures when they show their portfolios or send their work on a deadline to editors. At a minimum, the caption information should be attached to the File Info window of the picture file in Photoshop. If photographers find a way to make captions available on-screen when showing a portfolio, such a move can help viewers understand the picture. This alone may cause the photographer's stock to rise with the viewing editor.

The basics of caption writing can be found in many of the excellent basic photojournalism textbooks in the marketplace. Guides from some of the wire services or stylebooks outlining the policies of major media companies are also helpful.

With that in mind, especially in an age when information gathering and storytelling are converging in new ways, those photojournalists and documentary photographers (with both still and motion cameras) who have or who develop the ability to write often open doors for themselves in ways their competitors cannot.

Photojournalists with still or video storytelling skills who can write a proposal or pitch, craft memos to foundations, or put together successful magazine, newspaper, and Web stories may find editors willing to give them assignments over their competitors. As budgets become tighter, buying one airplane ticket for a fine photographer who also has acceptable writing skills beats buying two tickets for a writer and a photographer.

By providing the written as well as the visual story, photojournalists may find an opportunity to guide or control more aspects of the story. By eliminating at least one other layer or filter between the project and the audience, photographers may help ensure that the overall coverage is seen as intended.

The same is true for documentary photographers who have dreams of long-form video storytelling. Being able to write a proposal or even a full-blown script if needed may help documentary storytellers see that their projects receive the green light and appear on the screen as intended.

Ideas: The Coin of the Realm

Perhaps rising above all other skills discussed so far is the ability to bring forth ideas that will be of interest to a wide

audience. Journalism and publication are about communicating with many people. Audiences of several thousand are believed to be better than audiences of a few thousand.

The most successful photojournalists and storytellers start with questions such as "Why is this important?" and "Why would a wide audience care about this story?" Those who can answer such questions successfully and then produce pictures and stories successfully addressing these questions will often find a place for their work.

Another way storytellers approach a project is from a personal point of view. They tell themselves, "If I find this interesting, others will find this interesting too." This approach may work to focus on one's personal taste when developing story ideas. However, in journalism, concentration on personal interests is often more risky than focusing on the potential wider audience.

Whatever the case, all storytellers will know that they have the beginning of a successful idea when they can answer in a sentence or two the question "What is your story about?" Answering such a question briefly and succinctly takes practice. Professional storytellers often imagine themselves in a 20-second elevator ride with someone who has money or the power to publish. A 20-second pitch can lead to a two-minute pitch. This can lead to a 20-minute pitch. If the journalist can tell his or her story in a short, pithy way, he or she may have a chance to see the project come to life.

But ideas are key. No photojournalist or documentary photographer should go into a meeting without several ideas rehearsed and ready. Some editors are happy to hear two or three ideas. Others expect ten. Preparation on the photographer's part is key. One noted editor was famous for saying that he had many journalists calling regularly asking for assignments. Few called offering ideas they wanted to develop.

The Importance of Having a Project

Besides having photographers generate ideas, editors are impressed when photographers are engaged in projects. It is good to show completed projects (picture stories, photo essays, multimedia stories, video documentaries). However, a few pictures shown as work-in-progress also gets editors' attention. They want to see that photographers are engaged in the storytelling process, even if those stories and projects are incomplete and will be unfinished for months to come. All this helps editors see the direction of a photographer's mind and passion. This gives editors a deeper understanding of the photographer and opens editors to what kinds of stories and projects a photographer might do for them or for one of their professional colleagues.

Internships and Assistantships

One of the ways photographers starting out gain experience in photojournalism and storytelling is by interning

with a publication or news organization. Similarly students, recent college graduates, or aspiring photographers might assist a working professional in his or her business. Both experiences are valuable and give the new photographer an understanding of the profession. Interns may be treated as regular staff members and may produce pictures for the publication on deadline. Some companies offer roles more in the background. These allow a chance for photographers to develop new content for their portfolios and educate photographers about industry practices.

Students need to find a way to generate fresh content above and beyond what they produce for class assignments. Through internships, assistantships, and self-assignments, which aspiring photographers take on outside of class, making time to create single pictures and for longer projects is the best way for a photographer to show his or her drive and special storytelling interests to potential employers.

Internship and assistantship experiences are often available to college students at publications, broadcast outlets, Web sites, wire services, and photography businesses throughout the country. Sometimes the details are posted on an organization's Web site. If not, students can often approach editors and photographers who work for such organizations and learn the details of internship possibilities. Universities often post such opportunities either on campus or on the Web. Professional organizations such as NPPA make such listings available electronically to their members.

It is not unusual for photographers breaking into the business to serve several internships while in school. Summer breaks are the high season for internships, so the most eager students work to arrange internships each year they are in school. The best internships often are competitive, so a first internship starting in the summer following a freshman or sophomore year can lead to second or third internships at major organizations by graduation.

Some internships are paid, some are not. Ideally, aspiring photographers will gravitate toward those internships that pay well. If students take unpaid internships, they should see if their school grants academic credit for completing an internship. Often, such experiences can count as an elective or as an independent study course. Students should never be asked to pay for the privilege of doing an internship. Organizations that make such demands on students misunderstand the nature of internships.

Covering War

While it is possible to have a long career in photojournalism without covering conflicts, for some storytellers, war is at the heart of being a photojournalist with a still or video camera. For visual storytellers with these aspirations, there are conflicts in every corner of the world ripe for coverage.

Wise photographers will research what others have done, before setting out on their own. Many photographers have written candidly and eloquently about what it means to be under fire. Aspiring war photographers should read some of the biographies of experienced war photographers and look at some of their videos where photographs talk about their experiences. It is useful to understand what it means to be in conflicts zones, to understand the risks.

Because photographers and members of the media are often targets to be shot at or kidnapped, photographers may want to go to battle zones with an organization, military or civilian. Media companies have people on the scene to provide some measure of support in the conflict area. If a photographer can be hired by such organizations, it may give him or her access to medical care and evacuation in case of injury.

One way to prepare for war zones before getting on an airplane is to work in some of the more challenging areas of one's own country. By finding a way to tell stories about U.S. inner cities, whether from the point of view of the people who live there or from the side of law enforcement authorities who patrol these areas, photographers can gain considerable street sense by challenging themselves with such assignments before going to a foreign country.

The Money

Like the worlds of music and sports, it is possible to make large amounts of money in photography. However, as with these other professions, only a small number of the industry's participants actually succeed at a high level. For the most part, photography is like teaching, the priesthood, nursing, acting, social work, working for NGOs (non-governmental organizations), and the like: It is not about the money. Something else motivates people to get into the profession.

In the case of journalists, photojournalists, videographers, and filmmakers, the motivation is often to tell stories. In many cases, the resulting stories and projects are intended to make a difference. While it can bring great satisfaction to accomplish these goals, it is the rare project that brings Oscar-like wealth and recognition. This means that photographers must find satisfaction in other benchmarks of success.

Because the work of photojournalism and storytelling with still or video cameras and multimedia equipment is so challenging, some argue that this is a profession people should pursue only if they cannot see themselves doing anything else. The technological challenges are considerable. The access to willing subjects seems to close down every day. The distribution of completed projects doubles the work involved in any undertaking. Unless aspiring storytellers are compelled to take on these challenges, they would do well to consider other work, unless they simply cannot imagine doing anything else.

However, those who do take up the challenge regularly report that they have chosen the best job in the world.

Copyright

One of the ways photojournalists and visual storytellers help ensure that ongoing income from the work they create is by registering their work with the U.S. Copyright Office (www.copyright.gov). Such a move helps those in the creative arts maintain legal ownership of the work they write, photograph, film, paint, and compose. It is not enough to do the work: Creative people must register their finished work with the U.S. government. The process is relatively simple and inexpensive compared with the consequences of not registering.

With the digitization of photographs and films, the opportunity to steal a photographer or filmmaker's work is easier than ever. If a photographer is good, chances are that at some point, someone will take the photographer's work for some purpose. If the originating photographer or filmmaker has registered the work with the copyright office, the opportunity to seek legal redress becomes significantly easier.

How easy? When a creative artist calls to complain that one of images or film clips has been taken and used without compensation, the first question asked in response often is, "Has the copyright on this work been registered?" If the creative photographer can answer in the affirmative, the lawyers of the person who used the work without payment or authorization take the complaint far more seriously—because the penalties for taking a copyrighted work are so much more significant than for the illegal use of unregistered work.

Ideally, the copyright law is something creative artists study and monitor throughout their careers. Congress modifies this law regularly, and courts make important decisions about copyright law all the time. Copyright is a subject to follow over time.

There are many books and resources to help with this process. In addition, professional societies such as the NPPA, the ASMP, and the filmmakers' International Documentary Association (IDA) and Web sites such as the one created by EP all follow this subject and do what they can to spread key information to participating professionals.

Trends: Looking Ahead

Perhaps the most important trend around photojournalism and documentary storytelling is that this world will become increasingly digital. Stories will be told on the Web in a multimedia environment using still pictures, audio (music, narration, interviews, natural sound), video,

and the written word. These elements may exist as individual components of the story or in a blend.

Therefore, for photographers who want to work in storytelling, the key is to learn as many of these techniques as possible—or partner with those who know them—in order to produce accurate and fair storytelling.

While it is possible for one individual to develop a wide range of software and technical skills, it is good to remember the model of the motion picture director. Starting out in the business, filmmakers often learn enough script writing, photography, audio production, lighting, and editing to do small projects reasonably well. As they advance in their careers and take on larger projects, directors often team up with friends and colleagues who have greater aptitude in certain areas of the process. This allows the directors to bring their best skills to the project and allows other highly skilled professionals to bring their diverse talents to the project.

This means that the best films, the most fascinating books, and the most amazing Web sites often result from the collaboration of many highly creative minds brought to bear on one project. While one might attempt to do something by oneself, projects often succeed when partners are involved as collaborators.

Fortunately, the Web has considerable room to display one's work. Creative minds are no longer limited to just the space of the printed page or the distribution system of major film studios. With the Web, everyone can be a publisher or a studio head. Individuals no longer need millions of dollars for a brick-and-mortar building, a printing press, or a series of theaters for a distribution system. With a computer, a blog, a Web site, anyone can tell a story and exhibit material where it can be seen.

The key, however, is paying attention to the viewer's attention span. Just because writers and photographers can post a story equivalent to 25 pages of printed material, does that mean the audience will stay with it? Just because we can post a feature-length film project to the Web, will an audience care?

Viewers will migrate to and will stay with compelling storytelling. If visual storytellers can do that, they have a chance to have their project seen by the audience they want to reach.

References and Further Readings

Getting Started

Once photographers have learned the basics of photography, they find their interest moving toward photojournalism.

Kobre, K. (2008). *Photojournalism: The professionals' approach*. Burlington, MA: Focal Press.

While there are many fine texts on the basics of photojournalism, much of what photographers want to know is in this one volume.

Readings for Early Career Enhancement

At the beginning of their career, photographers can often use a little boost from experienced photographers who have thought long and hard about picture making.

Bayles, D., & Orland, T. (2001). *Art and fear*. Eugene, OR: Image Continuum Press.

Labelle, D. (2005). *The great picture hunt 2: The art and ethics of feature picture hunting*. Lexington, KY: Kernel Press.

Magnum Photos

Founded as a cooperative at the end of World War II, this organization went on to become one of the most important organizations in photojournalism.

Miller, R. (1997). *Magnum: Fifty years at the front line of history*. New York: Grove Press.

Here is a history of Magnum Photos in which the reader will see that it is a miracle the organization has managed to survive so long.

Morris, J. (1998). *Get the picture*. New York: Random House.

The author, former director of photography at *LIFE Magazine* and former executive director of Magnum, writes about some of the key moments in the history of photojournalism, including Robert Capa's coverage of the D-Day invasion.

Important Photographers' Lives

By reading about how other photographers lived, those starting out can get a perspective for themselves and can perhaps avoid some of the mistakes made by those who have gone before them.

W. Eugene Smith

One photographer, W. Eugene Smith, deserves his own category.

Hughes, J. (1989). *W. Eugene Smith: Shadow and substance*. Columbus, OH: McGraw-Hill.

For those who want an in-depth biography of Smith, this is the volume.

Madow, B. (1985). *W. Eugene Smith: Let truth be the prejudice*. New York: Aperture.

A fine book with many pictures that draws on Smith's letters.

Smith, W. E., & Smith, A. (1975). *Minamata*. Austin, TX: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

This was the last large project by this master photojournalist. Some say its publication helped launch the environmental movement.

Other Photographers

Capa, Robert (1999). *Slightly Out of Focus*. New York: Modern Library.

Capa admits not every word in his autobiography is necessarily true, but it is the tale told by the photographer himself.

Goldberg, Vicki (1986). *Margaret Bourke-White*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.

By reading this biography, photographers can fill in some of the gaps found in Bourke-White's autobiography covering the same material.

Halberstam, David (1979). *Powers That Be*. New York, NY: Knopf.

A classic behind the scenes look at major media institutions as only Halberstam could do it.

Hendrickson, Paul (1992). *Looking for the Light: The Hidden Life and Art of Marion Post Wolcott*. New York: Knopf.

Hurley, F. Jack (1989). *Marion Post Wolcott: A Photographic Journey*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.

Kennerly, David Hume (1979). *Shooter*. New York, NY: Newsweek Books.

An inside look at TIME magazine, covering the White House as the president's official photographer, and winning the Pulitzer prize for work done in Vietnam.

Light, Ken (2000). *Witness in Our Time: Working Lives of Documentary Photographer*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.

By reading this book photographers learn challenges of making a successful life in photography have been consistent over the decades.

Loengard, John (1998). *Life Photographers: What They Saw*. New York, NY: Little, Brown & Company.

In this one volume this former director of photography at LIFE magazine lets us see in the careers of several leading photographers.

Meltzer, Milton (1978). *Dorothea Lange: A Photographer's Life*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, Giroux.

Ostroff, Roberta (1992). *Fire in the Wind: The Life of Dickey Chapelle*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

Chapelle was a woman photographer of considerable courage who worked for National Geographic and other publications and who was killed in Vietnam.

Parks, Gordon (1992). *Voices in the Mirror: An Autobiography*. New York, NY: Doubleday and Anchor Books.

Parks wrote his biography several times under different titles. Any of them are worth a photographer's time.

Whelan, Richard (1985). *Robert Capa*. New York, NY: Knopf.

This is the biography of Capa by a knowledgeable historian.

The Challenge of Storytelling

The essence of photojournalism is telling stories. It is also one of the supreme challenges of the profession. The volumes below give some insight into the process.

Allard, W. A. (1989). *The photographic essay*. New York: Bulfinch Press.

Although this veteran of the *National Geographic* uses the word *essay* in his title, much of what he says relates to photojournalistic storytelling.

Boot, C. (Ed.). (2004). *Magnum stories*. London: Phaidon Press Limited.

In this massive collection, members of Magnum write about their careers, and each is given a chance to describe one of the projects.

Coles, R. (1998). *Doing documentary work*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

This Harvard-based Pulitzer Prize winner has much to say about all kinds of documentary material, including photography, folk songs and tales, and much more.

Understanding War

Many photographers have made a name for themselves by finding the most interesting current war and then going to cover it. Photographers who want to understand what happens in conflict zones through the life experiences of other photographers can look at the following titles.

Buell, H. (2006). *Uncommon valor, common virtue: Iwo Jima and the photograph that captured America*. New York: Berkley.

This book tells the story of the most famous picture from World War II and the battle where it was taken. With so many World War II veterans having passed away, fortunately this amazing story is captured here, reminding us of the many fine pictures that were made during this time.

Howe, P. (2002). *Shooting under fire: The world of the war photographer*. New York: Artisan.

Kogan, D. C. (2000). *Shutterbabe: Adventures in love and war*. New York: Random House.

A young college grad decides to try photojournalism and goes to the hot spots around the world: Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Romania, and Moscow during the fall of communism. Despite the potentially misleading title of her book, she is a serious photographer who does good work under challenging conditions.

Leroy, C. (2005). *Under fire, Great photographers and writers in Vietnam*. New York: Random House.

Leroy was one of the women of great courage who went to Vietnam and did great work. She understood the importance of writers and photographers.

Loyd, A. (2000). *My war gone by, I miss it so*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

This is a no-holds-barred look at the war in Bosnia, and what a novice British photojournalist discovered in covering this brutal conflict.

Marinovich, G., & Silva, J. (2001). *The bang bang club*. New York: Basic Books.

A group of news photographers cover the passing of apartheid in South Africa. Several people are killed, several Pulitzers are won.

McMullen, D. (1992). *Unreasonable behaviour: An autobiography of Don McCullin*. New York: Knopf.

This is an excellent look at what it takes to photograph in war zones by a photographer who was “everywhere” when things were at their worst. He even survived capture by the forces of the dictator Idi Amin.

Midcareer and More

Once photographers have launched their careers, they may want help and insight on taking their careers to the next level.

Chapnick, H. (1994). *Truth needs no ally: Inside photojournalism*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press.

The head of the Black Star photo agency helped many photographers get their start in the business. Some of his suggestions are collected here.

Lamott, A. (1994). *Bird by bird*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Excellent instruction on writing well, a skill many photographers can add to their skill set. Outrageously funny as well. Worth reading once a year.

Moss, B. (2006). *Photosynthesis: A simple guide to the magic of photography*. Corydon, IN: Self-published by the author at <http://www.lifeinamerica.us/photosynthesis>

BROADCAST JOURNALISM

MARK LEFF

Ohio University

One of me.

More than one of you.

I'm not in the room with you. And I'm trying to tell you something you don't know. That's the essence of communication. If there are a lot of you, we call it *mass* communication.

If I'm talking and you're listening—or better, watching—all at the same time and what connects us is a form of electricity, that's broadcasting. If I'm telling or showing you about something that just happened, that's broadcast news. If you're not all seeing it or hearing it at the same time, you're getting it asynchronously. And if I'm a broadcast journalist, that's probably not a word I'd want to use, I'd want to use words and sounds and pictures to tell you what I know, and to do it in less time than it took me to learn it. Broadcast news is an effort to give you a sense of the reality that the reporter and/or videographer experienced. But it's a compressed reality. If you don't have time to sit through, watch, or experience an entire city council meeting, house fire, election, stock market meltdown, revolution, or that cat being rescued from a tree, radio and television news can at least give you a sense of it in a very short time.

How well broadcast journalists do their jobs can be determined in several ways. Stations and networks measure it by the number of people who tune in to hear or see the broadcasts (and the commercial announcements between the stories or segments). Some people listen to or watch certain broadcasters because they like the reporter/anchor's appearance or voice or way with words. Some people watch because they find the reporter easy to understand.

The best reporters just talk to you. And the idea of speaking the news to people who are not in the same room goes back even before the invention of radio.

In this chapter, we'll look at how broadcast news works, starting with how broadcast news developed into a particular form of journalism, then detailing the people and technical requirements for a 21st-century broadcast news operation. We'll see how a news story is produced and conclude by looking at what it takes to become a broadcast journalist.

Some History

“Jo Reggelt”

No, that's not the world's first anchor. It's “good morning” in Hungarian. Back in February 1893, you could check into a hotel in Budapest, put on a pair of earphones connected to a telephone line, and listen to men in a downtown studio giving you the news of the day. *Telefon Hirmondó* (Telephonic News Dispenser) was very similar to the all-news radio stations you can hear today in some big cities, with local news, European and world news, business news, and sports news depending on what time you listened.

An American company tried the same wired-news idea in Newark, New Jersey, in 1911. Radio would not become a mass medium for several more years. But by November 1920, people in Pittsburgh could tune in to KDKA for live election returns and hear that Republican Warren Harding had beaten Democrat James Cox hours before they could read it in the morning papers. Sometimes, just having the information makes people want to listen.

Radio and newspapers competed for audience attention throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Television wasn't introduced to the American public until 1939, and TV news had to wait until after World War II. But the *idea* of news with moving pictures had also been a reality since the late 1800s—except that you had to go to a movie theater to see it.

Silent news films were first shown in France in 1895; Abner McKinley's American newsreel company, Biograph, filmed part of his brother William's presidential campaign in 1896. Sound came along in the 1920s, and by the 1930s, Fox Movietone, Paramount, Universal, Warner-Pathe, and Hearst Metrotone were among the equivalents of NBC, CBS, and ABC. Twice a week, they would produce newsreels running for 8 minutes or so for distribution to theaters, and they would compete fiercely with each other and with the other news media to bring audiences the first words and images of the news of the day.

“Oh, the Humanity!”

Emotion is also a key factor in a good broadcast story. On a stormy day in May 1937, the WGN Chicago radio reporter Herb Morrison and his sound engineer Charlie Nehlsen were sent to Lakehurst, New Jersey, to record a radio feature story on the giant German dirigible Hindenburg making its first transatlantic crossing of 1937. Morrison was describing the slow, majestic docking of the airship when fire suddenly erupted on the hull. He tried to describe what he was seeing but simply ran out of words as the emotional impact of watching people die hit him. His recorded description (which was never planned as a live broadcast) may be the first case in American radio of a reporter “losing it” at the scene of a violent event.

Newsreel cameras were also at the Hindenburg crash. But nobody except the journalists and other people on the scene saw it “live.” More than 70 years later, we're surprised when we *don't* see something live. Immediacy is another factor in determining what makes a good broadcast story; it's one reason why radio and television newscasts have so many field reporters interacting with the anchors before or after their recorded reports.

“This . . . Is London.”

Presence is an important criterion for many broadcast stories—having a reporter “on the scene” describing or summarizing what is happening. Edward R. Murrow, who built the CBS News team of radio reporters who covered World War II, was a master of description that conveyed both factual information and emotion. His accounts of a German bombing raid on London or flying in an Allied bomber over Germany, to cite two of his most famous broadcasts, set the standard for what are still called radio on-scene reports, or ROSRs (pronounced RO-zers).

The January 1991 bombing of Baghdad as carried on CNN was essentially a ROSR. CNN had installed a special audio line to the hotel room where its correspondents were

staying, intending to use it just for communication. But once the attack began, there was no way to get live television pictures out. So, for several hours, viewers in the United States and much of the world could only *hear* the live description by John Holliman, Peter Arnett, and Bernard Shaw of what was going on. Only later did video of the anti-aircraft fire and explosions make it out of Iraq. By the time the U.S.-led coalition was fighting the second Gulf War 12 years later, American TV correspondents were broadcasting live pictures from military vehicles racing across the desert toward Baghdad.

Television and Television News Anytime

Just as radio news challenged newspapers for audiences (and advertisers) in the second quarter of the 20th century, television news was a new competitor as the broadcast networks grew after World War II. The first newscasts were short broadcasts of theatrical newsreels; in 1949, NBC began the 15-minute *Camel News Caravan* using newsfilm that its own cameramen had shot. The three broadcast networks—ABC, CBS, and NBC—eventually expanded their newscasts to 30 minutes; as of mid-2008, PBS was the only broadcast network doing an early-evening 60-minute news program, called simply *The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer*.

Radio news also expanded after World War II. In the 1960s, as demand for news grew—especially in bigger cities—some radio stations began offering nothing but news 24 hours a day. All-news radio sprang up in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego/Tijuana, Chicago, New York, Washington, D.C., and other cities, where it remains a successful format. In 1975, NBC News tried a national 24-hour radio network feed called the NBC News and Information Service; it lasted only until 1977 and never made money.

But in 1980, the cable TV entrepreneur Ted Turner decided to try 24-hour news on television. CNN was born in the basement of a little wooden house next to his WTBS television studio in Atlanta and spent its infancy in the basement of a remodeled country club not far away. The growth of 24-hour cable and satellite news networks such as CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News in the United States, BBC World and Sky News in the United Kingdom, Al Jazeera in Qatar, and Euronews in France, among others, extended the 24-hour news radio concept into television—constantly updated information and images on a schedule that the audience can remember.

At the international level, the 24-hour news services often have national identities. CNN International is not Voice of America television, but it is sometimes television with an American voice. The U.S. government does fund and run television services for viewers outside the United States: Al-Hurra in Arabic and TV Martí in Spanish. BBC's international television services reflect a British

worldview. China Central Television (CCTV) International is news from an official Chinese perspective. Al Jazeera's Arabic language service has been the most successful of the various pan-Arabic news channels, and its English language channel has a distinctly Arab point of view.

And as the chapter "The Changing Nature of 'News'" (67) has pointed out, the nature of news is changing—now, some stories are available online faster and in more depth than broadcast news can possibly provide. But from those first silent newsreel films more than a century ago to the latest form of vodcast, some things remain constant about telling stories with spoken words and moving pictures.

The Big Picture: Getting It In and Getting It Out

Television news is not a career choice for hermits. Even in the smallest TV newsrooms, more than a dozen people can be involved in turning an event in one place into a report in front of a viewer's eyes and ears in another place. They work in one of two broad areas: getting the news from the source to the newsroom (known as news gathering or news intake) and getting the news from the newsroom to the viewer (known as news production).

Here are some of the jobs involved. Depending on the size of the news operation, one person may do more than one of them.

The Camera Operator. Sometimes called a videographer or photographer, this person captures the images and sound of the event. Although some small consumer-type video "camcorders" can take broadcast-quality video, most professionals use much larger cameras that can cost more than \$50,000.

The Sound Technician. You've seen pictures of news crews surrounding an interviewee where some people are holding what looks like a fishing pole with a fuzzy gray salami on the end near the person speaking. The "soundman's" job is to get the best possible audio by getting the microphone close to the speaker, while the videographer concentrates on getting the best possible image and camera angle.

The Light Technician. Some television news crews have a third person whose primary responsibility is getting the right kind of light at the right angle on whatever the videographer is shooting, whether it's a sit-down interview or just something happening in a place that doesn't have enough natural or artificial light.

The Reporter/Correspondent. The viewer sees and hears this person deliver the report from the scene or later from the studio/newsroom. He or she may gather all the information on the scene, interview all the available people, and write the script for a prepared report or make notes to do a live report.

The Field Producer. In larger news operations—especially the broadcast and cable networks—this person may do everything the reporter does except actually go on the air. Field producers often do interviews for stories, often gather information for stories if the correspondent is busy doing on-air reports, and are often the people "in charge" of coverage at the story location. That includes making all the logistical arrangements and sometimes writing the story script with or for the correspondent.

The "Truck Operator." You have all seen pictures of TV news vehicles with big dishes and/or antennas on their roofs. Some are the size of minivans; others are as big as delivery trucks and even semi-trailers. Before the Internet added yet another distribution and transmission medium, television news crews covering a story "in the field" had two basic ways of transmitting their stories back to the studio. If they were in the same city as their newsroom, they could use microwave transmission to broadcast from an antenna on the truck to a receiving antenna or a series of antennas that would deliver their pictures and sound to the station. If they were in a different city, they would have to get the story back to the station by satellite—using a different kind of antenna that relays their pictures and sound to the station through a receiver/transmitter "hovering" 22,000 miles above the earth. Both microwave transmission and satellite transmission work on the principle of "line of sight." The transmitter has to be able to "see" the receiver—either a microwave receiver that's usually on a tower like a TV transmitter tower or the satellite in space. Sometimes, in urban areas with lots of tall buildings, it's impossible to see either one from a truck on the street. And a satellite can "see" only about a third of the earth's surface. So if a correspondent is transmitting a report from China to the United States, it may have to go through *two* satellites—up and down and up and down—before it gets to the newsroom. Each of those transmissions takes time—not much, but it adds up. That's why if you watch an anchor in New York interviewing a correspondent in Beijing, there's a couple of seconds delay between the time the anchor finishes asking the first question and the time the correspondent *hears* that question 12,000 miles away.

The Assignment Editor. Usually, the most frazzled-looking person in the newsroom, the assignment editor is in charge of all aspects of news gathering, both editorial and logistical. As any good reporter does, the editor (sometimes known simply as "the desk") keeps in touch with sources and contacts and keeps track of upcoming events that are worth covering. The desk also dispatches and coordinates crews in the field, using two-way radios, telephones, and various forms of text messaging to make sure that videographers and reporters and transmission trucks are where they need to be, which is usually wherever the producers (see below) want them. As a result, assignment editors often have to think ahead in several different directions—kind of like playing speed chess. Often, the desk will do

research to pass on to reporters in the field who are too busy covering one aspect of a story to get all the information needed for a complete report. Sometimes the desk also handles the logistics for microwave and satellite transmissions from the field to the studio, though many stations and networks have a separate department for that.

The Producer. Just as the assignment editor is in charge of getting the news into the newsroom, the producer is in charge of the newscasts that get the news from the newsroom to the viewers. Producers design the broadcast using a rundown that lists each story/element of the program; who the anchor or reporter is; whether it's in the studio, newsroom, weather set, sports set or whether it's a remote broadcast from a reporter; how long each segment is; what graphics are to go with the story; and when to pause for commercial announcements. Producers make sure that there is a "flow" between related stories and often write much of the broadcast—especially the important "teases" designed to keep the viewer from changing channels during the commercial breaks. A producer may be responsible for one or two newscasts each day; there's often an executive producer in overall charge of a 2-hour morning program or a 90-minute early-evening newscast.

The Assistant/Associate Producer (AP). In some newsrooms, this person helps the producer by designing over-the-shoulder and full-screen graphics that help anchors and reporters tell stories visually. The AP often coordinates all the visual elements in the newscast, making sure that there is video for every story in the producer's rundown. Like producers, APs also write some of the newscast.

The Video Editor. Without video, a television newscast might as well be on the radio. Editors work with the material that videographers shoot locally and with nonlocal material that may feed in from a bureau in another city or from a network or news agency. Through the mid-1970s, editors worked mostly with images shot on 16-mm film—cutting it into individual shots and assembling the stories by gluing or taping the strips of film together. Then came the shift to videotape, where editing happened by dubbing (copying) shots and sounds from the camera source tape to the tape that would be played back on the air. Now, most television news operations are moving to computer-based (nonlinear) editing, using much more sophisticated versions of the simple video-editing programs found on most personal computers. Many of those newsroom computer video systems also play the edited video back during the broadcasts.

The Writer. Many newsrooms have people who write stories that the anchors will deliver on the air. Most reporters write their own scripts (sometimes together with a producer). Working from the producer's assignments in the newscast rundown, writers look at video and information (and sometimes gather information on their own) and

combine them into the most effective way for the anchors to deliver the story to the audience.

The Director and Studio Production Crew. When a newscast is on the air, the producer is in charge of the editorial (news) content, deciding whether to cut a report short or eliminate some planned stories in order to get "breaking news" into the program. The director—not a journalist—is in charge of the control room and studio crew that gets the broadcast on the air. He or she tells the technical director (or switcher) which image to put on the air: the studio camera pointed at an anchor, a recorded report, or a series of graphics (still images) that help tell a story; the technical director pushes the buttons on a device that can look like an electronic version of a five-keyboard church organ to make it all happen. Studio camera operators point the cameras at the people on the set, and a floor director relays time cues and other information from the director. And there is somebody running a device that electronically projects the scripted words onto a mirror in front of the studio camera lens so that the anchors can maintain eye contact with the audience. The best-known brand of those in the United States is TelePrompTer; in Britain, it's called AutoCue, but the generic term is "prompter." The president of the United States uses them too when making major scripted speeches in public, such as the annual State of the Union speech to Congress. Look for what appear to be clear glass rectangles on poles several feet in front of the president on either side. The audience sees the glass. The president sees the words of the speech scrolling by.

The Anchors. No, we haven't forgotten them. Anchors are the voice, face, and personality of a television newscast (and of radio, too, without the faces). Their job is usually to lead the viewer through the summary of the day's events but can also involve hours of free-form talking during "breaking" news—speaking calmly to the viewers while the producer is snapping orders and providing information through a small earphone. Anchors often write many of the stories they deliver. But an important part of their job is to deliver stories that other people have written and to do it in such a way that they appear to be just talking to the audience.

Don Hewitt, the producer who created *60 Minutes* at CBS News, coined the term *anchorman* to describe Walter Cronkite's duties at the 1952 Democratic convention, where he acted as a kind of host and central reference point for the various correspondents covering different parts of the event. Hewitt saw the position as similar to the captain of a track team. Outside the United States, people doing that job are often called presenters or news readers. But the greatest skill an anchor has is the ability to deliver information without a script. The term for that is *ad lib*, from the Latin *ad libitum*, which can mean at one's pleasure or as much as one likes.

Anchors may specialize in news, sports, or the weather. Many weather anchors are trained and certified meteorologists who understand the science behind the forecasts and may even do their own forecasting rather than relying on

the National Weather Service. They often design their own maps and graphics—the visual aids you see behind them on the screen. In reality, there is nothing behind them in the studio except a green wall. A technology called chromakey inserts the graphics electronically; the weather anchors position themselves by watching small monitors on either side of the wall and on the camera that show what the viewer sees at home. Most weather anchors hold a device that looks like a TV remote control. They are changing their own graphics as they speak—watch closely as they manipulate the controls.

TV News and Technology

In broadcast news, journalism and technology are inextricably linked. As technology improves, journalists have more tools to help them tell the story. But sometimes, the tools *drive* the storytelling.

Everybody who watches television news has seen reporters standing in front of something that relates to the story they're telling. Often, it's part of a recorded report. As often as possible, it happens live—the reporter precedes and follows a recorded and edited report or continues to talk live as recorded or live pictures of the event appear on the screen.

As we have seen, it can take a lot of people behind the scenes to end up with a reporter speaking live to the viewers from somewhere outside the studio. And the fact that a reporter *can* “go live” often adds to the perceived importance of the event.

When CNN went on the air in June 1980, live transmissions of things that were not scheduled events, such as presidential news conferences or political conventions were expensive, difficult, and rare. CNN promoted itself as “the news channel.” Because of the emerging technology, that meant trying to be the *live* channel whenever possible—a characteristic that now applies to CNN, its competitors, and television news operations almost everywhere.

CNN's first day of broadcasting included live reports from Key West, Florida, where thousands of Cubans had been arriving by boat in a huge wave of legal emigration. The correspondent Mike Boettcher later talked about the problems of getting the satellite truck and its huge transmission antenna ready in time for his broadcasts and the technical problems of coordinating with producers in the Atlanta headquarters—which were solved, he recalled, by having someone on a pay phone hundreds of yards away relaying instructions.

The Power of Technology: Two Examples

In May 1981, a Turkish gunman critically wounded Pope John Paul II as the Pope was riding through St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. The state-run Italian TV (RAI),

which had camera positions throughout the Vatican, was covering what had been a routine event until the shooting. Within minutes, RAI was transmitting live and recorded pictures throughout Europe over the Eurovision network that linked almost all of the continent's national broadcasters and transmitting by satellite to news organizations all over the world.

The author—then a producer/correspondent in CNN's Rome bureau—quickly found himself on the air via satellite through a jury-rigged system at the small RAI building where the CNN bureau was located, while the international assignment desk in Atlanta was frantically trying to reach the bureau chief and camera crew, who were away from Rome covering another story, in order to get them and other reporters back to Rome to help deal with what had suddenly become a huge story.

The relatively new technology enabled the speedy trans-Atlantic hookup, which meant that the author in Rome was able to report *live* to the American audience—even when there was nothing new to say because the information was so sketchy. Technological improvements in the decades since have made it easier to “go live” from almost anywhere. But talking to anchors and the audience when the reporter has little actual information in a “breaking news” scenario remains, for many journalists, one of the most difficult things to do.

Just a month after the papal shooting, a 6-year-old Italian boy named Alfredo Rampi fell into a backyard well near his house. The story attracted a lot of local attention, because it had all the elements of human drama—a little boy, a race against time. But it also had something new—live coverage from RAI, which sent its new “live trucks” to the well because it was in a village very close to Rome.

The author included a short recorded clip of the rescue effort in the daily 10-minute international news video compilation assembled from a variety of international news sources and sent by satellite to Atlanta, and planned to file a telephone report after the transmission so that editors at headquarters could combine the pictures and narration into a story that would run in newscasts for the next several hours.

But when CNN executives in Atlanta found out that a live picture was available from Italian TV, they ordered a new and very expensive one-hour satellite transmission from Rome. The author, on the phone from the Italian TV control room with Atlanta technicians, suddenly found himself on the air and had to talk for nearly an hour about what was going—getting information by listening to the Italian TV reporters who were actually on the scene describing it for their own audience.

The pictures themselves were not compelling—just a bunch of people standing around a hole in the ground. But the drama so captivated the Italian audience that the president of Italy eventually went to the scene. CNN was one of many news organizations to use the live pictures from RAI during the 80-hour rescue drama; a story that had begun as a local accident quickly became a worldwide phenomenon.

At the time, Italians debated whether such coverage was a good thing. That debate continues among journalists and their audiences around the world more than a quarter-century later. But there is no question that the technology made the story what it was. Little Alfredo Rampi died in that backyard well, and a nation mourned him.

A week or so later, an almost identical incident happened in another Italian village that was too far away from a major city for Italian TV to send a live truck. It never became more than a local story. But in October 1987, 18-month-old Jessica McClure fell into a well in Midland, Texas. And what some critics called a “media circus” began all over again. That story had a happier ending. But whether it’s live coverage of a dramatic rescue, a war, or police chasing a car down a freeway, the debate continues.

The Anatomy of a Story

Television—and television news—has much in common with motion pictures. While the technology now exists to allow just one person to gather information, shoot, edit, and transmit a video report, the combination of available budget and manpower (often involving union rules) means that it very often takes more than one person—sometimes dozens—to do the job.

In 1979, the author interviewed the African politician Robert Mugabe, then leading one of the factions attending a London conference on who would rule a postcolonial Rhodesia (Mugabe would eventually become president of Zimbabwe). To record an interview for excerpting in a story on the conference for an American network, there were three of us, including a two-person crew (one for camera, one for sound). To record the same sort of 5-minute sit-down interview to run at the end of a British documentary that night, the British network had 11 people—because it was for the “current affairs” department, not the evening news.

The growth of 24-hour news services on domestic cable and international satellite has changed the news gathering and production process. The need to “fill” 24 hours with as much “new” information as possible sometimes means that stories that once would have been considered of limited local interest now have a new prominence.

From North Platte, Nebraska—the smallest U.S. city that has locally produced TV news—to New York City, where at least eight stations and local cable services compete for the local news audience, the process is much the same.

News in any medium comes from a variety of sources. Sometimes a reporter or producer will come up with a story idea individually or at one of the daily story and assignment meetings that go on in every newsroom. Sometimes story ideas come from press releases. Sometimes they come from listening to emergency services

dispatchers and crews talking to each other by radio. And sometimes they come just by chance.

What If . . . ?

The scenario below has not happened—but it could. It’s based on circumstances and events that *have* happened, in one form or another.

Let’s say a reporter and a videographer from a TV station in a small Midwestern town are supposed to cover an academic conference on international relations at the local university. A news release from the university alerted them to the meeting. It’s about “conflict resolution” and includes academics and minor government officials from several countries. On their way to the university in the morning, the reporter and the videographer are trying to figure out how to make an interesting story out of a bunch of people in a big room. They will interview some of the important players, get video of the speeches and the audience, shoot a “stand-up” report, and bring the videotape back to the station to edit a story for the evening newscast.

The reporter knows that material from the event won’t be enough. So he asks for video from “the feed” to incorporate into the story. The broadcast networks and cable news services, including ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, and NBC, provide video feeds to their affiliated local stations of national and international news that they either generate themselves from their own bureaus or obtain from international broadcasters such as the BBC in Britain or CCTV in China or from international news agencies such as Reuters TV and APTN, which maintain bureaus in many cities around the world. The assignment desk or a producer records some video clips from that day’s feed of fighting in Iraq, refugees in Africa, and a troop buildup on the border between two Asian nations and keeps the recording and associated written information for the reporter to use when it’s time to write and edit the story.

But before the crew gets to the event, the assignment editor hears the highway patrol dispatcher sending troopers, fire trucks, and ambulances to a crash on a four-lane highway along the river that loops around the town. He tells the conference crew to head there instead and report back on what’s going on.

It’s bad. As the crew arrives, the highway patrol closes that road and another major highway that intersects it. Three cars are burning, and an overturned tanker truck is leaking something into the river. The reporter and the videographer leap into action, shooting video and interviewing the police and witnesses. At least three people are dead. This is a big local story.

The producer of the noon newscast wants a live report. That means the assignment desk has to divert the microwave truck from another story and move it to the crash while updating the station’s Web site with what he and the reporter are learning about the crash. It happens all the time in local TV news.

When the truck with its antenna and portable editing system arrives, the reporter and the videographer edit the middle part of their story to transmit back to the station before the newscast. The station's control room will play back that part after the reporter introduces it live from the crash site, unless the editing is finished so close to the broadcast that the truck operator must roll it "live." Engineers and producers prefer to have it in the control room ahead of time.

Because the crash has now closed two major highways through that part of the state, two news helicopters from stations in the state capital show up overhead just before the noon newscast, shooting overhead video of the crash scene to transmit back to their own noon news programs. And one of the producers in the capital, whose station is with the same network as the local station, calls to ask the reporter to do another "live shot" for his station, which will relay it to the capital using satellite transmission.

Now, the local reporter has to do *two* reports—one for a local audience, in which he can make specific local landmark references for people who know the area as well as he does and another for an audience 75 miles away. People in the capital don't know or care that the crash is near a spooky old former mental hospital on a hill called The Ridges, so the reporter has to describe the scene in broader terms, and focus on the regional traffic disruption.

Just after the noon newscasts, there are more developments. The county and state environmental protection agencies have identified the substance from the truck that is leaking into the river. It is threatening the fish in the river and the water supply of three communities. The county issues a "boil order" for thousands of water customers. Now, a routine traffic accident has turned into a major public health story. Radio stations, newspapers, and their Web sites and the Associated Press news service are all giving the story wider distribution.

The local station goes into "crisis mode." The entire news department is now working on live coverage of the health threat. The local university (the one sponsoring the international affairs conference) offers several experts for interviews and analysis. Student journalists are running around shooting video and interviewing people for online, print, and broadcast coverage.

Now the local station's network news headquarters calls from New York. Because of the environmental impact, the network wants video of the crash, the river, the water treatment plant, and anything else it can get from the station along with a complete on-scene story to feed its local affiliates while its own reporter, camera crew, producer, and live transmission truck are on the way. So once again, the local reporter has to prepare a different kind of story—environmental, not traffic—for an audience that only vaguely knows which state the reporter is in and doesn't care about the victims or the traffic mess.

Back at that international relations conference, there is concern because the featured luncheon speaker—a former

graduate student who is now the deputy interior minister of his oil-producing African nation—didn't show up. Then, police release the names of the three people killed in the crash. He is one of them. Now the crash itself isn't just local news.

The phone rings in the local station's newsroom. It's the executive producer of the national network in the minister's English-speaking country. He has just seen the minister's name online, and his network is about to do a special report on the minister's death because he was about to be named the opposition candidate in that country's presidential election. He pleads for video and a live report from the crash scene and arranges a satellite transmission to get the material to Africa for a show that begins within an hour. The station hires journalism students from the university to go through old yearbooks and archived video from when the minister was a student 15 years earlier to find something relevant to use for the overseas report.

Now, the overworked original reporter and videographer at the crash scene have yet another story to prepare. For this one, the reporter must quickly learn how to pronounce the minister's name (his first and last names each have five syllables) and put together a story focusing on the minister and the international conference that they had never reached that morning because of the accident.

So in this very possible scenario, within 6 hours of the accident, the videographer's images of the crash scene and the victims being put into ambulances are on the air in a country thousands of miles away, and the reporter has had to prepare four different reports for four different audiences on four different aspects of the story.

That's television news in the 21st century.

What It Takes to Be a Broadcast Journalist

The "modern" television journalist is often doing much more than reporters did in the early days of television news—and doing it much faster. That puts a lot of pressure on the people who do the reporting, because in reporting (presenting) what they know to the audience, they often don't have enough time to do the *other* kind of reporting—gathering the information.

At the International Press Institute conference in Belgrade in June 2008, the British journalist Misha Glenny, who used to cover southeastern Europe for the BBC, talked about changing times and changing pressures. Glenny, a scholar's son whose first reporting job was for a newspaper, suggested that the role of a foreign correspondent had changed over the years—and not for the better—because of pressure from employers. He described the BBC's 1964–1986 India correspondent Mark Tully, who was born there, as "someone who knew everything about India and everybody worth knowing in the Indian elite."

But he said it is rare now for reporters to know their countries—that the pressures of multiple filing demands

from the BBC's domestic and international radio and television services plus online create conditions in which he said basic reporting—let alone investigative reporting—is impossible.

Many journalism schools are training and educating their students to try to meet the demands of the “converged” newsrooms of the 21st century. The tools of the trade are getting smaller, cheaper, and easier to use. But using them to tell good stories well remains a challenge for anybody who wants to work in broadcast journalism.

Your Turn?

We have seen how the techniques of broadcast journalism have evolved over more than a century—from live speech on the telephone to live and recorded speech on the radio to silent and then sound theatrical newsreels to live and recorded television to pictures and sound online. Over the years, journalists have adapted their storytelling techniques to take advantage of the new technology and method of distribution. But, from the KDKA announcer Leo Rosenberg, broadcasting the 1920 Harding-Cox presidential election returns, to the hundreds of anchors and reporters and bloggers covering presidential election night 2008, the aim has been the same: Whatever the technology, get it to the audience quickly—and be sure to get it right.

Broadcast journalism continues to evolve in the 21st century. If you're interested in pursuing a career in it, be sure to learn something about something other than broadcast journalism. Expertise in economics, business, politics, or international relations will help you tell better stories. The education and training you get in a broadcast journalism program will teach you how to tell stories. The best journalism schools teach students how to do everything—reporting, shooting, editing, anchoring, crafting Web stories, producing, and assigning, because even at the big-city and network levels, there's a growing demand for people who can do it all. They used to be called “one-man bands.” Now some people use the term *backpack journalists*.

Not everybody does everything equally well, but if you're fortunate enough to be working as a reporter or producer in a newsroom that has dedicated videographers

and video editors, you will do your own job better because you know firsthand what they can and cannot do. And whatever the medium, the job of a journalist is ultimately to put clear, concise information into the audience's heads—accurate information that educates, enlightens, and, yes, sometimes entertains. Still interested?

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NEW MEDIA JOURNALISM

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New media journalism emerged in the late 20th century and has continued to evolve in the early 21st century. It is a form of journalism based on the convergence of digital, or computer-based, technologies and telecommunications, especially but not limited to the Internet and World Wide Web. New media technologies are reshaping journalism in four basic ways. First, new media are transforming how journalists do their work. Second, new media are producing a restructuring of journalistic organizations and institutions. Third, new media are giving rise to new media content forms. Fourth, new media are leading to the reinvention of the relationships between and among journalists, journalistic organizations, and their many publics, especially these five: audiences, sources, regulators, financiers, and competitors. This set of changes is leading to a form of new media journalism with greater citizen involvement and participation in a discourse with journalists, newsmakers, and other citizens. At times, this discourse is little more than opinions and pandering to base interests. But at times, this discourse is reasoned, informed, and refreshing.

Journalism and New Media Technologies

Journalism has long been driven by technological change. The rotary printing press, photography, the telegraph, wireless communications, television, and other technologies have all exerted profound influences over the shape and nature of journalism. It is thus not surprising that new media technologies have facilitated a transformation of

journalism in the late 20th and early 21st centuries and the emergence of new media journalism (Boczkowski, 2005).

To understand the influence of new media on journalism, we must first define what we mean by the key terms *new media* and journalism. Notably, the term *media* is plural and is a Greek word. *Medium* is the singular form. Therefore, “new media” *are*, not *is*. Journalism refers to the process of gathering, or reporting, current information, or news, from multiple sources (including primarily by interviewing people, reading or reviewing documents, and making direct observation of events, places, or people); editing and fact-checking that news; and distributing (broadcasting, publishing) that news, typically via storytelling forms, but also in other forms, as well as interpreting those facts via analysis or opinion. New media journalism is thus the convergence of new media and journalism into a new form of news reporting in the digital age.

New media emerged in the latter part of the 20th century, with the advent of various digital technologies, especially the Internet and World Wide Web, and also technologies such as digital cameras, satellites, and digital broadcasting. In its most familiar form, new media journalism is synonymous with online journalism. Although this is the most familiar, it is not the only significant part of new media journalism. The new media continue to evolve and represent a changing landscape.

Five Technological Functions

To fully appreciate the nature and scope of new media journalism, it is useful to identify five broad technological functions related to the new media. These five functions

are acquisition, storage, processing, distribution, and access or display. For each of these functions, there are a host of specialized new media technologies, although increasingly, convergence is leading to the development of individual devices capable of performing all five functions.

Acquisition

Acquisition refers to the process of gathering information, or data, in various forms, such as audio, images, moving pictures, or written text in the form of a reporter's notes. Traditionally, reporters' notes have been the foundation of all reporting. In new media journalism, a reporter's notes continue to be vitally important but are increasingly in electronic, or digital, form, with reporters typing or otherwise entering (e.g., using an electronic tablet that recognizes handwriting) their notes on handheld or laptop devices. Of course, many other devices are used in news gathering, including primarily digital cameras and digital audio recorders.

Processing

Processing refers to the editing of digital content gathered by the reporter. Whether text, audio, images, or video, reporters and editors use computer-based tools to sort, refine, or edit that material from its raw form into stories, graphics, or other formats for ultimate delivery to an audience. Computer-based processing, like all computers, is becoming faster and less expensive, following what is called *Moore's law*. Moore's law specifies that the number of components on a single computer chip doubles every 18 months (Moore, 1965). This essentially means that computers get twice as fast every year and a half. As a corollary to Moore's law, miniaturization has also swept through the world of computing, as digital devices have become not only more powerful but also much smaller in size. As a result, 2007 saw the emergence of the laptop computer as more prevalent in the marketplace than the desktop computer in the United States. Journalists are also increasingly using laptop computers as their preferred device for processing news in raw data form or refined storytelling format.

Storage

Storage refers to the archiving of digital content, initially in its raw form and later in its processed form, for subsequent search and retrieval by either journalists or the lay public. There are many such digital storage devices of increasingly powerful form. Digital storage devices are also subject to the patterns of increasing speed, power, and miniaturization that characterize processing devices. As a result, few reporters go out into the field without one or more powerful miniature digital storage devices. These include USB sticks (universal storage buss) that can hold

gigabits of data (billions of bits, 1,000 times a megabit, which is 1,000 times a kilobit, which is 1,000 times a bit). Many devices commonly used by new media journalists, such as digital cameras, cell phones, or handheld computers not only have built-in massive storage capabilities, but they also typically have ports for portable external storage devices. Such portable storage devices are important in journalism because they can be easily slipped into a pocket or past a censor.

Distribution

Distribution refers to the delivery of digital content, or news, from one location to another, either a short or a long distance. In a new media context, this distribution is typically done over a digital telecommunications network, including the Internet, but also via digital television, other wireless spectrum, or other digital delivery media (such as Bluetooth, a local-area wireless technology). Such distribution systems in journalism are increasingly made secure in the same fashion as banking, satellite or cable television, or other applications. Security is important for a variety of reasons, including not only protecting copyrighted content but also guarding against computer hackers (friendly) or crackers (unfriendly).

Display or Access

Display or access is the final step in new media journalism, although it is the most visible and often thought of as the defining quality of new media journalism. Technologies such as computers, handheld devices, cell phones, and MP3 players (including Apple's iPod) are among the most common display or access technologies used in new media journalism.

Transforming Journalism in the Age of New Media

New media as described above are reshaping journalism in four basic ways. First, new media are transforming how journalists do their work. Second, new media are producing a restructuring of journalistic organizations and institutions. Third, new media are giving rise to new media content forms. Fourth, new media are leading to the reinvention of the relationships between and among journalists, journalistic organizations, and their many publics, especially these five: audiences, sources, regulators, financiers, and competitors.

Transforming How Journalists Work

New media are transforming how journalists do their work. In days past, newspaper reporters relied on principally a telephone, a notepad, and a pencil, with an occasional

photographer sent on assignment. In television, reporters typically were accompanied by a videographer and, depending on station size or if a network level, also a sound or lighting technician. In radio, the standard operating equipment was a microphone (lavalier or lapel) and audio recorder. New media have meant a series of changes in the tools reporters bring with them into the field and a corresponding series of changes in how reporters often work. To begin, most reporters, regardless of medium, make heavy use of the Internet and World Wide Web as research tools and e-mail as a communication tool. Reporters also make extensive use of cell phones to reach sources and stay in touch with editors. Many reporters also rely on various handheld devices both in news gathering and in communication. Mobile e-mail or text messaging is commonly used. Reporters will often type a short version of a story while still in the field and e-mail it to an editor for review.

One interdisciplinary research project at Columbia University launched in the late 1990s featured the design and field testing of a mobile journalist workstation (MJW), which was in fact a hybrid of news gathering, production, storage, distribution, and display technologies encased in a wearable backpack. The MJW permitted a single reporter to gather news of any type, deliver it wirelessly to a remote location, or display it in geographically annotated format based on the specific coordinates obtained from the global positioning system (i.e., satellite system). Such digital backpack journalism was first conducted by Steve Mann (2008), now Professor of Computing and Electrical Engineering at the University of Toronto. Mann developed the wearable computer in the 1980s and used his convergent system to report on a series of breaking news events and provide stories and photos to local newspapers via wireless data transmission.

Restructuring Journalistic Organizations and Institutions

New media technologies are producing a restructuring of journalistic organizations and institutions. Since at least the 19th century, the newsroom has been the central organizing spine of American and most of the world's journalism. Editors and other decision makers have operated from the newsroom, meeting with reporters, assigning stories, and editing text, images, audio, and video. The flow of information in and around the newsroom has largely depended on the capabilities and limitations of analog technologies. In the early 20th century, the click and clack of the typewriter and teletype machine were pervasive in virtually any newsroom, especially those of the daily newspaper. Copyboys physically carried from one location to the next the copy, or text, of stories typed by writers or ripped from the teletype machine, where wire-service copy arrived over analog telephone lines and was delivered to the appropriate news desk or editor.

The development of high-speed online technologies, including broadband wireless, as well as increasingly powerful and inexpensive mobile computers and other devices, has brought about a revolution in the modern newsroom. Increasingly, newsrooms are organized in ways that facilitate the production, editing, and distribution of multimedia content in digital form. Sometimes called a converged newsroom or an information center, newsrooms of the past are rapidly disappearing. Typically, any editor can get access to any story, file, or bit of data regardless of its format (i.e., text, audio, video, photo, graphic). As a result, reporters and editors can work much closer to the deadline. They can produce stories for any delivery outlet, whether print, online, television, or radio.

New media have fueled even more radical structural change in American and global journalism. Emerging is what might best be called the *virtual newsroom*. The virtual newsroom is a journalism structure freed of the physical constraints of a traditional newsroom. A virtual newsroom uses inexpensive yet powerful mobile technologies, including laptop and handheld computers as well as megapixel digital cameras and digital audio recorders. The virtual newsroom takes advantage of the flexibility afforded by broadband wireless technologies. It permits reporters to stay in the field longer while covering more stories, interviewing more sources, and expending little time traveling to and from a central newsroom to meet with editors. News conferences can happen via cell phone or laptop. Stories are filed electronically, regardless of whether they involve text, photos, graphics, video, or audio. Staying in the field while on assignment is of course not a new thing in journalism. Reporters have famously called into a newsroom from just outside a courtroom where a major verdict was just handed down, requesting "re-write."

Yet mobile broadband has enabled structural change of an entirely new magnitude in new media journalism. New media technologies have made possible the development of unique one-person news operations, or news operations with extremely small staff, mostly freelancers or stringers, who cover local or regional geographic communities, topical domains, or beats at very low cost. There is no need to maintain an expensive central newsroom. With Internet delivery, there is no need to invest in an expensive printing press or television or radio transmission tower or acquire a broadcast license. Instead, entrepreneurial news operations have emerged across the United States and are internationally designed to exploit the capabilities afforded by new media to do quality journalism.

Moreover, because the costs are so low, business models based on small or limited revenues are still viable. Consider the case of RedBankGreen.com, an online news operation founded by a long-time Gannett journalist. Red Bank Green (www.redbankgreen.com, accessed January 4, 2008) is a very local online news service produced by John Ward, a veteran newspaper journalist, who in 2006, left the ranks

of daily newspaper journalism to pursue his vision of producing quality local journalism delivered online. A two-decade veteran of traditional journalism in the analog media environment, Ward saw an opportunity to reinvent local journalism in the New Jersey community where he lives, Red Bank, through a new news structure, one based on community. His vision is captured in his estimate of the number of stories waiting to be reported: “There are 12,000 people in Red Bank,” Ward says. “That’s at least 12,000 stories.” Ward’s wife, Trish, is a Web-site developer and graphic artist and is responsible for all the design aspects of Red Bank Green. The name of the site is a reference to the extremely local nature of the reporting and the interactive quality of the medium. It is meant as an online village green or commons where people can meet to learn about and discuss what is going on in the town. Ward practices what has long been called shoe-leather reporting, what many consider the hallmark of great journalism. He walks the town and reports. He stops in stores and chats with business owners and customers. He sees people about town and talks with them. He asks them what is going on and what is on their minds. He observes and reports. He tells people’s stories. He has a digital camera and takes pictures and shoots video. He has a digital audio recorder that can record up to 13 hours of audio. He writes and edits on his laptop computer. He has a growing number of advertisers and advertising revenue and hopes to grow the business side of things so it can sustain even more journalism, including investigative reporting. Ward’s goal is not to be objective in the traditional sense of mainstream journalism. That is impossible, he says, although it is a worthy pursuit. Ward writes from his own perspective and in his own style. His goals as a reporter and editor are to be accurate and to be fair.

Producing New Content Forms

New media are giving rise to new media content forms. New technologies have often led to new content forms in journalism. The Frenchman Louis Daguerre’s early-19th-century invention of the Daguerreotype led to the introduction of photography in newspapers. The French Lumiere brothers’ late-19th-century invention of moving pictures led to the popular newsreels of the early 21st century. Italian Guglielmo Marconi’s late-19th-century invention of the wireless led to the development of radio journalism in the early 21st century as well. American Philo Farnsworth’s early-21st-century invention of electronic television led to the development of the most widely seen journalism in the United States, television news. New media are following this long tradition of reshaping news content based on new technological possibilities, only this time in the digital age.

Among the first forms of new news content to emerge in the new media environment was the Web-based newspaper. Online and electronic newspapers had existed in various

forms since at least the 1970s, mostly as text with limited graphics. But these primitive, early, online newspapers were radically overhauled with the 1989 invention of the World Wide Web by the English scientist Tim Berners-Lee (www.w3.org/People/Berners-Lee, accessed January 3, 2008). Since then, online news sites have exploded, adapting dramatically in form based on the capabilities made possible by the Web. Among the most important evolutionary changes in news content on the Web is the introduction of hyperlinks, or online connections to related Web pages. These links (typically in the form of embedded Web addresses, or URLs, such as <http://news.google.com>) serve several important functions in online news. First, they can offer readers a chance to look at a related Web page for more details or context. Second, they permit readers to see other relevant Web pages that have been previously screened by the reporter for quality, relevance, or appropriateness. Third, they can enable access on demand for the news consumer to multimedia content produced by the news organization or another organization but related to the current page. Fourth, links can serve as a vehicle to facilitate user engagement, such as in an interactive reader poll.

The legendary singer Frank Sinatra’s FBI file entered the public domain on December 10, 1998 (Pavlik & Ross, 2000). Newspapers, television, and radio stations throughout the United States and internationally reported on the release of the report and the allegations it contained. Among the topics reported were Sinatra’s alleged mob connections, his arrest for “seduction,” and his 4F status of psychological instability making him ineligible for the draft during World War II.

Illustrative of the standard journalistic accounting of the 1,300-page file was *The New York Times* report, which examined these subjects in an approximately 2,500-word account. The report was available in print and online and serves as an exemplar of how most general-interest newspapers or news magazines would approach a story such as this. First, a primary source releases newsworthy information, and second, news organizations report on the report, giving an overview of its contents, noting the highlights, and perhaps adding interviews with key sources.

Contrast this with the approach employed by APBnews.com (a now-unfortunately discontinued news site covering crime and criminal justice). APBnews covered the Sinatra report in pure new media journalism style, employing a range of online media capabilities, including text reporting, interactivity, images, and all 1,300 pages of the FBI Sinatra file electronically scanned and made available online. This put the APBnews report into the full context of the original source material. *The New York Times* made the Starr report on President Bill Clinton’s affair (running to several hundreds of pages) available on its Web site and in the paper, but it did not publish the Sinatra file online or off. APBnews also didn’t annotate the 1,300-page Sinatra file but featured several side-bar reports about each of the most important sections of the report.

APBnews's Sinatra report illustrates the unique potential of new media journalism. Journalists and the news are no longer constrained by the technical limitations of analog media boundaries of print, television, or radio. Rather, new media journalism can feature virtually all modalities of human communication to make storytelling as powerful and complete as possible. Of course, this is the potential. The realities of new media journalism still constrain it by the fiscal requirements of publishing quality news content. Without a viable business model, even the best-intentioned new media journalism as illustrated by APBnews can still fail due to the lack of economic resources.

Since the advent of the basic news Web site, various other more specialized forms of Web-based news content have emerged. Among these are Weblogs, or blogs, twitter, and Podcasts. Blogs have emerged as among the most pervasive and popular forms of online, new media journalism. Gartner Consulting (www.gartner.com, accessed January 2, 2008) estimates that as of 2007, there are some 100 blogs. Having evolved from online diaries, blogs are Web sites in which postings are typically presented in reverse chronological order. Most blogs use browser-based software and are sometimes hosted by dedicated blog-hosting services. Some blogs run on blog software, including blogger, LiveJournal, and WordPress. Jorn Barger coined the term *Weblog* (Wortham, 2007) on December 17, 1997. Peter Merholz created the contraction, *blog*, by which Weblogs are known universally in 2008. Merholz (1999) introduced the term on his blog peterme.com in April or May 1999. Since their inception, blogs have grown dramatically in their popularity, reach, and impact.

By 2008, there are many types of blogs. Among the more common, somewhat specialized blogs relevant to new media journalism are Vlogs and Linklogs. Vlogs are blogs that include or feature video. Linklogs are made mostly or entirely of links to other Web sites. Blogs designed for mobile devices such as a mobile phone or a personal digital appliance (PDA) are called Moblogs. Many blogs concentrate on a single topic, including politics, travel, or fashion. There are also search engines that focus on searching the content of blogs. These include blogdigger, Feedster, and Technorati. The general domain of all blogs is known collectively as the blogosphere.

Blogs constitute an important form of new media journalism. Although many blogs focus on opinion, some also break news and introduce original reporting. As a result, blogs have become popular around the world. Perhaps the single most popular blog is that of the Chinese actress Xu Jinglei (English: <http://sino-angle.blogspot.com>; Chinese: <http://blog.sina.com.cn/xujinglei>, accessed January 2, 2008). Her blog is reported by the Chinese news service Xinhua to have more than 50 million page views a month (*China Daily*, 2006). Jinglei's blog also has (as of 2006) the most incoming links of any blog (another measure of blog popularity).

Blogging has become a significant part of what is often called participatory journalism, or journalism produced by lay citizens rather than professional journalists employed by mainstream, commercial (or not-for-profit) news media. One of the reasons blogging has become valuable to those engaged in participatory journalism is that it can avoid the filter typically imposed by established news media. This filtering process, or gatekeeping, can be important in providing editorial review and fact-checking. It can ensure higher-quality journalism, more responsible reporting, and fewer possibilities of libel or other legal action in response to potentially flawed reporting. It can protect the credibility of news reporting. Yet the mainstream news media filter can also inhibit diverse perspectives and viewpoints. It can limit the range of opinions or even subjects reported on. It can force a certain uniformity of voice. Some contend that bloggers fail to respect copyright by republishing other reporting. The blogosphere has often played a vital role in bringing critical attention to important news stories that the mainstream media had ignored or were not in a position to cover effectively. Video bloggers, for instance, proved important in reporting the tsunami that wreaked havoc on much of Indonesia and beyond in 2004. In one case, a federal investigating team found the video blog of a Seattle-based reporter of such value in pursuing its investigation of alleged terrorists that it jailed the blogger for not revealing his sources. Josh Wolf, a Seattle, Washington, video blogger was jailed by a federal prosecutor in August 2006 for not revealing his sources during anti-WTO (World Trade Organization) protests in April 1999 in Seattle (Blue, 2006). The blogosphere demonstrated its robustness in identifying questionable media, political, and other activities when, in 2006, bloggers discerned that the news photo of an Israeli bomb attack in Beirut had been manipulated. Still, much of the blogosphere is of dubious or limited quality and sometimes is designed specifically to mislead, distort, or propagandize.

Mainstream journalists also produce their own blogs. CyberJournalist.net's J-blog report lists some 300. Jonathan Dube of *The Charlotte Observer* published perhaps the first use of a blog on a news site in August 1998, when he chronicled Hurricane Bonnie (Scanlan, 2003).

Twitter and the Double-Edged Sword of Speed

Twitter is a form of blogging that is based on the use of mobile devices and text messaging to upload short messages to blogs while on the fly. Twitter is especially popular for current information, such as what a candidate for president is doing on the campaign trail.

On the downside, Twitter demonstrates one of the most significant concerns about new media journalism. Twitter at its best demonstrates the currency of new media journalism. A blogger can follow a candidate on the campaign trail and

post the very latest information from the field directly to the public without more than a moment's delay. The public can have the absolute latest information in near real time.

At the same time, Twitter points out the potential deepest flaw of currency: no time for thoughtful reflection. New media journalism in the form of Twitter or other near-real-time reporting provides a direct, unfiltered look at current events, but the events may be taken completely out of context with virtually no depth in the reporting.

Other New Media Content Forms

Podcasts are another important content form of new media journalism. These are audio files created for online distribution, formatted for downloading to MP3 players such as the iPod, using syndication technology. Listeners can subscribe to Podcasts and have them downloaded automatically when new content is added via aggregator software or feed reader tools such as RSS (really simple syndication) or Atom (a syndication protocol using XML, the extensible markup language). Podcasts can be downloaded from a variety of online locations, including aggregation sites such as iTunes. Podcasts can also be made available via any Web site or blog.

Video Podcasts (vodcasts) are increasingly popular. A list of vodcasts is available from Vodstock (www.vodstock.com/vodstock/vodcast-directories.php, accessed January 3, 2008). Some of the more popular vodcasts are listed on Mefedia (www.mefedia.com/feeds, accessed January 3, 2008). The top 10 vodcasts for the week of January 6, 2008, included the vodcasts of *The New York Times*, *The Today Show*, and the Discovery Channel.

Some news Web sites also feature animation, typically made using a software application called Flash. Flash animations or animated gifs (short animated pictures based on the graphics interchange format) are often used to present animations online that might parallel the types of animations sometimes seen on television news, such as a rotating globe.

One of the more interesting new media journalism forms is virtual reality. Reuters, a major international news service, has created and staffed a news "island" in the popular online virtual reality environment Second Life (www.secondlife.com, accessed January 3, 2008). Open to anyone, Second Life has emerged as a compelling 3D virtual reality for millions of citizens around the world who have created avatars (virtual representations of themselves) to populate and live in an altered state where personal flight is a reality, altered egos can flourish, and real money (US\$1,296,257 were spent during the 24 hours concluding at 10:19 a.m. eastern time January 7, 2008) can be made without ever setting foot into the real world. The Reuters Island in Second Life is a virtual version of the Reuters real-world news service but covering the domain of Second Life for the citizens of Second Life (numbering 11,807,742 residents as of January 5, 2008).

More experimental forms of news content in a new media environment have also been developed. Among these are

- immersive video,
- 3D graphics,
- interactive photographs,
- situated documentaries, and
- locative media.

Immersive video refers to various video formats that provide a 360-degree, spherical video experience for the viewer. In a new media journalism context, this most typically refers to panoramic video displayed on a computer monitor allowing the viewer to use a mouse or keyboard controls to pan, tilt, or zoom about a full hemispheric view of a news scene or location. Although this can be provided in still photo images, video provides an especially powerful news medium. Such technology enables new media journalists to tell stories in new ways that help place events in a greater context. While standard photojournalism and video reporting help focus attention on a subject, they by their very nature remove much of the surrounding context for the image or video. Immersive video can put this context back into the story. Through software, directional photography or videography can still be produced from images or moving pictures shot with an immersive camera system. But the viewer can be provided with the option of being able to pan, tilt, or zoom into or about a scene to examine the background previously unavailable to the viewer of a news photo or television report.

When reporting on a protest, for example, this context might help the viewer better appreciate the scale of the protest or other potentially relevant facts. Pavlik (2001) and his former students at Columbia University collaborated with new media journalism organization APBnews.com (no longer in operation) to report on the 1999 slaying of Amadou Diallo in the Bronx, New York (West Bronx News Network). An immigrant from Africa, Diallo was stepping from the vestibule of his apartment building one night when four undercover police officers pulled up in their unmarked squad car and mistook Diallo for a criminal suspect. Apparently mistaking Diallo's wallet for a gun, and then inexplicably hearing nonexistent gunfire, the police officers open fired on Diallo, shooting a fusillade of 41 bullets, killing Diallo instantly. Several of the bullets entered the dead man's feet as he lay prone and bleeding in the entrance to his building. Pavlik's students used an experimental 360-degree camera invented by the Columbia University computer science professor Shree Nayar (www1.cs.columbia.edu/CAVE, accessed January 7, 2008) to record the scene in immersive fashion. The immersive photos were posted on the APBnews.com Web site, along with other accompanying reporting. Viewers were able to look about the vestibule, examine the scene, click on the entrance to the building, and access an immersive view from the street, getting a sense of the police perspective when they first arrived on the scene.

Pavlik's students also used the 360-degree video camera invented by Nayar to cover the Irish-Lesbian Gay Organization's (ILGO) protest of and arrest in the 1997 St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City. Banned by the parade organizers because of their sexual orientation, ILGO members attempted to march in the parade anyway and were arrested by the police. Pavlik's students covered the events leading up to the parade as well as the parade itself. They produced an award-winning pioneering 360-degree immersive video documentary, in which viewers could use their mouse to pan, tilt, or zoom about the scene during any portion of the video to examine activity beyond the roughly 90-degree (or less) field of view typically available in video shot by a standard camera. The human eye takes in a field of view of approximately 160 degrees horizontal by 75 degrees vertical. By providing an immersive video experience, 360-degree video or photography can give viewers a feeling of presence not possible when viewing photos or video with the standard field of view. There are various commercial providers of 360-degree imaging technology (e.g., fullview.com, remotereality.com, ipix.com).

3D graphics are graphics with three visual dimensions, width, height, and depth. Most graphics in journalism are two dimensional, width and height. Adding a third dimension is possible in online or digital environments, and in new media journalism 3D graphics can provide an additional valuable tool to the reporter's storytelling palette. With 3D graphics, a reporter can provide complete visualization of an object central to a story, such as a science or health story. A 3D model of a human internal organ, such as a heart or heart valve, can be provided on a screen, and the reader can examine the model from all sides or from any angle. 3D graphics have been used experimentally in new media journalism trials, such as those of Pavlik and his students when, in 2000, reporting on a story about the possibility of a terrorist bombing in New York City.

Interactive photographs present another storytelling tool for new media journalists. Interactive photographs are increasingly being used online at sites such as Facebook.com, where members can post pictures of themselves, friends, or family, and then insert mouse-over labels onto the photos. Similar tools are being used in new media journalism, although they are not yet mainstream news applications. Interactive photos can take a variety of other forms in new media journalism. In one of Nayar's computational camera systems, called high dynamic-range imaging, a photographer can capture a photo of a subject involving high contrast and permit the user to see all portions and objects in the field of view without overexposing or underexposing any portion of the image (Nayar, 2008).

Situated documentaries refer to a new form of documentary developed by Pavlik and his Columbia University computer science colleague Professor Steve Feiner (www1.cs.columbia.edu/graphics/projects/mjw, accessed January 5, 2008). A situated documentary involves the use of the mobile journalist workstation (Pavlik & Feiner,

1998) previously described. In this application, the wearer walks through a location and sees through the head-worn display 3D virtual objects that act as story markers. The head-worn display incorporates a gyroscopic head tracker linked to GPS (global positioning system) and GIS (geographic information system), technologies that together permit the user to look at an interactive object for a half-second and thereby select it, much as a user on a desktop computer would select an object by moving the cursor onto it and clicking on it. This system is known as gaze approximation. It is a particularly useful tool in a mobile computing and communications environment. Through the use of gaze approximation technology the user looks at any of these virtual objects, typically a color-coated flag, selects one, and initiates a multimedia sequence or storytelling narrative. Pavlik's students produced a series of situated documentaries about past events at Columbia, including the 1968 student strike or revolt, Edwin Armstrong's invention of FM radio, and the prehistory of the Columbia Morningside Heights campus when in the mid-19th century it was home to the Bloomingdale Asylum for the Insane.

Locative media is an emerging form of new media journalism content that extends the situated documentary into a broader context. Locative media embraces all forms of media content based on geographic location. Most often, locative media is produced for online access. It is typically powered through Google Earth, a geographic visualization system made free to the public by Google (<http://earth.google.com/download-earth.html>, accessed January 8, 2008). Many news organizations such as ABC World News Tonight make extensive use of Google Earth as a visual tool for locating remote stories for the viewer. A view of the Earth from space opens the story or segment, and then a zoom down to the ground locates the story for the viewer. The digital imagery and software needed is provided freely by Google Earth, as assembled from satellite photography or photos taken from an airplane. Using this same technology, new media journalists tell stories about specific locations on Earth. A text, video, or audio report is prepared about a person, place, or event and tagged with specific geographic coordinates in Google Earth. A growing number of interesting locative media projects are under way (www.locativemedia.org/projects/C93, accessed January 4, 2008). The Center for Locative Media (www.locative-media.org, accessed January 3, 2008) provides a window into several such projects, including a geo-tagged Mississippi Blues Trail exploring the growth of the blues through the Mississippi delta. A useful examination of ongoing developments in locative media is provided by the blog of the PBS new media journalist Leslie Rule (2008).

Reinventing Relationships

New media are leading to the reinvention of the relationships between and among journalists, journalistic organizations, and their many publics, especially these five:

audiences, sources, regulators, financiers, and competitors. These relationships are essential to the continuing operation and impact of journalism in society. Perhaps most fundamentally, the relationship between news media and the general public, or what has often been called the audience, is critical. Without an audience, news media would have no purpose. Essential to this relationship is the trust of the public. Credibility is the cornerstone of the news media/public relationship. Credibility is a multidimensional concept, including not only trust but authoritative-ness of both the source and the message or content itself. As we move into the age of new media journalism, the relationship between news media and the public is evolving in significant ways, and credibility is changing as well. First and foremost, the public is evolving from a largely passive receiver of news media messages to an active participant in a two-way dialogue between and among the news media and the public. As such, the idea of “audience” is changing. Citizens have become active participants in online discussions with journalists, public figures, and each other. This is seen in a variety of venues, perhaps most visibly on the so-called YouTube debates in the early stages of the 2008 U.S. Presidential campaign. Segments of the YouTube debates (2007) are available online for on-demand free viewing. With the rise of a more active public in political dialogues, the notion of an apathetic or uninvolved citizen may decline or be replaced by a citizenry highly and directly involved in the political arena.

Other important relationships between the news media and sources, regulators, financiers, and competitors are also undergoing significant change in the age of new media journalism. Sources are those individuals or organizations journalists turn to for original information, whether through interviews, Web sites, or other materials. In the days of analog media, the barriers to publication or broadcasting were significant, and most sources with a message they hoped to deliver to the public were generally limited to going through the filter of professional news media. The growth of the Internet, World Wide Web, and various digital media of content production and delivery has made it increasingly practical, affordable, and efficient for individuals or organizations to go around the media gatekeepers and deliver their messages directly to desired publics. Whether through blogs, mass text messaging or e-mailing (sometimes called spam), RSS podcasts, or social-networking sites such as YouTube, MySpace, or Facebook, individuals and organizations can often deliver potentially powerful multimedia messages to targeted groups.

Yet such unfiltered messages can sometimes lack the credibility of messages delivered via traditional or new media journalism. Sources still often rely on journalists to tell their story, even if it is not exactly the story they would like to tell. When new media journalists talk with sources, they often do so not just face-to-face or by phone but by e-mail. And when on the phone, it may be via Skype, an online telephone service with very inexpensive or free national or international rates.

Regulation of new media journalism is increasingly not just a domestic matter. As online messages reach the farthest corners of the globe, international regulators and regulations come into play. A reporter or report legally published online in the United States can violate law in a foreign country and subject that reporter or employer to possible fines, imprisonment, or other penalties. New media journalists are typically required to adhere to the same laws (e.g., libel) as other journalists but may not enjoy the same freedoms or opportunities. Not all laws recognize bloggers as journalists and may not accredit them to gain access to news venues, such as the White House, as other recognized journalists.

Financers of new media journalism are still in a state of evolution, and it is not clear what viable business model will emerge to support journalism in the digital age. Advertising-supported journalism has operated as the main business model of journalism since the rise of the Penny Press in the 19th century. Whether online news media will enjoy these same revenues is unclear. Google, with its news aggregator service; craigslist, with its efficient online classified advertising; and other online media have emerged as powerful advertising environments, and original producers of online journalism have struggled to compete. Whether citizens in general will learn to pay for credible new media journalism remains to be seen. *The Wall Street Journal* online and a handful of other premium and specialized (e.g., *The Wall Street Journal* focuses on business news) online news sources have cultivated significant pay subscribers.

Competition in the new media age is robust and increasingly nonlocal. Frequently, competition for audience eyes and ears (not to mention dollars) is fierce in the online arena and elsewhere (e.g., digital cable is competing with telephone companies and satellite providers for television audiences as well as high-speed Internet services, all of which serve as important environments for new media journalism). This competition is not only local but national and international, as audiences find it increasingly easy to click on Al Jazeera (the Arabic news service, <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/55ABE840-AC30-41D2-BDC9-06BBE2A36665.htm>, accessed January 7, 2008), Google News, or their personalized Yahoo page with customized news, as it is to click on *The New York Times* online or other traditional news providers.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the nature and scope of new media journalism. New media journalism is differentiated from traditional or mainstream journalism and distinguished based not only on the tools used by journalists working in an online, digital domain and the means of delivering news online and on-demand but also in terms of the content new media journalists create, the structure of new media news organizations, and the relationships between new media journalism and its publics. The emergence of an active public

engaged in a participatory discourse with the media, newsmakers, and other members of the public is one of the most important qualities separating new media journalism from the journalism that preceded it and to a certain degree continues to exist in mainstream media. Whether through blogs, text messaging, or social-networking sites such as YouTube, the public has entered into a new and closer-than-ever media relationship and is demonstrating a growing interest in not only receiving messages but also creating and sharing its own content and voice. Oftentimes, this voice may be shrill, biased, or just plain silly, but sometimes it is thoughtful, insightful, and unique. Such is the promise and the peril of new media journalism.

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MEDIA LAW IN THE UNITED STATES

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How much freedom of expression is desirable? Should anyone be able to express anything at any time? Perhaps the English philosopher John Stuart Mill made one of the more eloquent statements supporting the freedom to air even the most repulsive ideas in 1859 in his work *On Liberty*. Mill says,

The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race, posterity as well as the existing generation. . . . If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error. (p. 10)

Mill is displaying confidence in humankind's reason. If an idea is erroneous, let it be openly aired so people can see for themselves the error. Of course, one has to have some confidence in the basic rationality of people, as Mill does, before this view of openness is appealing. But even Mill thought that freedom of expression needed some limits:

Even opinions lose immunity, when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute . . . a positive instigation to some mischievous act. An opinion that corn-dealers are starvers of the poor . . . ought to be unmolested when simply circulated through the press, but may justly incur punishment when delivered orally to an excited mob assembled before the house of a corn-dealer. (p. 11)

Likewise, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes saw limits to freedom of expression when he famously said, "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic."

How much freedom of expression should a society tolerate? This chapter will explore how the U.S. Supreme Court has grappled with this question in three primary areas of communications law: (1) sedition; (2) prior restraint, also known as censorship; and (3) libel of public officials.

Sedition: A Roller-Coaster Ride for the Supreme Court

Openness and toleration, or lack of the same, play a large part in the topic of sedition. "Sedition" means verbal attacks on government and its trappings—its officers, laws, and institutions. Governments generally are more tempted to pass and enforce laws against sedition when their countries are in turmoil. The United States has followed that pattern, as the following history of sedition law demonstrates.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, passed in 1791, says, "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." But the First Amendment is not absolute, and it did not guarantee that the United States had true freedom of expression. Only 7 years after the First Amendment became law, Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798.

Events across the Atlantic helped passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts. France had had its revolution in 1789. It was a bloody affair, and some people in the United States were revolted because it was so bloody. Then, England went to war with France's leader, Napoleon. There were split feelings over here about which country we should support—France or England.

Tensions mounted between the United States and France. Still, U.S. Vice President Thomas Jefferson and his Republicans favored France. President John Adams, and his Federalist Party, who favored England, passed the Alien and Sedition Acts in part to control Jefferson's Republicans. Under one part of the Sedition Act, it was a crime to conspire with others (1) "to oppose any measure . . . of the government of the United States." Conviction could result in a large fine and jail time.

Those convicted included Republican editors from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Richmond, Virginia, and a Vermont Congressman who referred to President Adams's "continual grasp for power" and his "ridiculous pomp, foolish adulation and selfish avarice." The reaction of the American people to these arrests could simply be called backlash. The Vermont Congressman's constituents reelected him by a vote of 2 to 1 over his nearest rival, and Thomas Jefferson became the president in 1801, defeating the incumbent Adams (Davidson & Winfield, 2007).

In *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* (1964), the U.S. Supreme Court commented on the Sedition Act, saying,

Although the Sedition Act was never tested in this Court, the attack upon its validity has carried the day in the court of history. . . . Jefferson, as President, pardoned those who had been convicted and sentenced under the Act . . . , stating: "I discharged every person under punishment or prosecution under the sedition law, because I considered . . . that law to be a nullity, as absolute and as palpable as if Congress had ordered us to fall down and worship a golden image."

Also, Congress, by an act passed on July 4, 1840, repaid fines because Congress considered the fines to be unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court did not test a sedition law until 1919, when it heard a case arising under the Espionage Act of 1917. When tensions heightened in 1917 with the Russian Revolution and with the United States becoming involved in World War I (a "war to make the world safe for democracy"), Congress passed the Espionage Act. Under the act, people could be punished for obstructing military recruitment, for causing disloyalty or insubordination within the armed forces, or for conspiring to obstruct recruitment or cause insubordination. The act imposed severe fines and imprisonment. Also, the law allowed the postmaster general to exclude seditious material from the mail. The following year, 1918, the law was broadened: Congress also criminalized urging curtailment of the production of necessary war material, such as ammunition.

The U.S. Supreme Court's first sedition case was also its first case interpreting the First Amendment. *Schenck v. United States* (1919) started when Schenck, the general secretary of the Socialist Party of the United States, and some other defendants mailed leaflets out to draft-age young men, telling them that the draft violated the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1865). That amendment prohibits slavery or involuntary servitude. One leaflet, the Court said, "intimated that conscription was . . . a

monstrous wrong against humanity in the interest of Wall Street's chosen few," and said, "If you do not assert . . . your rights, you are helping to deny or disparage rights which it is the solemn duty of all citizens . . . of the United States to retain." Arguments on the other side, the leaflet said, came from crafty politicians and a mercenary press. Predictably, given the Espionage Act of 1917, the government said that the leaflet encouraged obstruction of the draft. Also, the government said that the defendants unlawfully used the mail to disseminate the leaflet.

Schenck and his codefendant were found guilty of violating the Espionage Act. They appealed, claiming that their leaflet was protected by the First Amendment. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote the opinion for the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court upheld Schenck's conviction. In *Schenck v. United States* (1919), Holmes articulated his "clear and present danger" test. Holmes said,

We admit that in many places and in ordinary times the defendants in saying all that was said . . . would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done.

Then, he uttered his famous line, "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic." The question, according to Holmes, is whether the words themselves and the circumstances in which they are used "create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent." This "clear and present danger" test creates no bright line between what words are acceptable and what are not; whether there is a clear and present danger must be made on a case-by-case basis.

One week after deciding *Schenck v. United States* (1919), the Supreme Court upheld another conviction in *Frohwerk v. United States* (1919). Frohwerk was convicted of conspiring with another in producing the *Missouri Staats Zeitung* (the *Missouri State News*) and received a 10-year sentence. The paper allegedly attempted to obstruct military recruitment and to cause disloyalty in the military. Justice Holmes thought the language was on a par with that in *Schenck v. United States* (1919), with one article, in Holmes' words, "declaring it a monumental and inexcusable mistake to send our soldiers to France" and speaking of "the unconquerable spirit and undiminished strength of the German nation." Another spoke of the few amassing "unprecedented fortunes" and of the United States going to war to protect Wall Street loans: "We say therefore, cease firing." On the same day it decided *Frohwerk v. United States* (1919), in *Debs v. United States* (1919), the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of a man who ran for president five times on the Socialist ticket. Eugene Debs believed that "the capitalist system has outgrown its historical function" and that it was "incompetent and corrupt and the source of unspeakable misery and suffering to the whole working class." He was sentenced to 10 years for a speech he made

in Ohio criticizing the government's prosecution of persons for sedition. He extolled the virtues of socialism in his speech, but that is not what got him in trouble. The problem was that he told the crowd that he had just returned from a prison where he was visiting three of his friends who had aided and abetted another friend in failing to register for the draft. He eulogized those three friends and said that he was proud of them.

Debs did not help himself when at his trial he said this to the jury: "I have been accused of obstructing the war. I admit it. Gentlemen, I abhor war. I would oppose the war if I stood alone." Holmes wrote the opinion upholding Debs's conviction for obstruction of recruitment. Eight months later, Holmes, who is sometimes called the "Great Dissenter," dissented although the majority of the Supreme Court upheld the Espionage Act convictions in *Abrams v. United States* (1919). As for the facts leading to the case, the five defendants in *Abrams v. United States* (1919) were born in Russia. In the summer of 1918, the United States had sent marines to Siberia, which was supposed to be a strategic move against the Germans on the eastern front. But Abrams and his friends thought that this was an attempt by the United States to crush the Russian Revolution, so they put out pamphlets that attacked the special American expeditionary force that they said was sent to Russia to defeat the new Communist revolutionary government.

Convicted of conspiracy to encourage resistance to the war with Germany, Abrams and his four friends were sentenced to 20 years apiece for their leaflets—leaflets based on confusion. One of their pamphlets says, "Awake! Awake, you Workers of the World! Revolutionists!" It ends with this note: "It is absurd to call us pro-German. We hate and despise German militarism more than do you hypocritical tyrants. We have more reasons for denouncing German militarism than has the coward of the White House." The majority opinion in the *Abrams v. United States* (1919) case is seldom quoted. The Court said, "Even if their primary purpose and intent was to aid the cause of the Russian Revolution, the plan of action which they adopted necessarily involved . . . defeat of the war program of the United States." The Court pointed out that the five were trying to persuade people not to work in ammunition factories and Congress had made it a crime to urge curtailment of the production of necessary war material, such as ammunition.

The Court's opinion in *Abrams v. United States* (1919) activated Holmes's gag reflex. Holmes had written the court opinions in *Schenck v. United States* (1919) and *Debs v. United States* (1919) that upheld convictions, but he drew the line in *Abrams v. United States* (1919). In a fiery, impassioned dissent, Holmes called the leaflets "poor and puny anonymities" and said,

In this case sentences of twenty years imprisonment have been imposed for the publishing of two leaflets that I believe the defendants had as much right to publish as the Government has to publish the Constitution of the United States now vainly invoked by them.

Holmes's most famous words from this dissent came, however, when he said,

When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe . . . that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market.

In short, Holmes introduced the marketplace-of-ideas theory into American jurisprudence in this often quoted dissent.

The "clear and present danger test" as applied in *Schenck v. United States* (1919), *Frohwerk v. United States* (1919), *Debs v. United States*, (1919), and *Abrams v. United States* (1919) did not protect freedom of speech and press. It was a balancing test, and the Supreme Court tipped the balance in favor of suppression of speech.

Suppression can come in many forms, including economic suppression. The *Milwaukee Leader*, a Socialist newspaper, had its second-class mailing permit revoked by a third assistant postmaster general in 1917. This meant that postage would cost 8 to 15 times as much for the newspaper. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld this revocation in *United States ex rel. Milwaukee Social Democratic Publishing Co. v. Burleson* (1921). Editorials had called World War I an unjustifiable, dishonorable, capitalistic war and had called the president an "autocrat" and the Congress a "rubber stamp Congress." One editorial said that soldiers in France were becoming insane in such vast numbers that long trains of closed cars were transporting them away from battle. The Espionage Act also made it a crime to "willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation and success of the military or naval forces of this country, or with the intent to promote the success of its enemies." The Supreme Court said, "We cannot doubt that they [the newspapers] conveyed to readers of them, false reports and false statements with intent to promote the success of the enemies of the United States." The newspapers also attempted to cause disloyalty in the military and to obstruct recruiting, the Court said. Again Holmes dissented, saying, "The United States may give up the Post Office when it sees fit, but while it carries it on, the use of the mails is almost as much a part of free speech as the right to use our tongues."

In 1925, a defendant in a sedition case did make some headway with the U.S. Supreme Court. In *Gilow v. United States* (1925), the Court agreed with him that freedom of speech and press are among the "fundamental liberties" protected by the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Fourteenth Amendment, passed in 1868, in part says, "No State shall . . . deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." The Fifth Amendment, passed in 1791, says that the *federal* government may not deprive a person of "life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

Gitlow had violated a New York statute that made it a felony to advocate violent overthrow of the government. That statute was passed in 1902, after President William McKinley was shot and killed. A member of the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party and business manager of a magazine called *Revolutionary Age*, Gitlow arranged for a “Left Wing Manifesto” to be published in the magazine. The Manifesto called for mass strikes aimed at destroying the democratic state in the United States and establishing a “revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.”

Although the Court agreed that freedom of speech and the press are fundamental liberties, the Court also upheld Gitlow’s conviction. According to the Court, the Manifesto was not abstract philosophical doctrine or mere prediction of Communist victory; that would not have been enough to convict Gitlow. Instead, the Manifesto contained “the language of direct incitement.”

“A single revolutionary spark may kindle a fire that, smoldering for a time, may burst into a sweeping and destructive conflagration,” the Court said. The state, according to the Court, did not have to wait for “actual disturbances of the public peace or imminent . . . danger of its own destruction.” Instead, the state could “suppress the threatened danger in its incipiency.”

In this case, the Court said, it did not have to apply the “clear and present danger” test because the New York legislature had already determined that a danger existed from specific language—language advocating the violent overthrow of government. And if a legislative body had already determined that specific words “involve such danger of substantive evil that they may be punished,” then the question of whether the words are “likely” to bring about the evil is “not open to question.” In short, the Court deferred to the legislature’s judgment.

Holmes dissented in *Gitlow v. United States* (1925). He thought the Court should apply the clear and present danger test. “Every idea is an incitement,” Holmes opined. “The only difference between the expression of an opinion and an incitement . . . is the speaker’s enthusiasm for the result. Eloquence may set fire to reason.”

Now, the United States was moving toward World War II. Fear of domestic Communists was also causing tension. In 1940, the U.S. Congress passed the Alien Registration Act, also known as the “Smith Act” because Representative Howard Smith of Virginia had introduced it.

The Smith Act was quite similar to the New York law under which Gitlow had been convicted. Advocating violent overthrow of the government, printing anything that advocated violent overthrow of the government, or conspiring with others to do either was forbidden under the Act. In 1951, the Supreme Court heard its first case arising under the Smith Act, *Dennis v. United States* (1951). The 11 defendants in *Dennis v. United States* (1951) were charged with conspiring to organize a Communist Party to advocate violent overthrow of the government. The trial in federal court in New York took more than 9 months and produced 16,000 pages of transcript.

The *Dennis v. United States* (1951) defendants wanted the U.S. Supreme Court to use the “clear and present danger” test, and the Court, in contradiction to the deference it paid to the legislature in the *Gitlow v. United States* (1925) case, did apply the test. But applying the test ultimately made no difference for the defendants. The Court upheld their convictions. As a matter of fact, the U.S. Supreme Court only reversed convictions in one case using the “clear and present danger” test—three Jehovah’s Witnesses in the case of *Taylor v. Mississippi* (1943). The Jehovah’s Witnesses had been convicted under a Mississippi sedition law for publicly urging people not to support World War II and for urging people not to salute the flag. National security won out over freedom of speech every other time.

After saying in *Dennis v. United States* (1951) that “we are squarely presented with the application of the ‘clear and present danger’ test,” the Court said that it “must decide what that phrase imports.” But first, the Court said what “clear and present danger” does not mean: It does not mean that “probability of success is the criterion” or that “before the Government may act, it must wait until the putsch [the overthrow] is about to be executed.” The Court decided to adopt the view of Judge Learned Hand, a brilliant federal judge from New York. This is Hand’s interpretation of “clear and present danger”: “In each case, [courts] must ask whether the gravity of the ‘evil,’ discounted by its improbability, justifies such invasion of free speech as is necessary to avoid the danger.”

This definition can be converted to the following formula:

Gravity – Improbability = Invasion of free speech.

On one side of the equation is the gravity of the evil, discounted by its improbability. On the other side is the amount of invasion of free speech necessary to avoid the danger. The greater the gravity of the evil and the lower the improbability (meaning the higher the probability), the greater the invasion of free speech that a court will allow. If the gravity of the evil is not that great and the improbability is high, the invasion of free speech cannot be that great. In short,

High gravity and low improbability = A high degree of
invasion of speech,

Low gravity and high improbability = A low degree of
invasion of speech.

In the *Dennis v. United States* (1951) case, the Supreme Court found that a highly organized conspiracy created danger that justified the convictions. Although Holmes was no longer a member of the Court, dissents were blistering. For example, Justice Hugo Black protested that the First Amendment had been watered down until it would

not protect anything but “safe” ideas that did not need protection in the first place. He wanted tougher judicial review of legislation. Chief Justice Douglas, also dissenting, said that he would uphold the convictions if Dennis and his friends were teaching, say, how to plant bombs or assassinate the president, but they were just teaching “Marxist-Leninist doctrine.” He saw no clear and present danger. Douglas used words that the Court would see again—but in a majority opinion. He said, “Free speech—the glory of our system of government—[should] not be sacrificed on anything less than plain and objective proof of danger that the evil advocated is imminent.”

Because the Supreme Court upheld the convictions in *Dennis v. United States* (1951), the U.S. government continued to prosecute Communists under the Smith Act. The Supreme Court did not agree to review any of these cases until it accepted the case of *Yates v. United States* (1957). In *Yates v. United States* (1957), the Court overturned the convictions of 14 people. The Court did not rely on the “clear and present danger” test, however. *Yates v. United States* (1957) held that the Smith Act does not prohibit “advocacy and teaching of forcible overthrow as an abstract principle.” The Court determined that “it is only advocacy of forcible action that is proscribed.” Still, *Yates v. United States* (1957) does not say that the action advocated has to be imminent or probable.

Four years later in another Smith Act case, *Scales v. United States* (1961), the Supreme Court stated, “[Communist] Party leaders were continuously preaching . . . the inevitability of eventual forcible overthrow” of the U.S. government and that this “systematic preaching” constituted “advocacy of action.” The Court opined that advocacy of *future* violent action is just as punishable as advocacy of *immediate* action. Justices Black and Douglas again dissented, joined by Justice Brennan. Eight years later, a Court majority accepted the dissenters’ point of view.

The case enunciating the modern doctrine of incitement is *Brandenburg v. Ohio* (1969). Brandenburg, the red-robed leader of a Ku Klux Klan group, had invited a Cincinnati television reporter to a rally. The reporter also brought a cameraman to the rally, which included a flag burning and oratory by Brandenburg: “We’re not a revenge organization, but if our President, our Congress, our Supreme Court, continues to suppress the white, Caucasian race, it’s possible that there might have to be some revenge taken.” After the televising of the rally, Brandenburg was convicted, under an old Ohio statute passed in 1919, for “advocat[ing] . . . crime, sabotage, violence, or unlawful methods of terrorism [are there any lawful methods of terrorism?] as a means of accomplishing industrial or political reform.”

The Supreme Court overruled Brandenburg’s conviction, saying, “Constitutional guarantees of free speech and free press do not permit a State to forbid or proscribe advocacy of the use of force or of law violation *except where advocacy is directed to inciting or producing imminent*

lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such actions [italics added].” This *Brandenburg* test contains a subjective part (advocacy must be “directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action”) and an objective part (advocacy must be “likely to incite or produce such actions”). Or the *Brandenburg v. Ohio* (1969) test may be viewed as a three-part test requiring (1) intent, (2) imminence, and (3) likelihood.

After all the flip-flops in its reasoning, after all the upholding of convictions, the U.S. Supreme Court had finally landed on an incitement doctrine that would protect freedom of expression. The Court had tempered sedition as a threat. Only direct incitement could lead to the slamming of prison doors.

Prior Restraint: Gangsters and Good Law

Unlike the sedition cases, where the Supreme Court flailed for 52 years, the Supreme Court got prior restraint right the first time. In *Near v. Minnesota* (1931), the Court set the standard that it has consistently maintained through the years. Like *Brandenburg v. Ohio* (1969), *Near v. Minnesota* (1931) was a 5-to-4 decision.

The historical context of a case can often provide indicators of the policy the High Court would want to pursue. As for the context of *Near v. Minnesota* (1931), World War I had ended, the stock market had crashed in 1929, and Prohibition was in full swing, and along with Prohibition came bootlegging, gangsters such as Al Capone and Bugs Malone, and public officials on the take. In Minneapolis, a man by the name of Jay Near and his partner were busy starting a paper called *The Saturday Press*. They published that the Minneapolis government had connections to local gangsters, including an allegation that the local police chief was in cahoots with gangsters. After the first issue, gangsters shot but did not kill Near’s partner. Near wrote that the prosecuting attorney was not doing enough to clean up the situation. Unsurprisingly, this allegation angered the prosecutor.

A Minnesota statute permitted abatement, or elimination, as a nuisance of any “malicious, scandalous and defamatory newspaper” or other periodical. The prosecutor used the statute against Near and his partner, and *The Saturday Press* was perpetually enjoined from publishing.

On appeal, the U.S. Supreme Court said that the question presented was whether the restraint of publication authorized by the statute was consistent with liberty of the press. Answering “no,” the Court spoke of the Constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press: “It has been generally, if not universally, considered that it is the chief purpose of the guaranty (of freedom of the press) to prevent previous restraint upon publication.” The Court also used another term for “previous restraint” or “prior restraint”—censorship.

In striking down the Minnesota statute, the Court used the Fourteenth Amendment, saying, “It is no longer open to doubt that the liberty of the press and of speech is within the liberty safeguarded by the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment from invasion by state action.” Still, the Court rejected the notion that there could be no prior restraint. Instead, the Court made clear that prior restraint could occur but only in the following four “exceptional cases”: obstruction of military recruitment; publishing sailing dates, the number, or location of troops; obscenity; and incitements to violent overthrow of government. In 1976, in *Nebraska Press Association v. Stuart* (1976), the Court would add a fifth exceptional case: prior restraint to protect a criminal defendant’s right to a fair trial.

Note that the Court did not list cases involving malfeasance of public officers, and that is what the Court thought this case was about—trying to use prior restraint of a publication dealing with alleged malfeasance of the prosecutor, a public officer. For roughly 150 years, according to the Court, there had been almost no attempts at prior restraint of publications dealing with malfeasance of public officers, and this fact is “significant of the deep-seated conviction that such restraints would violate constitutional right.”

In short, the “character and conduct” of public officers “remain open to debate and free discussion in the press,” the Court said. Far from restraining the press, the Court even gave the press a pep talk. After all, it was the days of the Great Depression, Prohibition, and gangsters, and some public officials undoubtedly were on the gangsters’ payrolls. The Court said,

The administration of government has become more complex, the opportunities for malfeasance and corruption have multiplied, crime has grown to most serious proportions, and the danger of its protection by unfaithful officials and of the impairment of the fundamental security of life and property by criminal alliances and official neglect, emphasizes the primary need of a vigilant and courageous press, especially in great cities.

But what if a newspaper makes false accusations? The public officer will have to use the libel laws, the Court said.

In 1971, the Supreme Court followed *Near v. Minnesota* (1931) and ruled against the U.S. government when the Justice Department tried to stop *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* from publishing stories about the *Pentagon Papers*. Demonstrating the importance the Supreme Court places on attempts to shut down the press, the Court heard the arguments for the case on June 26, only 13 days after the first story ran in *The New York Times*. Four days later, the Court issued its decision in the *Pentagon Papers* case, *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971), saying, “Any system of prior restraint of expression comes to this Court bearing a heavy presumption against its constitutional validity.” The federal government had simply failed to carry its burden of proof that stories

based on the *Pentagon Papers* would cause irreparable harm to U.S. defense interests. So while the conflict in Vietnam raged on, the presses rolled, criticizing U.S. entry into that divisive, undeclared war.

Libel: The Supreme Court Starts a Revolution

But even if the Supreme Court is protecting freedom of expression from government interference in the areas of sedition and prior restraint, that is insufficient if civil suits—suits brought by private individuals or corporations—threaten the vitality of the media. Libel had become a serious threat to media vigor.

Granted, society has a strong interest in protecting peoples’ reputations. According to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart in his concurring opinion in *Rosenblatt v. Baer* (1966), this protection “reflects no more than our basic concept of the essential dignity and worth of every human being.” But freedom of speech also needs protection, of course.

Before 1964, the balance between protecting reputations and protecting speech tilted sharply in favor of protecting reputations. Three doctrines, an unholy triumvirate for the press, made winning a libel suit easy for the plaintiff: These were strict liability, presumed damages, and the burden of proof on the defendant. Under strict liability, the only question for the press was “Are those your words?” The question of how careful or not a reporter had been did not arise. The plaintiff did not have to prove that he or she in fact suffered damages because courts assumed that damages had occurred, and the defendant had either to prove the truth of the statements in question or suffer loss of the case. Libel law, in other words, was stacked against the press. Of course, the upside was that the press would perhaps be more careful. But perhaps the press would also be intimidated.

In its landmark case *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* (1964), the Supreme Court for the first time assessed the libel situation, and the revolution of U.S. libel law began. Successful libel cases were having a chilling effect, the Court found, and a timid press is inconsistent with democracy. So the Court set out to unthaw public debate on public issues, by making it much more difficult for public officials to win libel suits. Justice William Brennan wrote the decision. He said, “We consider this case against the background of a profound national commitment to the principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open, and that it may well include vehement, caustic, and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials.”

New York Times Co. v. Sullivan (1964) posed the question of whether the First Amendment permitted a law of libel. The Court then took a halfway position. It did not say that libel law was unconstitutional, but it said that the way

states were handling libel law was unconstitutional. The Court reversed Sullivan's win. The Supreme Court held that the Alabama view of libel was constitutionally deficient. Alabama failed to provide the safeguards for freedom of speech and press required by the First and the Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution. The Court declared that a public official who claims to have been libeled can only win if he or she jumps high legal hurdles. The public official must prove, with clear and convincing evidence, that the defendant newspaper or broadcaster acted with "actual malice," that is, with "knowledge that a statement is false, or reckless disregard of whether it is was true or false." In other words, the official had to prove that the defendant either knew that what he or she said was false or at least entertained some serious doubts about whether it was true or false. Furthermore, the public official had to prove that the statements caused him or her to suffer damages. And the public official had the burden of proof to prove that the allegedly libelous statements were in fact false. In short, the unholy triumvirate of strict liability, presumed damages, and burden of proof on the defendant was now dead.

The alleged libel of Sullivan, the commissioner who supervised the Montgomery police, occurred in an editorial advertisement, "Heed Their Rising Voices." It was a full-page ad with 10 paragraphs of political speech taken out by a civil liberties group dedicated to the struggle for equality by African Americans. Sixty-four persons' signatures appeared under the ad, including those of a number of celebrities. The ad began by saying,

As the whole world knows by now, thousands of Southern Negro students are engaged in wide-spread, nonviolent demonstrations in positive affirmation of the right to live in human dignity as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

But the ad said that these nonviolent demonstrations were being met

by an unprecedented wave of terror by those who would deny and negate that document which the whole world looks upon as setting the pattern for modern freedom.

The ad contained some errors. For example, it said, "In Montgomery, Alabama, after students sang 'My Country, 'Tis of Thee' on the State Capitol steps, their leaders were expelled from school and truckloads of police armed with shotguns and tear-gas ringed the Alabama State College Campus." The students instead sang the National Anthem, and the police did not "ring" the campus.

The Supreme Court said that the ad did not forfeit its First Amendment protection because some of its statements were false or because they were allegedly defamatory. "Neither factual error nor defamatory content remove the constitutional shield from criticism of official conduct."

Talking about the need for "breathing space," the Court said, "erroneous statement is inevitable in free debate, and . . . it must be protected if the freedoms of expression are to have the 'breathing space' that they need to survive." The court pointed out that the \$500,000 civil judgment in Sullivan was 1,000 times greater than the maximum fine provided by Alabama's criminal libel statute and 100 times greater than the maximum fine under the Sedition Act of 1798. The Court said that even if newspapers could survive financially, "the pall of fear and timidity" would create "an atmosphere in which the First Amendment freedoms cannot survive."

As for requiring the defendant to prove the truth, the Court said that it leads to self-censorship. Having to prove truth deters criticism because the critic, even if the critic knows that something is true, might doubt whether he or she could prove it in court or might fear the expense of having to prove it in court.

The most revolutionary statement concerning constitutional restraints in libel cases is this:

The constitutional guarantees require . . . a federal rule that prohibits a public official from recovering damages for a defamatory falsehood relating to his official conduct unless he proves that the statement was made with "actual malice"—this is, with knowledge that it was false or with reckless disregard of whether it was false or not.

There were no dissents in the *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* (1964) case. Three justices, Black, Douglas, and Goldberg, wrote concurring opinions saying that they would have gone even further than the rest of the Court by recognizing an absolute right to publish criticisms of public officials. Had the court gone as far as these three, then public officials would have been precluded under the Constitution from bringing libel suits concerning their official conduct.

In 1966, the Supreme Court extended the *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* (1964) rule of actual malice to nonelected public officials and to former public officers when there is still public interest in a matter (*Rosenblatt v. Baer*, 1966). The following year, 1967, the Court extended this doctrine of actual malice to public figures (*Curtis Publishing Co. v. Butts* and *Associated Press v. Walker*, 1967).

As for who qualifies as a public figure, the Court explained in *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.* (1974) that "in some instances an individual may achieve such pervasive fame or notoriety that he becomes a public figure for all purposes and in all contexts." Famous entertainers, athletes, or other persons whose names almost everybody recognizes are public figures for all areas of their lives and thus must always prove actual malice to win a libel case. "More commonly," the Court says, "an individual voluntarily injects himself or is drawn into a particular public controversy and thereby becomes a public figure for a limited range of issues."

In *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.* (1974), the Court applies a different rule than actual malice for these private persons for two main reasons. First, “Public officials and public figures usually enjoy significantly greater access” to the media. Thus, they have a greater opportunity to “counteract false statements” than do private individuals. They can engage in “self-help,” as the Court calls it. But private individuals are “more vulnerable to injury, and the state interest in protecting them is correspondingly greater.” Second and more important, the Court says, is a moral consideration at the base of this distinction between public and private plaintiffs: “An individual who decides to seek governmental office must accept certain necessary consequences,” and running the “risk of closer public scrutiny” is one of them. “The media,” according to the Court, “are entitled to act on the assumption that public officials and public figures have voluntarily exposed themselves to increased risk of injury from defamatory falsehoods.” But “no such assumption is justified with respect to a private individual.” In short, the Court says, “Private individuals are not only more vulnerable to injury than public officials and public figures; they are also more deserving of recovery.” Therefore, in *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.* (1974), the Court held that states could “define for themselves the appropriate standard of liability for a publisher or broadcaster” who defames a private individual, “so long as the states do not impose liability without fault.” Negligence, or not using the degree of care that a reasonable person in similar circumstances would use, is thus an acceptable standard of proof for private individuals. But even private individuals who seek punitive damages must prove actual malice. The Court in *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.* (1974) defines punitive damages as “private fines . . . to punish reprehensible conduct and to deter its future occurrence.”

The revolution in libel law ended in 1974. The Court continued to struggle with the sometimes fuzzy lines of who constitutes a public figure, but the basics of libel law were in place. The Court had gutted the old law of libel and left in its place a law of libel that sometimes made recovery of damages impossible even for persons who the media had intentionally wronged: “Plainly many deserving plaintiffs, including some intentionally subjected to injury, will be unable to surmount the barrier of the *New York Times* test,” the Court had admitted in *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.* (1974). Perhaps the pendulum had swung too far in favor of protecting the press, but the Court was expressing the importance of the press to a democratic society—“the primary need of a vigilant and courageous press” that the Court had emphasized in *Near v. Minnesota* (1931).

In 1988, in *Hustler Magazine v. Falwell* (1988), the Court emphasized the importance of protecting the press even when it printed material designed to hurt feelings, especially political cartoons: “The appeal of the political

cartoon or caricature is often based on exploration of unfortunate physical traits or politically embarrassing events—an exploration often calculated to injure the feelings of the subject of the portrayal.” Indeed, history, according to the Court, is on the side of caustic cartoons: “From the early cartoon portraying George Washington as an ass down to the present day, graphical depictions and satirical cartoons have played a prominent role in public and political debate.”

In libel, as well as in prior restraint, the Court had gone directly to protecting freedom of expression. The Court had not spun its wheels, grinding up defendants, as it had in sedition cases.

Conclusion

Sedition, the crime of criticizing government or its officials, laws, or institutions, took its toll on freedom of expression while the Supreme Court floundered. Many years were wasted in prison by persons convicted for “crimes” such as criticizing the draft or opposing the making of armaments and war. Arguably, the United States did not get true freedom of political expression until 1969 and the *Brandenburg v. Ohio* (1969) decision, which said, “Constitutional guarantees of free speech and free press do not permit a State to forbid or proscribe advocacy of the use of force or of law violation except where advocacy is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such actions.”

But the Supreme Court got it right the first time when asked whether a publication could be shut down for criticizing a public official for alleged malfeasance in office. In 1931, the High Court in *Near v. Minnesota* (1931) declared, “It has been generally, if not universally, considered that it is the chief purpose of the guaranty (of freedom of the press) to prevent previous restraint upon publication.” And the Supreme Court took it upon itself to revolutionize libel law in 1964, ruling that public officials could only win libel cases if they could prove by clear and convincing evidence that the defendant acted with “actual malice”—with “knowledge that a statement is false, or reckless disregard of whether it is was true or false.”

Although the Supreme Court is the ultimate authority on freedom of expression in the United States, perhaps one of the best statements regarding the importance of freedom of expression came from a New York trial judge in the *Pentagon Papers* case. Judge Murray Gurfein, in *United States v. New York Times Co.* (1971), wrote,

There is no greater safety valve for discontent and cynicism about the affairs of Government than freedom of expression in any form. This has been the genius of our institutions throughout our history. It is one of the marked traits of our national life that distinguish us from other nations under different forms of government.

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JOURNALISM ETHICS

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Journalism ethics is a dynamic and growing field. Ethical issues in news have been debated since the 1890s, but by the 21st century, journalism ethics had become a major enterprise. Textbooks, workshops for media professionals, research, university courses, professors who specialize in ethics are now commonplace. Advertising and public relations ethics, and entertainment ethics are taken seriously too, but journalism ethics is especially strong.

In 1980, following decades of slow advance, journalism ethics received a major boost from two sources that catapulted the field into the new century. In the United States, the Hastings-Carnegie studies of professional ethics in American higher education were completed that year (Hastings Center, 2000). Journalism was included within the domain called *professional ethics*, along with high-status occupations such as medicine, law, business, and engineering. It established for media ethics, the baseline statistical measures and many of the issues that we continue to use in research today. It gave to journalism ethics the status of philosophy. Journalism is included in the academic organization that resulted, The Association for Applied and Professional Ethics. The *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, which began publication in 1985, contributes to professional ethics as a whole, not just narrowly to the ethics of reporting.

Many Voices, One World also appeared in 1980. Sean MacBride, the UN delegate from Ireland, spearheaded a study for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) of international media policies and professional practices. It emphasized the developing world as an equal partner with industrial nations, insisting on the rights of the South to speak for itself in its own terms. Mass communication ethics passed

the international watershed and has been global of necessity ever since.

Since journalism ethics has become a large and complicated field of study, it is divided somewhat differently by various authors and thinkers. But generally, four important ethical issues dominate the agenda for 21st-century communication: truth, technology, social philosophy, and universals. The health and vitality of journalism ethics for the future depends on the sophistication with which these complicated issues are handled.

Truth

The press's obligation to truth is of paramount concern at present. Truth telling is the generally accepted standard of the media professions. Communicators are to be specialists in truth in the way politicians ought to specialize in justice and business leaders in stewardship. Credible language, in fact, is pivotal to journalism's very existence. But living up to the truth ideal is nearly impossible these days. Budget constraints, deadlines, self-serving sources, and the frenetic pace all complicate the production of truth in newswriting. Our impressive technology generates almost unlimited news copy and requires difficult choices without the opportunity to sift through the intricacies of telling the truth.

The prevailing view of truth as accurate information is too narrow for today's social and political complexities, though objectivity remains entrenched in ordinary practices of news production and dissemination. With this historic scheme under duress, some heavy thinking by both practitioners and academics is critical for transforming the concept of truth intellectually.

A more sophisticated concept of truth is disclosure, getting to the heart of the matter. Already in 1947, the famous Hutchins Commission Report, *A Free and Responsible Press*, had called for this alternative. It advocated a deeper definition of the press's mission as "a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning." Dietrich Bonhoeffer contends correctly in his *Ethics* (1995, chap. 5) that a truthful account includes the context, motives, and presuppositions involved. Truth as authentic disclosure means, in other words, to strike gold, to get at the core issue, the heart of the matter, to see the essence of things (Pippert, 1989). When the truth is told, the response is "You're right. Now I get it."

The best journalists understand from the inside the attitudes, culture, and language of the persons and events on their news beat. In the process of weaving a tapestry of truth, reporters' disclosures will be credible and realistic to those being covered. Rather than reducing social issues to the financial and administrative problems that politicians define, the truth principle requires that the news media disclose the depth and nuance that enable readers and viewers to identify the fundamental issues themselves.

During a formative period for the media in the 1920s to 1950s, a dichotomy between facts and values dominated Western thinking. Genuine knowledge was identified with the physical sciences, and the objectivity of physics and mathematics set the standard for all forms of knowing. Journalistic morality became equivalent to unbiased reporting of neutral data. Presenting unvarnished facts was heralded as the standard of good performance. The best news mirrored reality. Objective reporting was not merely a technique, but withholding value judgments was considered a moral imperative. With scientific naturalism being the ruling paradigm in the academy, universities institutionalized the convention of objective reporting in journalism curricula.

Objectivity has become increasingly controversial as the working press's professional standard. Rather than surrendering the idea of objectivity altogether and defining journalism ethics without it or alongside it, Stephen Ward (2004) argues for transforming it into pragmatic objectivity. This is another alternative instead of defining truth as authentic disclosure. It is an idea that warrants ongoing discussion, analysis, and application. Pragmatic objectivity is a "modest conception of truth that is closest to common sense" (p. 267). It understands "truth as the slow process of coming to know more and more things about our empirical world and to grasp them in a more accurate and comprehensive manner" (p. 271). Ward correctly challenges professionals to participate in its definition and implementation.

Technology

Ethics has its roots and longest history in print journalism. But the field is challenged in the 21st century by the revolution in media technology. The communication technologies

that produce and distribute information today have become an economic paradise. Clusters of high-tech communication firms are remapping the planet. Previous geographical alignments organized by political power are being reordered in terms of electronic megasystems.

The revolution is not taking place in abstraction outside of everyday affairs. The menagerie of fiber optics, super-computer data, and satellite technology, though inescapably global, is local and personal as well. Television, CDs, and DVDs, online databases, iPod, Facebook, MySpace, video games, cellular telephones, and virtual reality—the electronic highway has become the everyday world of advanced industrial societies. Mass media technologies are converging into digital formats, Internet chat rooms, multiuser domains (MUD), Web-based publications, and hyperlink— together they are producing new forms of human interaction. Public life in the 21st century is being altered in complex ways through ubiquitous multimedia technologies, and ethics is essential for coming to grips with them. Language is indispensable to our humanness and the social order; therefore, when our communication capacity is mediated in fundamentally different ways than before, the impact is substantial and far-reaching. Accounting for the social influence of media technologies is a historical and empirical task but clearly the domain of journalism ethics as well. And its grounding in print technology means that the field needs to be updated and transformed.

Historically, communication ethics arose in conjunction with concerns related to the print media, so that it requires substantial work to extend the original developments to the more prominent digital technologies. Print news and the ethical standards for newspaper reporters were the first concerns of anything that could be called communication ethics. The harm that an unregulated press could do to society was first explicitly linked to ethical principles in North America and Europe during the 1890s, when critics began assessing journalism philosophically. These initial forays blossomed into the first systematic work in communication ethics during the 1920s in the United States. Four major books emerged from America's heartland during that decade, their authors among a Who's Who of journalism luminaries: Nelson Crawford's *Ethics of Journalism* (1924), Leon Flint's *The Conscience of the Newspaper* (1925), William Gibbon's *Newspaper Ethics* (1926), and Albert Henning's *Ethics and Practices in Journalism* (1932). These authors understood ethics as a scholarly enterprise and left a permanent legacy. In Europe also, several ethical issues emerged in the early 20th century. Sensationalism was considered contrary to the public service role of the newspaper. Freebies and junkets, scourged by media critics already in the 19th century, were treated more systematically in the context of rising business competition. Together, they carved out much of the structure that dominates journalism ethics across Europe and North America in the early 21st century and, with some nuances, in various regions around the world.

But those intellectual roots of press ethics were formed when print technology was the exclusive option. Most of the heavyweights in communication ethics in industrialized democracies have shown a predilection for news, and news in its literary rather than electronic broadcast form. Many of the perpetual issues in media ethics—invasion of privacy, conflict of interest, sensationalism, confidentiality of sources, and stereotyping—get their sharpest focus in a print context. Meanwhile, newspapers outside the mainstream have scarcely been considered, making exceptions such as Patrick Washburn's book *The African American Newspaper* (2007) an important one for ethics.

The media situation changed in the late 20th century. Television became the primary source of news for most people, and information radio, such as National Public Radio, became vital. Research emphasized the news function, tackled cases and problems from broadcasting, the wire service agencies, and documentaries, in addition to everyday reporting. And beyond news, the electronic media's role in persuasion and entertainment became pervasive, socially significant, and ethically charged. The result was burgeoning research in the ethics of public relations, organizations, face-to-face encounters, the music business and cinema, libraries, book publishing, confidentiality in computer storage, fiction, new media technologies, the mass-mediated sports industry, and more.

The dark side of ethical research into this expansive field of all media functions has been faddishness and fragmentation. However, the widening spectrum did open new insights and fresh approaches to issues that lie beneath the surface. Deception and economic temptation were seen as common in all mass-mediated communication. Sexism and racism are deep-seated everywhere. Reporters often failed to recognize sensationalism in the news until they confronted the difference between gratuitous violence and realism in the entertainment media. Invasion of privacy, easily excused in news, becomes an insufferable evil when government agencies access confidential information from data banks without permission. The challenge for journalism ethics yet today is to demonstrate how ongoing ethical quandaries ought to be examined across a diverse range of media technologies and functions—not only in print and broadcast media but also with digital technologies primarily.

In outlining an agenda for communication ethics in terms of the entire spectrum of media technologies rather than print journalism alone, several issues emerge as primary. Each can profit from the past, though several are new or have such dramatic intensity at present that thinking rooted in the communication ethics of the 20th century is no longer directly relevant. Meanwhile, the electronic media have achieved some important successes. The Internet makes it possible for people who disagree with government policies to unite and protest against them. The Landmine Ban Treaty among the world's nations, for example, could not have happened without new media technologies. Television was the stimulus for humanitarian

intervention in Somalia and prison reform in the U.S. military. Strengthening the media's role in democracy is important for journalism ethics while identifying the negative dimensions that are already obvious.

Violence in television and in films has been a major ethical issue for decades. Internet technology has complicated the problem with hate speech and terrorism. In the United States, for example, studies have shown that by high school graduation, the average 17-year-old will have seen 18,000 murders in movies and on television. From the horrific shootings at Columbine High School in 1999 to similar tragedies in other states and countries before and since, teenagers who slaughter their classmates and teachers, and then kill themselves, are linked by debate or research to the culture of violence in which they live. While the United States leads the world in the amount of violence on television, television programming in all parts of the globe contains a great deal of violence, including a high percentage of guns as weapons and the terrible consequences only hinted at or not even depicted at all. Gun-related deaths in the United States have reached the level of a public health epidemic.

Violence is a serious ethical issue because it violates the persons-as-ends principle. The 19th-century ethicist Immanuel Kant made a standard formulation still used today—people must treat all other rational beings as ends in themselves and never as means only. The gratuitous cheapening of human life to expand ratings is a reprehensible mistreatment of human beings. From the persons-as-ends perspective, there is a special concern about the sexual violence so common in music video, horror movies (especially slasher films), and video games. Sadistic, bloodthirsty torture in pornography is a particularly offensive form of dehumanization.

A new dimension of violence has emerged with hate speech on the Internet. In 1995, the former Ku Klux Klan (KKK) leader Don Black established Stormfront, the first white supremacist Web site. As access to the Internet became less expensive and creating Web pages much simpler, the number of Web sites and people visiting them grew exponentially. Mirroring this growth, Web sites promoting various kinds of bigotry have multiplied dramatically, now numbering in the thousands. In the past, hate was promoted through crude graffiti and low-quality pamphlets. Bulk mailings to even a few hundred people were difficult. But with the Internet, slick Web sites devoted to hate are available to a potential audience of millions. Though late in the 20th century the KKK was fragmented more than at any time since World War II, its factions are now using the Internet to revitalize the organization as the so-called "Klan without robes." The KKK sites maintain and defend the superiority of the white race and warn against interracial marriage. Jews are vilified as Satan's people, and immigration is condemned as an uncontrolled plague. Numerous neo-Nazi Web sites promote the anti-Semitic racism of Adolf Hitler, with the National Alliance being the most

prominent Hitlerian organization in the United States thanks to the Internet. Jews are blamed for inflation, media brainwashing, and government corruption, with blacks depicted as criminals and rioters. A host of Web sites are devoted to Holocaust revisionism, denying the murder of Jews in World War II. Web sites of hate groups that claim religious legitimacy are flourishing as well. The Christian Identity site is virulently racist and anti-Semitic. The World Church of the Creator calls nonwhites physiologically sub-human. The site for White Aryan Resistance rails against the nonwhite birthrate. Other sites are anti-Catholic and anti-Muslim or militantly anti-abortion.

This is one example of how digital technology challenges journalism ethics in a new way. In dealing with the various moral problems in the media, some ethical theories are more appropriate than others, and different theories do not always give the same answer. But hate speech on the Internet is contradicted by all major theories without exception. This across-the-board condemnation suggests that all personal, educational, and policy efforts to combat Internet hate speech are permissible, even mandatory, but obviously without the revenge and aggressiveness that contradict good ends.

The worldwide reach of high-speed electronic technologies has made communication systems and institutions of global scope possible. Dealing with these new entities requires a technologically sophisticated, cross-cultural ethics commensurate with the worldwide reach of the media. In the process of identifying and responding to specific issues, communication and media ethics must make the questions raised by technology a central focus for the 21st century. As true of professional ethics generally, journalism ethics ought to become international in character. In place of its largely Western, gender-biased, and monocultural traditions, media ethics of the future must be ecumenical, gender inclusive, and multicultural.

A diversified, transnational ethics, with a level playing field rooted in equal respect for all cultures, is by no means unproblematic and involves an act of faith. The claim that all cultures have something important to say to all human beings is a hypothesis that cannot be validated concretely. Yet it serves as an open horizon for moving transnational study forward. Of the various types of applied and professional ethics, journalism ethics has its roots most deeply in language, culture, and human dialogue. In that sense, a multicultural style is required for its own identity.

Here is a way to summarize and clarify technology as today's challenge for journalism ethics. Over the history of journalism ethics, decisive changes have occurred in media technology from print to electronic. In the 21st century, another major shift is under way to digital. When journalism ethics entered its major phase in the 1980s, broadcast technology dominated our media systems; presently, the important ethical concerns focus on digital technology instead. Journalism ethics, as it took hold with MacBride and the Hastings-Carnegie studies, was rooted in print technology.

In the digital era now, ethics must establish its agenda in terms of the distinctive properties of this new technological system. An early version of this task was the special issue of the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* in 1998 devoted to new media technologies. A double issue of the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* in 2003, "Virtual Reality and Communication Ethics," developed the idea that the virtual world as the innovative edge of online technologies is the most advanced context at present for coming to grips with ethics. David Gunkel's *Thinking Otherwise: Philosophy, Communication, Technology* (2007) centers on ethics throughout, philosophical ethics and media ethics both. He develops a model of moral responsibility within the context of the newest innovations in information technology. Michael Bugeja's *Living Ethics Across Media Platforms* (2007) identifies moral issues that are similar across the various media technologies.

Based on this scholarship to date, the ethics agenda needs to be developed in full for the digital world of search engines, online networking, and computer databases. Some issues are new, some amplify or transform the ethics of the past, and others create new levels of complexity heretofore unknown. Regarding the latter, cyberwarfare and cyberterrorism have been given special urgency since September 11, 2001. Long-standing issues have taken on a new complexity or orientation, such as Web-based surveillance and theft of private information. The ethics of representation now has a different orientation with gender, race, and religion debated in anonymous cyberspace. Equitable allocation of information technologies is one moral problem of justice, confronting as it does the injustice of the digital divide between the information rich and poor.

Other problems are rooted in computer technology itself, such as the ethics of blogging and online journalism. Blogging is only possible in an age of sophisticated technology. As a digital revolution at home and at work, it requires special emphasis in developing ethical principles that are appropriate. A code of blogging ethics developed by Martin Kuhn and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication focuses on the struggle to build human relationships and communities in cyberspace. The quality of interaction by the participants is considered the core duty that a code of ethics must address (www.cyberjournalism.net/news). Together these dramatic technological changes offer an obvious challenge for developing ethical guidelines that are appropriate to them.

Social Philosophy

The emphasis in journalism ethics throughout the 20th century was on professional morality, on the character of news, and on the values and structures of news organizations. The classroom and research focused on the insider: reporters and sources, problems of daily newsgathering,

the economic temptations to put circulation and audience above the best possible reporting, the press's invasion of privacy, and so forth. Case studies were typically recommended for teaching since they deal with concrete issues and actions. For the bulk of its history to date, the agenda of journalism ethics has been set by the profession, its struggles and problems as understood from the inside out and the bottom up.

The challenge for the 21st century is grounding journalism ethics first of all in the general morality. The rationale for a practitioner orientation to date is obvious. The complexity of the field and its changing dynamics require ongoing concern for professional morality. However, rather than developing rules for experts, media ethics needs to be preoccupied now with the moral dimension of everyday life. The venerable issues of social ethics should determine the agenda (e.g., justice, human dignity, truth telling, no harm to the innocent), and journalistic practice should be understood in that larger context. How the moral order works itself out in community formation must be the focus, not what practitioners consider virtuous. Rather than refining journalism codes of ethics, the ultimate standard for media professionals is the moral life as a whole. With this broader orientation, reporters and management would operate in the same arena as their readers, viewers, and clients. The compelling need for this century is a citizen's ethics rather than a profession-based ethics per se.

To develop journalism ethics in these larger terms, democracy as a political system ought to be the framework for understanding the media. The important book *The Press*, edited by Geneva Overholser and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (2005), gives us the right perspective here. Democracy in this volume is the context in which the structure and function of the news media are understood. The health of journalism by itself is not the main concern of *The Press* but the vitality of democratic politics. As the authors put it, journalism is the means, and the end is democracy. Rather than provide audiences and readers with information, the press's aim is citizens who are literate about democracy. In that sense, ethical journalism is the foundation of genuine democracy.

Journalism ethics is not only concerned with the flourishing of democratic practice, but it also has a stake in democratic theory as well. For the 21st century, thinking on democracy is moving beyond individual rights and government policy to cosmopolitanism. Political theorists are seeking to make democracy more global, more responsive to and more viable in a world where political participation extends beyond traditional nation-states and requires forms of democracy not bound by geography. David Held (1995), among others, focuses on what he understands to be a new and pressing need for a global democratic order stronger than the United Nations, without discounting the importance of the local, regional, and national. Cosmopolitanism sets the highest and most accurate standard at present as the democratic context for understanding the

ethics of news—particularly Appiah's (2006) version, which deeply engages diversity.

In fact, diversity is one of the central issues in journalism ethics and society at present. Indigenous languages and ethnicity have come into their own. Ethnicity has replaced Marxist class struggle as the most powerful force of the 21st century. Sects and religious fundamentalists insist on recognition. One's culture is more salient at present than one's nationality. Muslim immigrants are the fastest-growing segment of the population in France, and they are not interested in full assimilation into French language and politics. A total of 30,000 Navajos live in Los Angeles, isolated from their native nation and culture. The nomadic Fulani, searching for good pasture throughout sub-Saharan West Africa, are held together by clan fidelity, but their political future hangs in the balance. In contrast to the melting pot of the previous century, immigrants to the United States in the 21st century insist on maintaining their own cultures, religions, and languages. The majority of European origin is under siege in North America. In the United States, for example, 1.5 million people from across the globe become new citizens every year, but debates over immigration policy are acrimonious and irresolute. More than 50% of the schoolchildren in New York State belong to non-Caucasian ethnic groups. In cultural terms, south-central Los Angeles is a continent away from residential Hollywood. A subculture of Chaldean Christians with Iraqi roots owns 1,500 small stores in Detroit, Michigan. Amish farmers in Pennsylvania and the Amana Colonies in Iowa struggle to maintain their identity. Consensus under the melting-pot thesis holds little salience.

On a global scale, according to anthropologists, nearly 20,000 culture groups are locked away from the social mainstream. For the most part, these hidden peoples exist without recognition or adequate representation. Urdu-speaking Muslims are aliens in the state of Punjab in India. Since winning independence in 1989, the Belorussians have had little success in creating a sovereign state; for 70 years, their history and language had not been taught. Their identity crisis reaches even to the parliament in Minsk. Only the remnants of Mayan culture survive in the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, obscured under the government's official commitment to the Spanish language and to nationalism. Anthony Cortese (1990) documents how deeply moral commitments are embedded in social relations—his cross-cultural evidence including among others an Israeli kibbutz, Kenyan village leaders, Tibetan monks, and folk societies in Papua New Guinea and India. Ethnic identity is now considered essential to cultural vitality. As a result, social institutions such as the mass media are challenged to develop a healthy cultural pluralism in their thinking, organizational structure, and reporting practices.

If the task of ethical journalism is to enable local communities to speak in their own language and to participate actively in public life, what glue is left to hold us together? With cultural identity coming into its own from Miami,

Florida, to East Asia, is ethnic conflict inevitable? The Hutu and Tutsi massacres in Rwanda, Russian soldiers shooting people in the streets of a Chechen village, and brutal warfare in Bosnia are not stories about tribal disputes only but also about ethnic cleansing. Is anarchy likely?

Therefore, the question is whether in a democratic view of public life and the press, we are referring to local cultures only. Without a commitment to the common human good, we will not avoid tribalism. The issue for ethical journalism is not communal values per se but universal ones—not the common good understood as the community's good but common in its richest universal meaning.

To make ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity come true in the 21st century, media programming and policies should move away from melting-pot homogeneity and replace it with the politics of recognition. Obviously, news cannot be ethical unless the challenge of cultural diversity is met, and this requires a fundamental shift from homogeneity to recognition. The basic issue is whether democracies discriminate against their citizens in an unethical manner when major institutions fail to account for the identity of their members. In what sense should the specific cultural and social features of African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Buddhists, Jews, the physically disabled, or children publicly matter? Should not public institutions ensure that democratic citizens share an equal right to political liberties and due process without regard to race, gender, or religion? The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor considers the issue of recognizing multicultural groups politically as among the most urgent and vexing on the democratic agenda. Beneath the rhetoric is a fundamental philosophical dispute about the ethics of recognition. As Taylor (1994) puts it, "Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need" (p. 26). Guaranteeing that people have their own voice, define their own identity, and are respected as equals on their own terms is a foundational issue for democracy and for the news media, which constitute the public arena where ethnic identity is represented and understood.

News professionals are generally committed to the flourishing of particular cultures, religions, and ethnic groups, but this commitment needs to be applied more aggressively. Paul Lester and Susan Ross's *Images That Injure* (2003) has become a staple of instruction for students and practitioners toward that goal. Downing and Husband (2005) help fulfill this agenda also with their literature review of three decades of racial stereotyping as background for proposing a new "multi-ethnic public sphere" model for representing race. And Robert Entman and Andrew Rojecki (2000) illustrate a deep application of cultural pluralism to race. Race in the United States

remains a preeminent issue, and their research indicates a broad array of white racial sentiments toward African Americans as a group. They emphasize not the minority of outright racists but the perplexed majority. On a continuum from comity (acceptance) to ambivalence to animosity and finally racism, a complex ambivalence most frequently characterizes the majority. Whites bring combinations of misinformation, emotional needs, assumptions, and experiences to their thinking about race. They may believe, for example, that blacks face discrimination but argue against welfare spending out of a suspicion of government programs. Correcting white ignorance and dealing with ambiguities hold the most promise for the media. There is little evidence that the media, in either news or entertainment, focus on ambivalence and pull their viewers and readers toward comity. In Entman and Rojecki's study, the media did little to enhance racial understanding among the ambivalent majority most open to it. The challenge for the media is to provide the news and programming that this important swing group needs to move policy and institutions toward cultural pluralism.

For journalism ethics, ethnic identity cannot be a half-hearted pursuit. We are fully human agents through language. Language makes community possible; it is the public agent through which our identity is realized. The lingual dimension forms humans and their relationships into meaningful units, and its vitality or oppression inevitably conditions our well-being. In that sense, the media as our primary form of public communication are a crucial arena through which ethnic pluralism comes into its own.

Universals

It is imperative that ethics in the 21st century be broad and strong enough to match the media's international scope. Fortunately for the field's long-term vitality, theoretical models of the universal are being developed for media ethics, as they are by academics in philosophy and the social sciences. Thomas Cooper's *Communication Ethics and Global Change* (1989) was the first comprehensive survey of journalism ethics across cultures by an international network of media professionals and teachers from 13 countries. The quest for truth, desire for responsibility, and call for free expression were identified as three major areas of worldwide concern. Another research strategy he developed for understanding our universal humanity is learning from indigenous groups (Cooper, 1998), noting in particular their sophisticated understanding of truth and their integration of heart and mind. The Christians and Traber (1997) study of ethical principles in 13 countries on four continents affirms the sacredness of life as a universal principle. Hamelink (2000) appeals to international human rights for moral guidance vis-à-vis cyberspace technology. Stephen Ward's (2005) global thinking revolves around a

modified version of social contract theory. Shakuntala Rao and Herman Wasserman (2007) use postcolonial theory as their framework. Lee Wilkins (2008) has established neuroscience as a theoretical framework for moral universals. None of them promotes transcendental metaphysical abstractions, but they recognize diversity across cultures by keeping ethics rooted in everyday experience.

Individual rights are the axis around which most journalism ethics has revolved—individuals making decisions as professionals and then being held accountable for them. While this focus on personal responsibility covers a large amount of everyday experience, the global society taking shape in the 21st century needs a broader and more comprehensive framework than individualism. The most radical alternative to individual rights is universal human solidarity. The beginning point of universals in ethical theory is global oneness. Starting at this end of the spectrum does not ignore individual decisions but comes to them from the larger perspective of the transnational and the needs of human beings as a whole.

What could this possibly mean? What is human solidarity? What are some universal principles on which we could all agree? Are there common goods in spite of the splendid variety of human ingenuity? If we are to foster good journalism on the local level, we need a vocabulary of master norms and of universal values, not lame appeal to community standards only. In its theorizing and everyday practice, journalism must advocate principles that hold true universally. Rather than either universals or communities, they need to feed from one another. If adjudicating among individual rights is often impossible, we confront the same issue among competing communities: Which one is legitimate, and which ones are not?

Universal values provide a framework for bringing our communities into perspective and under judgment as necessary. Obviously, not every community ought to be celebrated. Humans tend to make their local situations supreme and in the process overlook racism, sexism, and injustice within. Universal values are a way of keeping our common human solidarity as the ultimate and of restricting particular conventions on the local level to secondary status. Cultures need norms beyond their own heroes and ideals to be self-critical. An outsider lets us know that we are limited. In fact, without norms that are more than contingent, dehumanization cannot finally be condemned except on the grounds of personal preference or emotional appeal. Without a commitment to common principles, history is but a contest of arbitrary power.

Universal principles in the past have proved to be oppressive. They typically have been designed from a certain perspective—Western, male, and abstract, for example—and then imposed on others in a patronizing manner. The universals that are legitimate in the 21st century are not rigid, formal, and domineering but respect the diversity of the human race even while seeking commonness among peoples everywhere.

One such master principle is human dignity, most widely known as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, established in 1948 by UNESCO:

- Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. (Preamble)
- All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. (Article 1)
- Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set for in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. (Article 2)

Every child, woman, and man has sacred status without exception. Inspired in large part by the atrocities of World War II, the Preamble refers to “barbarous acts which . . . outraged the conscience of mankind.” The *Declaration* is generally considered the most universal expression of the moral aspirations of the civilized world.

Humans are a unique species. No society has open hunting season on people: “In October you can shoot three as long as you have a license.” On the principle of our unassailable dignity as human beings without exception, we begin to articulate notions of justice and public policy. Periodically, there are brief attempts to make human rights across the board the centerpiece of government action, and this is the master norm of human dignity at work. When journalists are serious about diversity and gender equality without stereotyping, they are acting on the principle of human dignity.

Human rights, as worked out among the world’s peoples in the United Nations, is one basis for the cross-cultural ethical principle of human dignity. Another strategy for establishing human dignity as a common good across cultures is rooted in the sacredness of human life. The German philosopher Hans Jonas (1984) argued that when giving birth to others, we do not begin with a neutral calculus trying to decide whether to take responsibility for this new human being. Rather our primal instinct is toward preserving life, protecting it, and giving unquestioned commitment to it. Parental duty to children is an archetype of responsibility among the human species—that is, irrevocable and without negotiating the terms every time some new person appears. Out of this notion of the sacredness of life emerge ethical theories about not harming the innocent as an obligation that is cosmic, primordial, and irrespective of our roles or contracts.

Human dignity illustrates the manner in which certain norms have a broad, taken-for-granted character. Given the oneness of the human species, its universal solidarity is the basic principle of ethics and the basis of all human communication. Our common humanness we share intersubjectively as a moral demand across cultural, racial, and historical boundaries. Instead of constructing a purely rational foundation for morality, our mutual human existence is

the touchstone of ethics. In this view, ethics is as old as human beings and a primordial force in human existence. Given the social nature of communication, the community's life story is the home of ethics. Society is inconceivable without an overriding commitment to each other's dignity. As an agent of our common life, the public press has no choice but to honor this master norm as well. It does not merely mean that we expand international reporting, though thinking globally is a necessary condition of adequately understanding the common good.

A commitment to universals does not eliminate all differences in what we think and believe. Journalism ethics grounded in universals is complex, and in an era of global communications, it inevitably involves pluralism. The issue is whether a community's values affirm human dignity. As our ideologies, philosophies of life, and beliefs are debated within the public sphere, some agreements will emerge that form a common good. While there are differences in nuance and application, the issue is whether at the deepest level we honor human dignity.

Communities tend to be hidebound and turned inward. To better shape journalism ethics by universal criteria, more experiments are needed that come to grips with community life in global terms. Some glimmers of that consciousness are emerging over the environment; overusing our share of the world's resources has now taken on moral resonance. Rather than local communities focusing on themselves in isolation, journalism can initiate public debate on issues such as this one.

The news media as agents of community formation stitch the issues into a universal norm, engrafting ordinary questions about community life into our human oneness. As a result, cultural diversity does not become self-centered tribalism in the extreme but an opportunity for helping communities work constructively from their own backyard and from the bottom up. In the process, local groups still make decisions for themselves, while resonating in principle with other human beings across the globe who are struggling with human values of a similar sort. Universal solidarity and our home territories are all rooted in the same human spirit and revolve around the same axis. At least it is possible to escape the excesses of individual rights and to avoid tribalism, but only if the common good is understood correctly and implemented.

Conclusion

After a history of steady work for three-fourths of a century, journalism ethics was established by 1980 as a legitimate enterprise and reasonably well-known in both the academy and the profession. With the dramatic growth in the field since then, journalism ethics has a wealth of resources at present for meeting the challenges of the 21st century. Textbooks and specialized courses in ethics are abundant; the codes of ethics for news are up-to-date and

reasonably sophisticated; and increasingly, reporters with a specialty in ethics are writing about moral issues with clarity and relevance.

All these dimensions of journalism ethics need ongoing attention to keep the field fresh and influential. But the four areas emphasized in this review are of particular importance and warrant the most attention.

Truth is a difficult concept to advocate or even understand in this postmodern age where reason and facts are no longer considered legitimate. The concepts of truth proposed here for journalism ethics take account of today's epistemology and can be defended even in an environment of skepticism about truth. But given these complexities, truth deserves extra effort in journalism ethics. And this review takes the same general approach regarding technology. It is highlighted in this overview because the world is now fundamentally different technologically than before. The media have radically shifted from print and broadcast forms to the dominance of digital technologies. Since our work to date in ethics has been oriented to earlier technologies, the field needs to be rethought in terms of online cyberspace. While journalism ethics has always had a social dimension, the complicated demands of multiculturalism and diversity are more accented than ever and make it necessary to give specific emphasis to ethnicity and gender today. And the fourth area accented in this overview also has a new urgency—developing universal principles that are equal to the global media, and to shifts in international politics from a Western axis to the developing world instead.

It is hoped that with that demanding agenda, journalism ethics can attract the best minds in both academia and the profession.

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INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISM

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International journalism in the 21st century has largely been defined by transformative changes in communication technologies and a growing culture of democratization around the world (Thussu, 2006). New communication technologies have made it easier for information to travel across borders, while the democratization wave around the world has led to greater freedom of expression in global societies and a rising growth in grassroots and community media. The overarching changes have created a vibrant civil society and a new generation of empowered citizens who expect to have an active voice in deciding the issues of the day in their societies. As a result, journalism in the newly democratizing nation-states of Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America is in search of an appropriate communications model that would help tap into citizens' voices and engender a culture of civic engagement that places citizens at the center of the democratic process.

Previously, media in authoritarian states tended to follow a paternalistic model, where issues that merited attention were determined by the media houses. The search for a democratic model of communication in these countries has borrowed heavily from civic engagement theories and is aimed at making the media inclusive democratic forums by tearing down fences around the arena of public discourse. This has led to various media experiments aimed at capturing citizens' voices on various issues deemed as important to these societies. Such civic engagement projects exploit the new information technologies and flourish in the widening democratic space that has empowered and encouraged people to tell their own stories. This chapter will examine several civic engagement models from around the world.

Defining Civic Engagement

The sociologist James Coleman, who wrote widely on public issues involving schools and families, is widely credited with laying the theoretical foundations for the civic engagement movement. His writing helped bridge the gap between the individualistic market-oriented thinking of economists and the sociologists' concerns with social networks, values, and norms (Coleman, 1988). He used the term *social capital* to show ways in which social ties and shared values and norms can help people become better educated, amass economic wealth, make careers, and raise well-socialized children. He argued that economists should pay attention to social ties and culture (Coleman, 1990).

The political scientist Robert Putnam borrowed some of Coleman's ideas on social capital in his seminal book *Making Democracy Work*, to explain effective democratic governance in Italy. Putnam found that regional governments in Italy, which looked very similar on paper, worked very differently depending on which region had a rich array of voluntary social groups (Putnam, 1993).

In a follow-up book, *Bowling Alone*, Putnam (1995) used social statistics to argue that the United States has experienced a decline in social capital in the late 20th century and Americans are increasingly going it alone instead of joining groups such as churches, bowling alleys, or civic organizations. He argued that the problems facing U.S. democracy and governance can actually be traced to the decline in social connections (Putnam, 1995). His research has inspired other scholarly works and discussions on social and political change, including studies on social capital that pay tribute to such networks as significant in the development of a democratic culture and participation

of citizens. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE, 2003) has compiled a comprehensive list of indicators of civic engagement, which include voting in national elections; joining a political party; being a candidate for local office; and civic activism such as writing letters to a newspaper about social or political concerns, collecting signatures for a petition, collecting money for a social cause, and boycotting products or services because of social concerns. For citizens to be engaged in civic life, they must be equipped with certain skills such as knowledge and understanding of community issues, values that support a civic culture, a willingness to act to advance the public good, and the skills and ability to imagine a better society and direct social change (Carpini, 2000; Pratte, 1988).

The media can provide an excellent platform to cultivate such a culture of civic engagement by covering and framing stories in a way that educates citizens on the issues of the day and inviting them to participate in public deliberations of such issues. Indeed the civic journalism movement that was largely popularized in the United States has borrowed heavily from the civic engagement literature and inspired several international journalism civic engagement projects. Described as both an experiment and an idea in the making, civic journalism seeks to help communities work through their own problems by framing stories in a way that provides the community with possible choices to stimulate public discussion on public issues. Jay Rosen (1996), a leading proponent of civic journalism, defines the practice as a type of journalism that seeks to encourage civic participation, improve public debate, and enhance public life without sacrificing the independence that a free press demands. He also argues that civic journalism, at its best, augments a community's ability to "recognize itself, converse well, and make choices" (p. 20). He advises that civic engagement in international journalism must not try to replicate the U.S. model but be informed by the unique political, economic, and social structures in other countries.

David Mathews, the president of the Kettering Foundation, which has funded civic journalism experiments in the United States and hosted international journalists interested in learning civic engagement, defines it this way:

Civic journalism isn't any one particular thing. It is simply a way of looking at journalism that puts journalism in the context of a democracy, or approaches it from the context of good democratic practice. It, itself, is not a practice. It is a way of thinking. If you tried to explain it by trying to find one good example of public journalism, not only could you not do it, but, it would be misleading, as it is a way of thinking. (Mwangi, 2001)

The journalism professor Camille Kraeplin defines civic journalism by comparing it with traditional journalism. Kraeplin (2000) says that traditional journalism plays the role of a town crier: "We see something happen, or a

problem that affects our readers and we say, 'Hey! Did you know about this? Here is what's up.' Then we stand back and wait for a reaction."

Kraeplin argues that civic journalism, on the other hand, recognizes that civic and political institutions are sometimes inadequate to the task of fixing the problems that traditional journalism identifies. Civic journalism goes one step further beyond the town crier approach and prods anybody who cares about the problem to come together to figure out what to do about it. Sometimes, journalistic institutions convene meetings and work with various stakeholders in addressing an issue.

In his article "Public Journalism as a Democratic Practice," Lambeth (1998) provides a framework in which civic journalism can tap the community's voice. He says that civic journalism seeks to do the following:

- Listen systematically to stories and ideas of citizens, even while protecting its freedom to choose what to cover
- Examine alternative ways to frame stories on important community issues
- Choose frames that stand the best chance to stimulate citizen deliberation and build public understanding of issues
- Take the initiative to report on major public problems in a way that advances public knowledge of possible solutions and the values served by an alternative course of action
- Pay continuing and systematic attention to how well and how credibly the media are communicating with the public

Critics of civic journalism argue that any involvement of journalists in solving community problems would compromise objectivity and other professional standards of journalism and that such involvement turns journalists into manufacturers of news (Buckner & Gartner, 1998; Hoyt, 1995; McManus, 1994).

The controversy surrounding the movement notwithstanding, at its heart, civic journalism speaks directly to the role of the media in a democracy. It aims at helping shape an enlightened populace that can take part in public discourse and deliberation (Carey, 1997). While the model has inspired controversy in the United States, it is very appealing in newly democratic societies, especially where the concept of public deliberation is culturally ingrained and there is a tradition of people coming together to discuss community issues, as is common in many developing countries. Today, there are media houses in Latin America, Asia, and Africa experimenting with the idea of civic journalism as a viable communications model of civic engagement (Mwangi, 2001).

Another theoretical inspiration for civic engagement models in international journalism is the body of work in development communication theories in recognition of the centrality of the quest for development in the democracy debate. To understand this theme, one must step back and understand the context of democratization in these societies, especially in Africa. The collapse of the Soviet Union

in the early 1990s unleashed a wave of democratization in countries that were hitherto under dictatorships. For example, in the 1990s, nearly three-quarters of African countries experienced upheavals in the form of protests and demands for more open systems of governments that would adequately meet development and societal need. The demand for change had both external and internal causes. Externally, in the early 1990s, the strategic importance of Africa declined in the eyes of the West after the fall of communism (Monga, 1996; Nzongola-Ntalaja & Lee, 1997). The new Eastern European states were now competing for Western aid alongside African states. While in the past, aid to Africa was largely allocated on the basis of African countries' loyalty to Western allies, donor nations in the 1990s adopted different aid conditions. Arguing that after 30 years of receiving aid, Africa had little to show for it, donors insisted that African governments now had to be transparent and accountable in the management of their political and economic affairs (Ndegwa, 1996; World Bank, 1989). These values, they insisted, could only be achieved in a democratic environment.

The demand for change internally could be seen by the fact that the wave of independence in the Eastern bloc had caught on in various African countries, leading to massive protests and demands for more democratic political systems (Monga, 1996; Siddiqui, 1997). Today, nearly all African countries have given in to these demands and have embarked on a process of democratization. This was often done by adopting a multiparty political system followed by general elections. Over the years, the emphasis has shifted from elections to building institutions such as a vibrant press and civil society to support African democracy. Because of this history, a viable communication model in these societies must make a connection between democracy and development, and hence the marriage of development communication theories to civic engagement.

Development communication is a relatively young field that began to rise in the 1960s with the publication of Daniel Lerner's classic book, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1960). The book was based on years of research that Lerner had conducted in North Africa and the Middle East. He traced correlations between expanded economic activity and other modernization variables such as urbanization, high literacy levels, media consumption, and political development (voting). He argued that the media could serve as a promoter of development by communicating development messages to their audiences.

Drawing from Lerner's research, the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) commissioned the renowned development communication scholar Wilbur Schramm to try and find out the exact place and role that the media played in development. Schramm's research was published as *Media and National Development* (1964), a monumental book that provided the solid theoretical foundations for development communication for the next decade and a half. He believed in the concept

of an all-powerful media that could persuasively deliver messages about innovations, use of high-yield seed, and improved daily health habits. This form of communication was authoritarian in nature and therefore nonparticipatory. It involved development agencies sending messages to a passive audience.

Schramm's theoretical conception of the media as the great multiplier of development received a major boost from another scholar, Everett Rogers, who came up with the theory of the diffusion of innovations. Rogers argued that there appeared to be a pattern in the way innovations were adopted and accepted in societies. The sequential pattern of adoption involved "the opinion leaders" or early adopters, late adopters, early majority, and late majority. Rogers's theoretical model was a major contribution to development communication. Indeed, as a result of Rogers's theory, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program funded thousands of what were called development extension projects located in rural areas, where trained agricultural officers would use media such as radio and opinion leaders to expose farmers to these innovations. The research of Schramm and Rogers provided the main theoretical focus of development communication in the 1960s and early 1970s.

A major paradigm shift took place in 1975, when development communication scholars met in Honolulu to assess progress in the field. The main reason for the conference was that despite more than 15 years of development efforts using the dominant paradigm, poverty was still widespread in the world. The scholars, therefore, wanted to rethink their approach to development. The results of the conference are published in a book edited by Rogers (1976), titled *Communication and Development: Critical Perspectives*. The conference resolved that the dominant paradigm was not compatible with the development agenda; instead, they should use the human-centered approach. This was a significant shift that placed the people at the center of development. Unlike the top-down dominant paradigm, this was horizontal and encouraged participation, input from project beneficiaries, and use of indigenous knowledge.

The people-centered paradigm, which currently provides a theoretical framework for development communication has an interesting parallel to civic journalism. It is pluralistic and does not suffer from the authoritarian overtones of the previous dominant paradigm. According to this model, communities are expected to set their own priorities and standards, which may be unique to their problem situations. It focuses on the human and economic needs of the people rather than the general theoretical emphasis on economic growth through capital industrialization. Greater emphasis is given to the basic needs of people and the participation of beneficiaries in development programs set up for their benefit. This paradigm emphasizes indigenous and self-reliant development, which is predicated on the utilization of indigenous knowledge. But most important, this new approach seeks to democratize

the decision-making process and make it accessible and sensitive to people's needs, an approach that is parallel to civic journalism.

Gillis and Moore (2000) argue that this shift in development communication serves as the best link between civic journalism and development communication. They claim that both development communication and civic journalism serve the people, and the people use the media to get the information that is critical to them in their daily lives. The media are partners with the people in seeking solutions to their problems, in seeking self-help, self-growth, and nation building. Thus, both concepts provide a voice to communities by letting the people know what is going on in their communities and providing them with the opportunity to be a part of the solution to community problems. Both approaches refer to models of communication that allow citizens to participate in the decision-making process, deliberate on their needs, and help design solutions. And while civic journalism places a heavy emphasis on citizens' participation in democracy and development communication's emphasis on participation in the development process, it is important to recognize that democratization in most of these countries was inspired and driven by a quest for development and a better way of life. Hence, a good communication model must recognize this symbiotic link between democracy and development.

Case Studies

The following case studies of international civic engagement models are inspired by the unique political, social, and cultural environments within which the media operates.

Africa

The sprawling suburb of Pikine in Dakar, Senegal, resembles any other urban slum in African cities where poverty and unemployment collide to create a vast sea of hopelessness. In more ways than one, Radio Oxy-Jeunes reflects its surroundings, where only the very determined ever make it. Conceived as an idea in 1996, it remained just that for 3 years due to bureaucratic lethargy and government's preference for foreign-owned stations capable of paying the huge licensing fees.

Faced with a bureaucratic stone wall, the young people behind Radio Oxy-Jeunes resorted to writing hundreds of protest letters to the Ministry of Communications, followed by many unfruitful visits. But a chance encounter with the country's president changed all that. He ordered that a license be issued immediately.

Today, Radio Oxy-Jeunes is Senegal's only community radio for youth and represents a good example of how a media house can engage the citizenry. Its programming focuses on the life and concerns of the people of Pikine. It

does this by giving a platform to marginalized people and strengthening community organizations by trying to get people involved in development and civic awareness. In a society where oral traditions are more valued than the written word, the station attempts to capture and express the views of ordinary people through programs such as *The Street*, *Political Satire*, *Traditional Healing* and a news program called *Pikine for Pikine* focusing specifically on local news. It broadcasts in all local languages, including those of immigrant workers.

The following are among the station's stated aims:

- To support the people of Pikine in improving their critical thinking skills and insights related to the political processes that affect their conditions and prospects.
- To promote traditional African culture across the spectrum of cultures represented in Pikine
- To encourage the people of Pikine to understand their rights and to take action to make sure those rights are applied
- To facilitate and support open talk among the population of Pikine on the major issues that concern them

Programs

The following are some of the programming initiatives by Radio Oxy-Jeunes that work toward the above goals:

1. *Dialog Conseil*: This is one of the most popular political shows in the radio's programs. Every Sunday night, a mayor is invited to discuss, with a live audience of his or her constituents, issues and problems in their quarter. Each week, the focus is on a different quarter and its mayor. Prior to the show, Radio Oxy Jeunes reporters (who are local people) interview people in the relevant quarter in their homes and on the streets. These interviews reveal the major issues that concern the community. The interviews are played, for response by the mayor, as part of the live broadcast, which also allows citizens to follow up on concerns by either being present during the taping or phoning in. When, after three editions of this program, the mayors refused to appear because of the questioning and criticism they faced, the program continued in their absence, making the mayors seem unconcerned and uncaring. Today, no mayor dares miss a taping, and the program is ranked as one of the most popular.

2. *Blah Blah*: This program airs every week night and focuses on evaluating local political life, issues, and dynamics. Hosted by two local comedians, the show relies on contributions from local people through phone calls, interviews, and written contributions to provide biting satire with serious political points and debate.

3. *The Bus*: In one of its most innovative programs, the station sends out a bus to experience and discuss a prominent local issue. *The Bus* morning show, which airs every week

day from 9 a.m. to noon, focuses on issues such as the state of the local markets and features a live coverage of the discussion involving stall holders, customers, and market management, among others. The topic changes each morning depending on the urgency and nature of the problem.

4. *Xam Sa Walla (Know Your Rights)*: This program focuses on the promotion of socioeconomic rights among young people and is aired once a week. It usually commences with a short drama on a rights issue relevant to young people. A recent program, for example, focused on the issues facing young people trying to get a small loan from a bank for an income-generating idea that they had developed. It is then followed by a live discussion that brings together the main people in the community relevant to the issue—in this case, young people who have been refused loans, young people who have obtained loans, bank and insurance company managers, teachers, parents, employers, and unemployed young people. As its popularity among the 1.5 million inhabitants of Pikine attests, the program stands out as an example of a form of engaging journalism that has emerged spontaneously in response to community needs.

Another project of note is the public journalism short course introduced by United States Information Services (USIS) in the South African country of Swaziland and taught via interactive video to midcareer journalists in Swaziland. The project was modeled after the American model of civic journalism in combination with development journalism. The design of the Swaziland project included 2 teleconference meetings held in September and October 1997, 12 interactive Internet video meetings with the journalists, and a 2-week field experience. The project adopted the six-step public journalism model of public listening, developing community issues and a time frame, developing community forums, collaboration between media within the community, promoting the concept with the community, conducting the project, and evaluating community response. Participants chose to focus on rural health care, rape, and incest stories. These final stories were published in the various media represented in the project.

As a result of this course and subsequent seminars by USIS, the Swazi Broadcasting Corporation now has a weekly regular feature on rural communities. *The Observer* newspaper started an ongoing weekly community page that appears on Mondays, based on community forums convened to discuss community problems. In both situations, however, the two media houses have stuck to the American model, perhaps due to the way the concept was introduced to them. Also, the two media houses do not collaborate with each other in tackling common problems.

The Swaziland case study is also interesting in that public journalism was introduced as “a practice” rather than a way of thinking and a greater emphasis was placed on teaching the media the required steps. This has placed a greater responsibility on the media, which, for instance, feels obliged to convene forums. Such a practice hinders

the devolution of power and shared responsibility that is expected to occur when citizens come together to tackle their own problems.

Asia

As the world’s third most populous nation and emerging democracy, Indonesia presents a fascinating case study of an innovative media trying to rise above decades of dictatorship to represent the public voice.

Due to Indonesia’s vast territory, radio is the only medium that can reach the remote areas of this archipelago. Today, there are more than 700 private radio stations serving the entire population. During the 32 years of the Suharto regime, the stations largely aired music and entertainment programs. They were only allowed to broadcast the news provided by the official broadcasting system.

After years of entertainment programming, the opening up of the political space after the fall of Suharto in 1999 provided both enormous opportunities and unexpected challenges to the media. Most rural radio stations in Indonesia are small structures with outdated equipment. They also had no trained broadcasters.

But with the help of the UNESCO, 25 radio stations serving outlying remote areas have come up with the idea of networking among the radio stations to offer the Indonesian population new avenues and possibilities to participate in the new democratic process. The project is called *Democracy on Air Project*.

To prepare the stations for this maiden role, UNESCO organized successive conferences in 1998 and 1999 to provide reporters with skills in journalism and, more important, news programming with a special perspective on the democratic process that Indonesia was going through at the time. To strengthen the stations further, UNESCO linked them through an Internet-based network that allowed the daily exchange of news items among the news organizations. This was important in several ways. First, the networks that were otherwise constrained by budgets could freely obtain and broadcast news items from all parts of the country. Second, for the first time in Indonesia, people could tune in to local stations that were truly broadcasting what was happening in the community. In a country accustomed to vertical and authoritarian communication, the stations embarked on civic education campaigns broadcasting items on democratic principles, good governance, and even development issues. Every station managed to run a campaign independently by setting its own agenda. UNESCO’s role ended with the provision of technical equipment and training. In subsequent years, the stations embarked on a campaign against corruption, which was seen as the number one impediment to democratization.

Socially, people use the radio to convene meetings, send invitations to a marriage or to cultural events, or discuss local issues in a talk-show format. This service is especially critical in the remote areas, where phones and post offices are a rarity.

Australia and New Zealand

The Australian Public Journalism Project is interesting for the way it has tried to fine-tune the American version of civic journalism to serve the Australian socio-political situation. In the early 1990s, Australia faced the same challenges that led to the emergence of public journalism in the United States, namely, declining newspaper circulation figures, a disconnect between media and the communities they serve, and a declining interest in public affairs and in civic participation. Suggestions to try out the kind of civic journalism projects going on in the United States to help build and strengthen links between the media and their audience were met with skepticism by defensive editors who argued that they were already doing that through community forums, meet-the-candidates nights, and newspaper-sponsored activities in schools and business areas. But such reactions did not address the key issues being raised by those promoting public journalism, such as a polarizing and pejorative debate on the vexing race issue in Australia or the absence of avenues for citizens to be a part of the daily news agenda.

That resistance, however, changed in 1998 when the Queensland University of Technology and the University of Wollongong established the Public Journalism Project to try out the public journalism concept using a case study approach. Known as “Public Journalism, Public Participation and Australian Public Policy: Connecting to Community Attitudes,” the project was a collaboration between the media (The *Courier-Mail* newspaper, Rural Press Limited, and John Fairfax Limited), community organizations (The Australians for Reconciliation Project and the Ethnic Communities Council), and university researchers. Drawing directly from the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Akron Beacon Journal* series on race relations in the United States, the project called on the public to set an agenda for debate on race relations and immigration in Australia.

More than 600 people attended the two forums, a remarkable number considering that they were held during the election campaign period for a federal and state election. And although all the stories were competing for space with a major political event, The *Courier-Mail* devoted two eight-page lift-outs to the forums plus various articles in its regular edition reflecting the range of perspectives on the issue. This was unlike any coverage previously devoted to the topic, and the articles elicited more letters to the editor, hotline comments, and opinion pieces than the election campaign itself.

The *Courier-Mail* won the United Nations Association of Australia Media Peace Prizes in 1998 and 1999 for its coverage of both the immigration and the indigenous issues under the public journalism initiative. Today, the Public Journalism Project has extended its activities in Queensland and outlying rural areas.

There have been other public journalism projects in Australia carried out by individual media houses, such as the one in 1999 by the newspaper *The Australian* around the referendum to consider whether Australia should become a republic.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation has also held a number of public forums to identify issues of local significance in Ipswich and the suburb of Fortitude Valley in Brisbane. Local issues raised included crime, politics, race, and quality of government services. The forums were broadcast live, and among those in attendance were municipal officials. It was hoped that the issues raised would feature prominently in future planning of municipal affairs.

New Zealand began its experiments even earlier using the American public journalism model. During the 1993 general election campaign, politicians, frustrated with the journalistic reliance on “bad news,” 10-second sound bites, and the adversarial A versus B reporting model made unprecedented use of talk-back radio and television talk shows that allowed them to interact directly with the voters. This public journalism technique allowed politicians the opportunity to engage directly with the citizens. Two New Zealand newspapers, *The Evening Standard* and *Waikato Times*, quickly adopted this community-centered journalism, and each recruited university researchers to conduct public opinion polls, asking readers to identify campaign issues. Among the technique tools used for the polls were telephone surveys, readers’ panels, and deliberative opinion polls that brought citizens together for discussions. Journalists then wrote stories based on the issues identified by citizens and asked parties to respond. When a party failed to answer, the papers printed a block of white space with the words “no response.” Naturally, this happened only once, when the National Party objected to the newspapers’ attempts to drive the campaign. But after the “no response” space was published, neither party missed a deadline.

Europe

Heavily inspired by American examples, the *Dagens Nyheter* newspaper in Stockholm, Sweden, has over the years been trying to apply engaging journalism to its coverage of Swedish issues with what the project coordinator, Petter Beckman, called *increasing success*. A small group of three reporters and Beckman spearheaded the effort, which aimed at strengthening and widening the paper’s capacity as an inclusive democratic forum by tearing down fences around the arena of public discourse.

The project started off with a focus on socioeconomic division and ethnic/racial relations, which are both hot-button issues in Sweden, but later drifted more toward other unsolved problems of modern society, such as the ubiquitous shortage of time and connected issues.

They also carried out a deliberative series of stories on teenage fashion and the peer pressure that such trends put on parents and teens (in many ways depriving both kids and parents of their freedom of choice).

The group’s last project was an attempt to connect the rather technical political debate on tax levels to how low-income groups have been affected and deprived by the tax laws.

In the Scandinavian countries, efforts to launch civic engagement projects date back to 1997, when *Aamuhleti*, one of the biggest dailies in Finland, and two university researchers, Heikki Heikkilä and Risto Kunelius, launched a short-lived pilot project. The project, which was carried out in the city of Tampere, brought together a group of 12 citizens (dubbed the budget jury) to discuss the city's budgeting priorities in a series of meetings. A reporter from the paper covered the public talks. Out of these deliberations and the subsequent coverage in the newspaper, the researchers observed that the traditional method of reporting stories is poorly equipped for reporting deliberative forums. They are in the process of trying to develop a better method for reporters to capture deliberative talk, which they will then test out in future forums.

But this did not deter other experimental projects from taking place. So far, the largest and perhaps most fruitful project is one carried out by *Savon Sanomat* (a daily published in Kuopio, in eastern Finland). Between autumn of 1998 and spring of 1999, the paper conducted three small-scale projects involving six journalists, a researcher, and an informal support group within the newsroom. The reporters gathered six groups of ordinary citizens who were invited to discuss their concerns, frame problems, raise questions, and find solutions. The idea was to have these groups contributing to the news work, while the reporters would commit themselves to developing public discussion on the basis of these contributions.

The participants were selected using the "snowball" technique. First, a group of reporters set up an advisers' list of persons who neither were journalists' friends, nor established news sources. Once the advisers had been informed of the projects by phone, they were asked to suggest two or three names they would like to see in a group. This round of phone calls produced a list of more than 150 candidates, of which about 50 were invited. Eventually, 46 of them took part in the discussions.

The first project (which was called *Citizens!*) focused on generational differences in Kuopio, the paper's hometown. The participants were divided into three groups, that is, senior citizens born in the 1930s, those born in the 1950s, and younger adults born in the 1970s. Each group met twice for 7 to 8 hours of intensive talk. In the first session, the groups focused on problems, in the second they tried to find solutions to the problems they had detected. During the project, the groups became so interested in each other's viewpoints that a third meeting was held in which some members of all groups were present. This extra session was more informal, but it was also covered in the paper.

The second project was launched a couple of months later in two small municipalities, where "community groups" met on three occasions. In the first two sessions, the groups reflected on their concerns and the extent to which residents could influence local decision making. In the third meeting, the groups had the opportunity to present their questions and suggestions directly to the local

authorities. The third project (called *Voters*) was an ad hoc experiment in which a group of citizens spent an evening discussing topics they thought would be relevant in the parliamentary elections; the following evening they were allowed to "interrogate" local political candidates. Since this project ended, the paper has decided to convene the group once a year to meet the MPs elected from their constituency.

All these group meetings and discussions took place in the presence of two reporters and the researcher, who also acted as a moderator. The discussions resulted in a dozen stories, which were expected to lead to "spin-off stories" and transform into public processes or even "beats" that would be under constant supervision in the newsroom. The projects were open-ended, but as it turned out, they remained rather short-lived. Spin-off stories that were supposed to develop public discussion further and cater to it with the journalistic tools available remained quite sporadic, and after May 1999, they ceased altogether. Later papers took a step toward institutionalizing a similar approach by establishing a weekly section to cover local issues from the residents' perspective. The reporter responsible for the projects is also in charge of this new section.

Latin America

The civic engagement project in Argentina represents a case where an American model has been modified to fit a local situation. The project began when Fundacion Ciudad, an Argentinean civic organization promoting citizen participation in public affairs, organized a civic journalism seminar with support from the United States Information Agency. The two-day seminar was devoted to the theories and techniques of civic journalism and was attended by more than 60 Argentinean journalists. The conference explored ways to adapt civic journalism to problems in Argentina.

Two American journalists, Max Jennings and National Public Radio's John Dinges, were sponsored by the Pew Center to speak about their experiences in organizing civic journalism projects.

Jennings described the *Dayton Daily News* project *Kids in Chaos*, in which the newspaper convened community forums to deal with a local problem as an example of how some media organizations in the United States are trying to frame their reporting around citizens' concerns and voices. Dinges, on the other hand, described the NPR election coverage project, which was built around an election agenda set by citizens through polls and small forums.

But unlike the U.S. situation, where civic journalism arose out of a concern of declining public confidence in the media, participants heard a different story in the case of Argentina. The Argentinean media enjoys a high level of confidence from citizens, due to its years of opposition to military dictatorship. And even after the fall of the military dictatorship in 1983, the media has continued to play this activist role as Argentina attempts to build a democratic

government. One of the most memorable activist press projects, since the fall of the military dictatorship, was the vigorous campaign to expose the corruption that has shrouded the privatization of state-held enterprises.

Despite this impeccable role as a watchdog, the conference heard from participants that the reporting of public affairs does not generally incorporate the views of citizens. Participants described the media's treatment of ordinary people as paternalistic, a treatment that massages rather than challenges them. Participants resolved to work on two civic journalism projects to change the way the media relates to citizens.

The first project, named *Citizens' Agenda*, focused on the coverage and citizen participation in the election of the mayor of Buenos Aires and a convention to draft a city charter. The election was a major break from tradition in that the mayor had previously been appointed by the central government. As part of this project, *Clarín* and *La Nación*, the two main newspapers in Argentina, held public forums in which the people of Buenos Aires attempted to set a citizen's agenda that they felt ought to drive the elections. The papers also organized meetings between candidates and the citizens in an attempt to have the candidates address the people's concerns. As a result of these forums and subsequent coverage, the June 2000 mayoral elections are today regarded as the pioneer example of a civic journalism project in Argentina.

Argentina's television station, Channel 13, also introduced a news program doing some pioneering work in public journalism as well. Known as *Noticiero de Santo* (Santo's News Program), the program focused on helping people solve their daily problems by providing them with service-related programs.

According to Ruben Garcia, the show's producer, the service was something that is not likely to be seen on any other media. The show is built around the high profile of Argentina's top journalist, Santo Biasati. In his regular broadcasts of "Santo the citizen," the journalist immerses himself in the daily routines of Argentinean citizens and reports his experiences live. Some of the most memorable episodes include Santo riding the subway in scorching summer heat and reporting on people's complaints. Other shows have taken Santo to the neighborhoods of greater Buenos Aires to cover city life issues such as bumpy roads, speed ramps, street lights, and even safety. The best part of the show is the power that it wields over policy and decision makers, who quickly respond to issues raised in the show by solving them.

But the Argentinean initiative was by no means the first civic engagement project in Latin America. Colombia hosts an interesting project established by Ana Maria Miralles, a university researcher. As the coordinator of Voces Ciudadana Por la Seguridad y Convivencia, a public journalism project based in Medellín, Colombia, she has worked with newspapers, television stations, and NGOs to get proposals from citizens on ways to address issues of concern to citizens. One of their earliest projects involved

addressing the issue of insecurity in Medellín. Maria, who has also written a book on public journalism, is currently engaged in experiments on innovative public journalism techniques to gather people's opinion and ideas on issues through a toll-free number. Such opinion is accessible to the media participating in her project, and they can use it for story ideas.

In Costa Rica, the leading news radio station, Radio Reloj, launched a civic engagement daily program called *Reloj, you and your community*, which aims at involving the community more in the news and giving people information relevant to their community. This is a radical departure from the earlier techniques of gathering news in that it lets the readers and viewers set the agenda of the issues around which journalists set their stories. Some of the issues that they have covered so far—crime in neighborhoods, overcrowding, and corruption—are at the top of citizens concerns.

Conclusion

There are a few key points that one can take away from the forgoing discussion. International journalism is currently engaged in a search for suitable journalistic narratives that reflect the changed environment in which it now operates. The traditional watchdog narrative leaves out voices that now want to be heard. In countries with widening democratic spaces, there is an urgency to tap into those voices. There is no single model that can be replicated across boundaries. Instead, the emerging models are informed by the cultural, political, economic, and social conditions unique to that environment. Most civic engagement initiatives are conducted as individual projects within a given time frame. There is a need to move beyond project-based initiatives and mainstream civic engagement as part and parcel of international journalism narratives.

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THE BUSINESS OF JOURNALISM

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When the first plane hit the World Trade Center at 8:46 a.m. on September 11, 2001, the New York newsrooms were still waking up. From an editorial floor in midtown Manhattan, it looked like a small private jet from one of the regional airports had tragically wandered off course. When the second plane struck Tower II at 9:03, an editor at the McGraw-Hill building in Rockefeller Center exclaimed, “Oh my God, a press plane must have come in too close.” But everyone knew the press used helicopters. By then, CNN was reporting that at least two airliners had been hijacked from Boston. The awful realization dawned on us: America was under attack.

Newsrooms became electrified in New York and Washington, where a third plane had hit the Pentagon. Within minutes, one-sentence headlines from the event had stopped business across the United States, and soon the world. Journalists saw the biggest story of their careers unfolding. Editors ripped apart print publications to make space. Broadcast trucks raced to the scene. No expense would be spared.

The Wall Street Journal, headquartered in a suddenly uninhabitable building next to the ground zero site, moved its newsroom and staff to facilities in New Jersey, where it produced its national edition for the next 11 months. *The New York Times* added extra pages to its news section for 4 months and in weeks to come would devote two additional pages to individual Portraits of Grief profiles of the more than 1,800 who had died in the attack. New York’s tabloids streamed reporters to the scene. Anchors of the three big TV networks as well as cable channels stayed on air 24 hours a day with uninterrupted coverage. No one was buying ads.

In the world of journalism economics, a great news event, from terrorism, war, an earthquake, or a global pandemic, means that there is no budget constraint. The press spends what it has to to provide coverage, and the public expects it to do just that. In the United States and many other countries, press rights are constitutionally guaranteed because it’s believed that the free flow of important information is vital to having an informed public. In return for this privilege, journalists are expected to spare nothing to get that news reported and distributed.

If you pay an annual subscription fee of \$88 for your home-town newspaper, \$828 for *The New York Times* national edition, or \$99 for a specialized newspaper such as the *Financial Times* or *The Wall Street Journal*, you might think that you are paying for a good share of this coverage. But in the world of newspaper economics, your subscription might at best cover the cost of delivery to your home or office. If you read magazines and newspapers online, you get nearly all coverage free. Radio and TV news is mostly free, too, except for cable and satellite fees. These include the cost of news gathering, but in much larger part the fees cover the cost of entertainment programs. The government-supported press, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation of the United Kingdom and America’s Public Broadcasting System, is funded by viewers, donors, and taxpayers. The BBC gets revenue from a tax on each TV set in the United Kingdom. In the United States, the Public Broadcasting System solicits donations from listeners and viewers with campaign drives and gets corporate sponsors to contribute in return for mentioning their names and often products.

What all this means is that with some government-supported exceptions, in the United States and most other nations, it is advertisers who really cover the costs of news. According to Veronis, Suhler, and Stevenson's annual survey of U.S. communication spending, ad spending in all media in 2007 was about \$880 billion (www.vss.com/news/index.asp?d_News_ID=166, accessed December 30, 2008). Of that, \$62 billion went to newspapers, \$25 billion to magazines, \$49 billion to broadcast TV, \$132 to cable and satellite TV, \$21 billion to radio, and \$81 million to alternative media, mainly online sites and digital distributors using mobile phones and portable devices. That total, about the size of the GNP of Saudi Arabia, was about one-third of all U.S. media spending in 2007.

Advertisers have very specific criteria. They want to reach the audience of the publications, broadcast stations, and online sites where their ads have the most impact. Who are the readers and viewers? What are the demographics? How do you reach the fickle 18-to-35 youth market? Corporations, their ad agencies, researchers, and creative teams spend thousands of hours plotting the right way to spend the ad marketing budget. Media advertising in the United States is nearly a \$1 trillion business; globally it is worth about \$2.2 trillion. There are about 10,000 paid and free newspapers, 12,500 magazines, 12,500 commercial radio stations, and 3,500 TV stations in the United States to choose from. Internationally, it's newspapers 60,000, magazines 22,000, radio 44,000, and TV 21,500. Nearly all these media in many languages and cultures are competing to get a share of someone's ad budget, or ad pie as the industry calls it.

Advertisers aren't especially interested in being associated with what is called *hard news*—wars, scandals, terrorism, elections, airplane crashes, and natural disasters, the news that most drives journalists. They'd much rather be around media that makes you feel good enough to want to buy their products and services. So business news sites, from newspaper sections to specialized investing magazines to online services, seek to attract mutual funds, retirement specialists, stock trading services, and investment advice advertisers. Women's magazines such as *Glamour* seek to attract health, fashion, and cosmetic advertisers. Lifestyle publications and home magazines such as *House Beautiful*, called *shelter books* in the trade, attract appliance and furniture makers, interior design firms and national real estate chains; travel publications attract luxury resort, cruise, and eco travel specialists, and so on. *The New York Times*, which carries about 35% hard news over a weekly cycle, also produces ad-rich softer news sections on travel, culture, fashion, health, and real estate. As Executive Editor Bill Keller told his public editor about the *Times*'s soft news sections, "We put out a daily newspaper plus about 15 weekly magazines." The sections, Keller noted, "exist in large part to generate advertising revenue."

What about countries with heavy state control of the press, such as Russia and China? Doesn't the government pay the bills there? Yes, but to a much lesser extent than

you might think. Russia's leaders indirectly control most broadcast networks through state-owned companies and can subsidize the kind of news they want with government funds. But when viewers know the news is state controlled, they look to independent alternatives. Small newspapers, magazines, and online sites in Russia struggling to fill the information gap depend on advertisers for support. In China, where all media is required to be government affiliated, there is a push to make the nation's newspapers and broadcast stations pay most of their own way even while their editorial operations are under state control. Newspapers in China now must try to cover 80% of their operating costs with ads, and that percentage will likely grow larger as the government cuts back on subsidies.

For Western journalists, there are libel and professional constraints on news gathering and writing but usually not government-mandated controls. For decades, the free nature of Western publications meant that most news organizations did not want their journalists to be concerned with the business side of journalism. There were good reasons for this. Reporters worried about advertising pressures or concerned about proposing costly but worthy big story ideas might hesitate in doing their jobs. A so-called Church and State wall was erected to keep journalists pursuing the story no matter where it led them. In practical terms, even then, most journalists knew that a story that took on a big advertiser might be handled with extra care. But unless they personally were shareholders in the media company, they usually didn't pay much attention to the finances of their employer.

Not so today. With newsrooms everywhere under extreme cost pressures and the media fragmenting into thousands of online sites and blogs, reporters and editors are critically involved with the financial health of their employer. Newsroom job cuts across the board have been unprecedented. In just 1 week in June 2008, some 900 editorial jobs were eliminated in U.S. newspapers. Knowing how the business of journalism works has become everyone's job.

The biggest threat to the established press everywhere, whether in the United States, Europe, or China, is not the government but digital media. The erosion of revenues from traditional media, often called *mainstream media*, or MSM, by digital competitors has been accelerating for 10 years and shows no sign of stopping. Online revenue is growing an average 30% a year. While many newspapers, magazines, and broadcasters have developed large and effective online news sites, the revenue they can generate by selling ads on these sites is still a fraction of what they need to maintain news staffs and run their parent companies.

In the digital world, nearly all information is free and the start-up costs are miniscule compared with the fixed costs of editorial, printing, and circulation for a large print news organization or for those broadcasting news over a national TV or radio network. Sending camera crews with producers to cover a large news event such as 9/11 or the Iraq War costs millions; the broadcast licenses and transmission over the airwaves is also a million-dollar expenditure each day.

Then, there are the daily business expenses of running a network, a cable company, or a large, independent TV or radio station. These include administrative expenses for top management and real estate; production, printing and distribution costs; and business-side marketing to sell ads and increase circulation.

How this seismic shift is taking place and the degree to which online journalism replaces print and broadcast media is an evolving story. It has sharply divided analysts and opinion makers. In one camp are those who believe that the age of large print publications and large broadcast companies is over. Marc Andreessen, the founder of the search engine *Netscape*, told a conference of media owners on July 9, 2008, "If you have old media, you should sell. If you own newspapers, sell. If you own TV stations, sell." In the pro-print camp, people such as Rupert Murdoch, the chairman of News Corp., one of the world's largest owners of newspapers, said in a March 2006 speech, "I believe that traditional newspapers have many years of life left but equally I think in the future that newsprint and ink will be just one of many channels to our readers."

To see how this landscape develops, let's look at the pillars of the news media today, starting with newspapers.

Newspapers

Newspapers, from local publications, such as the *Stamford (CT) Advocate*, to the large national newspapers, such as *USA TODAY*, rely on advertising for 80% or more of their revenue. Large full-page or partial-page ads, called *display ads*, account for about 85% of the ad revenue. Classified advertising amounts to 15%. In recent years, both have been losing ground to competitors such as direct mail and marketing service companies, as well as digital sites. Advertising sales can be local, such as a home-town auto dealer, to regional, a large department store, to national, such as Wal-Mart. Local advertisers today offer the strongest support for many smaller newspapers because there are no good alternatives that target their buyers. But if online media becomes more locally focused, it could also take a share of local newspaper revenue as it has of national revenue.

A large daily newspaper such as the *Los Angeles Times* until recently funded a newsroom of close to 1,000 reporters and editors. An unofficial estimate of its annual editorial cost for news, features, sports, culture, living, real estate, and other sections most readers desire might be about \$100 million a year. If that was 25% of its total cost, another \$300 million would go to printing, daily distribution, ad sales, and general overhead expenses. In good years, the newspaper would aim to generate a 20% before-tax return for its shareholders. So in the old days, when ad revenues softened cyclically because of a weaker economy, a large daily would ride through the downturn with at most marginal cuts. But because today's change is viewed

as structural, the paper is permanently reducing staff and costs. The *Times*, for example, started 2008 with 970 editorial employees. In July, it cut 250 of its editorial staff, bringing it down to 720. A decade ago, in its golden years, the paper had 1,300 editorial staffers. The July cut of 15% matched what the paper said was a 15% decline in revenues in the first 3 months of 2008. Increasingly, as revenue falls to what management believes is a permanent lower level, cuts that match revenue declines are likely.

Magazines

Magazines face a more varied future than newspapers even though both depend primarily on print advertising. There are about 10,000 magazines in the United States catering to nearly every taste and interest, from salt water fly fishing to needlepoint. Of that number, about 2,000 are prominent, and of that number, about 40 are large, above 1 million in circulation. Because a magazine often has a closer relationship to the reader than a newspaper, it has what the industry calls "shelf life." A newspaper is discarded the next day or sooner; a magazine can have value long after it is printed. It can also offer targeted features and columns to the reader and present sections with a visual flourish so compelling that many magazines are desired by subscribers first for their photos and design. *National Geographic*, for example, has an almost permanent shelf life. Copies of old issues sell for more than new ones because the magazine is considered a collector's item. Many home and fashion magazines have loyal subscribers who renew annually. The cost of renewal from \$12 for *House Beautiful* to \$15 for *Vanity Fair* is a fraction of the delivery cost, not to mention paper and production. In these cases, the magazine is using very inexpensive subscription pricing to maintain a large subscriber base while producing very attractive editorial, both to satisfy advertisers. This formula has so far kept many glossy magazines relatively healthy.

The publications closer to the news are the ones hurting the most. Newsweeklies such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report* and business magazines such as *BusinessWeek*, *Fortune*, and *Forbes* have seen a significant decline in their pages in recent years as online news outpaces their ability to deliver value-added or original stories against digital competition.

Most magazines like to keep a ratio of ad pages to editorial pages in the range of 60% ads, 40% editorial, or at worst, 50% to 50%. Because of seasonal variation, that ratio can drop to 30% of ads or less in some months, with the expectation that it will come back in other periods. The first quarter of the year is usually a weak one for many larger magazines because it follows a surge of advertising spending during the holiday season. Mid to late summer is also a doldrums period because of vacations. That is why revenue-producing ad pages are so carefully watched for the fall run, the last time to make up weak performance.

This is the period when big glossy magazines such as *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* carry a few hundred extra pages. *Vogue*, for example, ran 725 pages in its September 2007 edition. Reflecting a softer U.S. economy, its 2008 September issue carried 674 pages but still weighed nearly 5 pounds.

Two widely followed sources for the strength of ad pages and magazine circulation are the Publishers Information Bureau (PIB) and *Media Industry Newsletter* (MIN), a trade publication that tracks the industry with a weekly box score. In recent years, the MIN box scores have become of prime interest to journalists following the health of their publications. In mid-July 2008, for example, MIN scores showed leading U.S. magazines such as *Time* off 27% in pages from the year earlier, *Newsweek* off 23%, and *U.S. News and World Report* off 28%. *BusinessWeek* reported pages 17% lower than the year before, and its competitor *Forbes* was lower by 18%. But *The Economist* was up 5%, and its competitor *Fortune* was up 2%.

Like newspapers, magazines have limited options when rising costs meet dwindling ad revenues. Because magazine managements believe that the decline is a permanent condition, most of their choices involve cost cutting. They can cut business and editorial employees, discount from posted ad rates on their rate card, reduce the number of pages they carry, and reduce their circulation. The last is especially important because magazines usually guarantee advertisers a minimum number of readers per issue, called their rate base. If a publication goes below the rate base, it must pay back advertisers either with free extra pages or with financial payments. The number of subscribers compared with the cost of an ad is a critical consideration here because the advertiser is buying readers. The cost of an ad page is measured per 1,000 readers, called a CPM. The CPM is a critical competitive index. If the cost is higher than the competition's, the publication must argue that the demographic quality of its subscribers is higher. Among the three leading U.S. business magazines, for example, *BusinessWeek* claims senior management readers; *Forbes*, high-level investors; and *Fortune*, chief executive and board members. In contrast, *The Wall Street Journal*, which is the leading place for business print ads, claims an overall high net worth of \$2.5 million per household.

A decade ago, the rate card reflected the real cost of a page. But, like suggested retail car prices, today, it is a benchmark for discounting. Advertisers and analysts thus treat ad sales numbers produced by rating services as guidelines rather than actual revenue figures. A box score from MIN that says a publication that sold 2,300 ad pages at \$65,000 a page each earned revenues of \$138 million for the year reflects only the nominal price requested. In reality, discounts off the rate card might be from 20% to 40% or more for some big advertisers. If costs can't be controlled, the publication could be losing money when it might appear to be growing. Analysts and advertisers thus look at the actual number of pages sold and make their

own back-of-the-envelope calculation of what the publication is earning. Looking at the actual pages sold from year to year also gives them a more realistic view of the publication's condition.

Magazines have a few other levers to use for sales and cost control. Because they have a longer shelf life than a newspaper, they multiply their number of subscriptions by a "pass-along" factor to arrive at a readership rate. Independent research companies such as Halls and MRI sample readership and report pass-along scores. Thus, a magazine with a subscription base of 1 million may in fact claim almost 5 million readers based on a pass-along rate of 5 readers to each subscriber. While the number is an estimate based on a sample of impressions from readers, the industry and most advertisers accept it as a measurement standard.

Magazines can also try to trim weight, since most are mailed to subscribers. They can do this by trading heavier paper for lighter paper, called "reducing stock." They may also trim the magazine page size. In August 2008, *Rolling Stone* editor Jann Wenner said, "All you're getting is nostalgia," in announcing that his 1.4-million-circulation rock biweekly would reduce to a smaller newsstand size from the distinctive larger format it has had since its founding.

Television

Television and radio like print are mainly ad-supported businesses, but their revenue comes from commercials or "spots" that are sold in 30-second or shorter time periods. TV ads are sold against programming, and the more the viewers the more a station or network can charge for airtime. Each spring, the industry rolls out its schedule for all programming, news, and entertainment and asks advertisers to place orders for the season in what is called the "upfront market." This means that networks get paid up front. But they really don't own that revenue because like the magazine industry they must guarantee a minimum number of viewers. If a show falls short on viewership, they have to repeat the ad on free airtime until the required number of viewers has seen the commercial. Because they are giving up finite airtime to cover "make good" airtime, the practice can create a perverse effect where there is less time available for spot buyers. This means that advertisers seeking immediate spots, called "scatter advertising," can see rates go up in price even through there is an overall declining market. As the Project for Excellence in Journalism points out in its 2008 report, advertisers buying in advance in the upfront market are really reserving time, not actually paying for all of it. So a strong spring buying season in media headlines may end up down if advertisers trigger cancellation clauses or demand "make goods."

Extravagant opportunities are the exception. Both the 2008 American Super Bowl, where a 30-second spot for a football game sold for \$2.4 million, and China's 2008

Olympics, where NBC sold more than \$1 billion in advertising, had a waiting list of sponsors. A local TV station might accept \$2,000 for a spot if its cost of programming is low. TV shows are based on longer-term programming that can come from a network or outside production company. *Nightline*, a U.S. news show by Ted Koppel that ran for years on the ABC network, is now produced by Koppel himself and sold as a syndicated news program to local stations. Many entertainment shows are financed and sold by independent producers and then licensed for international revenue.

Audiences are measured by rating services. The leading providers in the United States are Nielsen, for national and local, and Arbitron, for local listings. Both use a small sample of total viewers to arrive at their local and national market ratings. Nielsen works with a universe of households based on sampling techniques accepted by the industry. In their book *This Business of Television*, Howard J. Blumenthal and Oliver G. Goodenough observe that while print publications sell to advertisers against their subscription and total readership numbers, broadcasters must convince advertisers that so many thousands of people “are actually watching a commercial message at a given time.” For a regional TV station, a sample of 300 households or less may be enough to satisfy advertisers that a million or more viewers are watching the show at the time the commercial appears. For a national ranking of 90 million households, the sample may be only a few thousand viewers, they point out.

Both Nielsen and Arbitron rely on the cooperation of sample households to keep track of their viewing habits. Because viewers can easily click away, mute, or use pre-recording boxes such as Tivo to escape the ad, Nielsen, a few years ago, introduced the electronic PeopleMeter for national rankings. This is a device attached to the TV set that records what channel is on and for how long. More sophisticated devices now also allow ratings companies to monitor actual viewing remotely so that household information arrives in real time to produce the overnight ratings that are being developed. Nielsen offers a real-time measurement tool called C3, which attaches to all viewing devices from TV to DVR, video game box, or set-top box and feeds live-viewing information, including what commercials are being watched in real time, into a data bank. New set-top boxes and viewer cards for digital TVs will also provide instant feedback and monitor how long a viewer stays with an ad and where the ad is placed in the programming.

High-profile events where ad time gets bid up don’t yet require this precision. Five days into the 2008 Beijing Olympics, for example, NBC Universal could claim that viewership was up 15% based on the current rating system. But that aside, more precise measurement of audiences and the need to raise ad revenue is a global trend, even in countries with tight government control of networks. Whether it’s an ad dollar, ruble, rupee, or yuan, broadcast TV is

increasingly required to fund itself by selling airtime, along with various kinds of taxes, subscription fees, or direct government support to supplement ad revenue. Running against the grain, Britain’s BBC remains one of the few successful noncommercial experiments. The BBC is not allowed to show any commercials in the United Kingdom, although it can get licensing revenue from selling shows abroad to commercial stations. Households in the United Kingdom pay a tax for owning a TV of about \$270 annually, which covers any number of sets in a house. Although the BBC competes against three commercial channels, its two main channels are watched by some 90% of Britons each week and have a 27% share of total viewing, even though viewers also have access to some 200 commercial channels on satellite networks. With live sports programming, the BBC usually has a much higher proportion of viewers for a match than commercial channels, a fact that analysts say shows that viewers want the game uninterrupted. In the largest emerging markets, TV viewing is free, but channels are limited, and editorial content is under especially tight state control. China’s national network, CCTV, for example, a government monopoly with 600 million viewers, is likely to generate \$60 million in Olympic revenue along with 30% growth in 2008, according to Martin Sorrell, the CEO of WPP, a major ad buyer in China. Russia has 20 major channels; India, a very competitive media market, has hundreds.

Radio

Radio also earns most of its revenue from advertising, with the remainder from fees and licensing, and broadcasters face the same cost pressures as all traditional media. But while radio stations have seen flat revenue growth, they must have invested more airtime in news—40 minutes a day from 37. According to the Radio and Television News Directors Association annual survey, the news increase has been primarily in major markets with an audience of 1 million or more, targeted to morning commute “drive” times. The economics of radio news is much simpler than for TV. An average newsroom can function with no more than four full-time and part-time employees, and regional news generated by one newsroom often gets used by several stations. The consolidation of stations under one corporate parent also cuts costs by homogenizing the news. Clear Channel, a U.S. radio consolidator, owns more than 1,300 stations.

Radio has a greater measurement problem than print or TV because it can’t tell with precision who is listening at any one time. There are about 14,000 licensed broadcast stations in the United States, and advertisers spent a total of \$21.7 billion on radio spots in 2008. But as the Project for Excellence in Journalism points out in its State of the Media 2008 report, “The strongest growth story in the radio universe is the Internet.” Although still small, ad spending

for radio on the Web grew some 15%, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.5 billion. If radio could produce a more accurate listener measurement, it might be better able to sell advertisers on airway ads as it can with Internet advertising. One experiment by Arbitron, which rates radio listening, is to have sample listeners carry around a portable transmitter that would send listening data to the rating agency in real time. While this has been withdrawn for now, other experiments to improve metrics this way may be forthcoming.

Online and Digital

It's clear that the future of journalism globally will be about how traditional media sort out revenues and audience in competition and aligned with the digital world. If publicly traded media companies lose investor confidence, they won't have the capital to remake themselves. Financial health, not size, is the criterion that measures their business. No matter how large a traditional media company looks, from CBS News to *The New York Times*, investors and advertisers have made a decision to bet much more heavily on digital than print and broadcast, and unless that trend abates, the value of traditional media of all kinds is at risk. As the media writers Jay Yarrow and Jon Fine asked in a recent column, "How can *The New York Times* be worth so little?"—noting that the paper itself, even with its online site, the Paris-based *International Herald Tribune* and a radio station, seems to be worth just \$750 million.

So who are the dominant players in digital journalism? Many are traditional media. Nearly all newspapers, magazines, and broadcasters have online news sites. *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, CBS, NBC, and ABC support large online staffs who produce original stories well beyond what the parent enterprise offers in print and broadcast each day.

But the biggest providers of news globally are increasingly not news companies at all. The giants in the field, Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft's MSN, call themselves aggregators rather than news sites, even though they are among the most heavily visited for news. As aggregators, they collect and distribute news and any other kind of information that they find useful. They have made the word *content* a substitute for what used to be called news, information, entertainment, classified advertising, and just about anything else that a print reader or broadcast listener might have found in a newspaper or on TV. The most watched provider of content is Google.

For journalists, Google epitomizes all that is both admired and feared about digital media. Journalists use Google constantly for their story searches and may also have their private e-mail accounts with Gmail. But at the same time, they know that Google's power to attract advertising in competition with their employers' media companies means that their own financial position weakens.

What is Google? When Google announces earnings each quarter, the financial press and Wall Street often call it the world's largest media company. That's because on any day, you can find a large share of the world's stories and broadcasts on Google for free. For example, Google News is a channel of constantly changing selections from the world's newspapers and broadcasters. YouTube, owned by Google, puts up clips from broadcasters as well as individuals that often beat the networks on spot news coverage anywhere in the world. This means that Google, an enterprise that started out as a pure search engine in 1996, is also a powerful distributor and facilitator of news.

If you are one of the world's most important places to check each day for news, are you not a media company? Google says no. Instead it calls itself a distributor of global content. "Our mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" is Google's mission statement.

Jon Friedman, the media columnist for *Market Watch*, owned by Dow Jones, the parent of *The Wall Street Journal*, agrees. "Google doesn't create content which informs and entertains people as media companies do. Instead, Google compiles facts and delivers information as well as news clips to its panting audience," he says.

If Google does not produce original news or create content, is it then a news distributor, as Friedman says? Many people think so. This means that the company that is one of the world's largest deliverers of media gets nearly all its content without cost. The U.S. broadcast and newspaper industry spends close to \$70 billion a year to gather hard and soft news. Google gets nearly all that material free.

Google earns its income from ads on its site paid for by order of placement and from keywords that direct a user to an advertiser on another site. But unlike a newspaper, magazine, or broadcaster, it gets paid by the number of users who click on an ad. In Google's financial statements, it reports income by the number of "aggregate paid clicks." On an annual basis, the number of paid clicks, meaning visitors to the Google site, has been increasing by 30% a year. In 2008 Google's total revenues were \$21.7 billion, up from \$16.5 billion the year before. Against those revenues, Google's main costs were compensation for 20,000 employees to the amount of \$8.6 billion; research of \$2.8 billion; and sales, marketing, and general administrative expenses; bringing total costs to \$15.1 billion. That allowed Google, before deducting for some investment losses and taxes, to earn \$5.8 billion. By comparison, *The New York Times* lost \$57 million in 2008.

Like all online sites, Google's attraction for an advertiser is the precise measurement and cost it offers from "hits." Each time a user uses the search engine, highlighted links that are prepaid by an advertiser show up in descending order on the search results. In a right-hand column separate from the search, there are also "sponsored links," similar to the kind of ads you might see on a traditional media online site.

Suppose you wanted to develop a low-cost shipping service. You might buy 100 keywords from Google ranging from *Low Cost* to *Cheap Shipping*. The keywords are sold at an auction, so the most popular are the most costly. If you monitor your list, you can see instantly which ones work for you and cut out the ones that don't. If *Low Cost Boxes* is \$1 a click but generates strong traffic to your site, the cost per click becomes worth it. If words costing 20 cents a click are cheap but don't draw users, you discard them. The Google model with variations is why the number of "eyeballs," meaning people visiting the site, is so critical. Google draws millions of search users a day. Users click a link, and if the link generates an inquiry or a sale, Google can measure that and report it back instantly to you. Traditional media cannot offer that precision.

According to Technorati, an online tracking service, there are some 100 million online sites worldwide. Some, such as Yahoo, spend some income on personal finance stories that they generate on their own. Many others use writers attached to their sites who may write for the print and broadcast companies that own them. When the stories that are used are new for the site, they are there to attract viewers. When they are stories taken from the print publication, or "repurposed," readers and viewers are getting older content but viewing it online.

A second way in which print revenues have been transferred to online services is through digital classified sites. The community-based San Francisco free online listing service called craigslist now has replicated its online listing model in many major U.S. cities. Craigslist has severely eroded classified advertising in newspapers, taking an estimated \$65 million of the classified market in San Francisco alone. According to *InternetWeek*, classified advertising in all forms is a \$30 billion business in the United States; about half of this still remains with daily newspapers but faces increasing competition from online services.

Craigslist and other online shopping services continue to take a share from print publications. In the employment category, online jobs boards such as CareerBuilder, Monster, and HotJobs have been growing at a 30% to 50% rate a year and account for about 20% of the classified job ad market, which is a \$1 billion-a-year business for newspapers.

In shopping, increasingly direct buying as well as key research for big ticket items such as autos, furniture, appliances, and vacations takes place primarily on an online site. Think of Edmunds.com for car buyers and Orbitz for travel. Amazon, once a bookseller, is now a digital department store for much of the world's consumer goods, with revenues of \$14 billion in 2007.

Then there are blogs. Most blogs do not make money, and most have low readership. According to Technorati, there are 56 million blogs worldwide growing at a rate of 22% annually. The blogosphere is mostly an avocation, but the number of blogs hosted by specialist contributors means that blogs get a following on key events. Blogs can affect the future of traditional media in two key ways. They

can swarm with expert opinion to challenge or drive the editorial views of large news organizations. They also draw eyeballs away from print- and broadcast-affiliated online sites, thus reducing the traffic needed to produce a high volume of "clicks" for advertising revenue.

Here is a huge debate about whether bloggers are journalists at all. But for the bloggers themselves, the debate is beside the point. As independent and usually unpaid commentators and reporters, bloggers have been vital to the information food chain, and their influence is felt on many public issues. Bloggers challenged the authenticity of a letter that was aired on the *CBS Evening News* that presumed to show that U.S. President George W. Bush did not participate in Alabama National Guard exercises as Bush said he did. Bloggers argued that the letter was a fake because the typeface used did not exist on electric typewriters available on the date that was printed on the letterhead. The CBS anchor Dan Rather, who initially defended the letter as authentic, retired from the network soon after.

If blogs can successfully challenge the top editorial views of traditional media, what effect do they have on large media revenues? It is too early to say what share of the media market blogs will command. As some blogs mature and become more like established online sites, they will be competitors for ad spending and become attractive takeover targets. Two leading U.S. news and opinion blogs, The Drudge Report and the Huffington Post, have low news costs and high visibility. Writers contribute to the Huffington Post mostly for free. The Drudge Report is run by one editor, Matt Drudge, who aggregates stories on his site. Thousands of other bloggers are seeking to follow these models and earn revenue through consortiums that sponsor and sell their content.

Conclusion

What this overview of the business of journalism shows is that the media world continues to fragment without a clear view of who will pay for quality news ahead. Online Web sites attached to traditional media companies are seriously committed to developing high-quality online journalism. They are also experiencing solid rates of growth that match growth among independent online sites. But their ability to monetize their editorial in a way that offsets or supports the losses they have from traditional advertising does not show signs of reversing. Over a longer time, this suggests a shrinking role for print and broadcast media since newsrooms will not be able to support their staffs even after repetitive cuts. This does not mean that the traditional media are going away altogether but that their effort may be focused on much more local coverage, with softer and high-profile online features that drive traffic to the Web site. Some traditional media executives see the day when their online business will become their dominant revenue source, big enough to sustain a healthy online news staff and generate enough revenue to also support a

smaller print and broadcast stepchild. This uncertain future is already creating divisions in newsrooms.

Print and broadcast newsrooms now post on their Web sites their most viewed and most e-mailed stories of the day. This creates sudden acclaim for popular writers but for reporters who are on serious but not always exciting beats, the practice is discouraging and threatening.

The good news is that the job demand for journalists with multimedia skills is increasing. Even with a downturn in the 2007 U.S. economy, a survey from the University of Georgia found that 63% of journalism graduates from 80 U.S. universities landed jobs within 8 months with an average starting salary of \$30,000, indicating no decline from the year earlier.

There is also a debate about what the number of editorial jobs means in the world of digital journalism. “Saving journalism isn’t about saving jobs” maintains Jeff Jarvis of Buzz Machine, who argues on his influential blog that future media investment should be in growing jobs outside newsrooms and training journalists to report and write to professional standards. Practices such as “twittering”—sending short instant messages—are now used by some traditional media to take files from “citizen reporters” at news sites, such as a bridge collapse, and turn them into constantly updated stories in a running narrative of the event. Entrepreneurs and journalists able to build stories out of these kinds of free editorial feeds are now trying to find ways to monetize their work, such as selling stories to mobile phone users and perhaps eventually selling their creations to large media companies. But unless and until there is a drift toward consolidation, it appears that the universe of new media will continue expanding into multiple digital pieces offering easy entry but limited structure and training for beginning reporters.

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PART XII

PUBLIC RELATIONS

HISTORY AND CONCEPTS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Much like atmospheric pressure, the practice of public relations affects all of us even though we usually are not aware of its presence. What you read, what you see, and what you hear in the media are often the direct or indirect effects of organizations trying to establish and maintain relationships with those important to their success or failure. The organizations include corporations, nonprofits, associations, health care organizations, educational institutions, governmental agencies, military branches, and many more.

Archeologists have found evidence of public relations activity in ancient Iraq, India, Greece, and Italy. Historians documented that kings in England several centuries ago had the Lord Chancellor to attend to their relationships with “the people.” The Catholic Church employed “propaganda” in the 17th century when it established the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (Congregation for Propagating the Faith). U.S. historians have documented what was likely the first systematic fund-raising campaign by Harvard College in 1614, how the revolutionaries stirred public opinion to fight a war against England and to form a new government and promoted the expansion and settlement of the new country (Basham, 1954; Cutlip, 1995; Davidson, 1941; Nevins, 1962).

Much of contemporary practice, however, can be traced to early practitioners in the 20th century, with two “founding fathers” typically credited with much of the emerging profession’s “DNA” and its evolution from press agency to public relations—Ivy Ledbetter Lee and Edward L. Bernays.

Origins of Modern Public Relations

Public relations today reflects the evolving roles of organizations in society, the growing power of the media and public opinion, the increasing interest in applying the findings of the social sciences, and the never-ending march of social and cultural change. Contemporary public relations developed during four eras: (1) public-be-damned, (2) public-be-informed, (3) mutual understanding, and (4) mutual adjustment (Broom, 2009, pp. 92–93).

Public-Be-Damned Era

This era took its name from the infamous remark allegedly made by William Henry Vanderbilt, son of the wealthy shipping and railroad businessman “Commodore” Cornelius Vanderbilt: “The public be damned.” Although this was reported by a Chicago freelance writer in 1882, the young Vanderbilt denied having made the remark disparaging the public interest versus the rights and privileges of the wealthy titans of industry. Nevertheless, the words epitomized the tone of the time and the often abusive power of big business in the 19th century.

For example, Bank of the United States president Nicholas Biddle and his associates attempted to influence public opinion in their political battles with the popular President Andrew Jackson and his adviser, Amos Kendall. By making loans to editors and buying advertisements in their papers, banks were able to influence many newspapers and silence others in the public debate.

Biddle's publicist, Mathew St. Clair Clarke, decided to promote "a brash, loud-talking Tennessee Congressman, the colorful Colonel Davy Crockett and to build him up as a frontier hero to counter Old Hickory's [President Andrew Jackson's] appeal to the frontiersmen" (Cutlip, 1995, p. 100). As Scott Cutlip reported, "The transfiguration of Davy Crockett from a boorish, backwoods boob into a colorful frontier statesman was the work of several ghostwriters and press agents," when in fact Crockett "spent four years loafing and boasting at the Congressional bar" (p. 101).

The Crockett campaign included ghostwritten books, widely distributed ghostwritten speeches (not the words he actually spoke!), and ghostwritten letters to editors. The strategy failed, however, to keep Jackson from winning a second term as president and to prevent the election of his successor, Martin Van Buren, in 1836. After failing to get himself reelected, Crockett headed to Texas, where he was killed by Santa Ana's troops in the siege of the Alamo. It was Walt Disney who revived the legend and polished the "Legend of Davy Crockett" to cash in on the creative work done by press agents more than 100 years earlier.

Press agents also introduced many practices to promote circuses and traveling road shows:

Today's patterns of promotion and press agency in the world of show business were drawn, cut, and stitched by the greatest showman and press agent of all time—that "Prince of Humbug," that mightiest of mountebanks, Phineas Taylor Barnum. (Cutlip, 1995, p. 171)

Barnum employed his own press agent, Richard F. "Tody" Hamilton, whom he credited with much of the success of his circus (now known as the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus). Likewise, Colonel William F. Cody ("Buffalo Bill") used press agency and hyperbole to promote his "Wild West Show." As a result of such successful promotions, press agency spread from show business to closely related enterprises, including powerful business interests.

Westinghouse Electric Company created the first corporate department to engage in press agency in 1889. George Westinghouse and his new electric corporation were promoting his revolutionary alternating-current (AC) system of electricity. The "battle of the currents" followed as Thomas A. Edison's Edison General Electric Company, which used direct current, tried to prevent the adoption of Westinghouse's AC technology (Cutlip, 1995, pp. 199–200).

Edison and his business associate, Samuel Insull, launched a propaganda scare campaign against the "lethal" AC, including the electrocution of stray cats and dogs:

Edison General Electric attempted to prevent the development of alternating current by unscrupulous political action and by even less savory promotional tactics. . . . The promotional activity was a series of spectacular stunts aimed at dramatizing the deadliness of high voltage alternating current, the most sensational being the development and promotion of the electric chair as a means of executing criminals. (McDonald, 1962, pp. 44–45)

Westinghouse recognized the need for specialized help to counter the scare campaign and to get his story to the public. He hired Pittsburgh journalist Ernest H. Heinrichs, who moved quickly to challenge the misrepresentations of AC. When Westinghouse's system won public acceptance despite the Edison-Insull propaganda scare campaign, it demonstrated "that performance and merit are the foundation stones of effective public relations" (Cutlip, 1995, p. 203).

As press agents' exploits became more outrageous, it was not surprising that they would arouse the hostility and suspicion of editors and an increasing skeptical public. Pressures for change led to changes in how public relations' predecessors would deal with both the media and the public in the 20th century.

Public-Be-Informed Era

Powerful business interests in the early 1900s employed publicists to defend themselves and their monopolies against muckraking journalists and a growing push for change and regulation. Thus, the first public relations firms—actually publicity agencies—were established to serve such clients. The strategy was to tell their side of the story and to counterattack to influence public opinion. The goal was to prevent increased governmental regulation of business.

The nation's first publicity agency—The Publicity Bureau—was founded in Boston in mid-1900. Although it would take on corporate clients later, Harvard University was the Publicity Bureau's first client and was paid on what was surely the first fixed-fee-plus-expenses arrangement:

In the matter of payment, we understand that you are to pay the Bureau \$200 a month for our professional services, and those of an artist where drawings seem to be required. That this sum is to include everything except the payment of mechanical work, such as printings and the making of cuts, and the postage necessary to send out the articles themselves to the various papers, which items are to be charged to the University. (Cutlip, 1994, p. 11)

The Publicity Bureau came into national prominence in 1906, when it was employed by the nation's railroads to head off adverse regulatory legislation then being pushed in Congress by President Theodore Roosevelt. Operating in secret, the firm used the tools of fact-finding, publicity, and personal contact to saturate the nation's weeklies with railroad propaganda. In spite of the Publicity Bureau's effort, a moderately tough regulatory measure—The Hepburn Act—was passed in 1906, after President Roosevelt had used the press and his "bully pulpit" to argue a more persuasive case. The Publicity Bureau faded from the scene in 1911 (Cutlip, 1995, p. 16).

Also early in the public-be-informed era, the former Buffalo reporter and veteran political publicist George F. Parker and a young Ivy Ledbetter Lee established Parker

& Lee in New York in 1904. They worked together in the Democratic Party headquarters handling publicity for Judge Alton Parker's unsuccessful presidential race against Theodore Roosevelt. The firm lasted less than 4 years, but the junior partner—Lee—was to become one of the most influential pioneers in the emerging craft of public relations.

The Princeton graduate and former New York newspaper business reporter, Ivy Ledbetter Lee, was among the first to recognize the potential of honest publicity and helping corporations tell their story. Even though this former journalist had difficulty labeling what he did for clients, he changed public relations forever.

Going against the prevailing feeling on Wall Street that “the public be damned,” Lee declared that the public was no longer to be ignored, in the traditional manner of business, or fooled, in the manner of the press agent. It was to be informed. Unlike the Publicity Bureau, which operated in secrecy, Lee sent a “declaration of principles” to all city editors in 1906 and introduced what would later become the “press release”:

This is not a secret press bureau. All our work is done in the open. We aim to supply news. This is not an advertising agency; if you think any of our matter ought properly to go to your business office, do not use it. Our matter is accurate. Further details on any subject treated will be supplied promptly, and any editor will be assisted most cheerfully in verifying directly any statement of fact. . . . In brief, our plan is, frankly and openly, on behalf of business concerns and public institutions, to supply to the press and public of the United States prompt and accurate information concerning subjects which it is of value and interest to the public to know about. (Morse, 1906, p. 460)

The oil and mining magnate John D. Rockefeller, then the world's richest man and one of its most reviled, would become one of Lee's clients. Ida Tarbell's *History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904/1987), described at the time as “a fearless unmasking of moral criminality masquerading under the robes of respectability and Christianity,” exposed abusive practices and energized calls for breaking up the oil monopoly. In 1911, upholding the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 and trust-busting President William Howard Taft's attempt to break up the Standard Oil Trust, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the Trust to break with 33 affiliated companies and to distribute stock to each company's shareholders.

The unpopular Rockefeller was finally persuaded to retain Ivy Lee in 1914 after a disastrous strike and killings at the Rockefeller-owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Company in Ludlow, Colorado. Rockefeller and his family were blamed for “Bloody Ludlow”—the massacre of women and children living in the tent city set up by the striking miners. In the years that followed, Lee used his journalistic skills and reputation for dealing with the press to highlight Rockefeller's generosity and philanthropy. By the time Rockefeller died in 1934, 2 months short of age 98,

he was known for his philanthropy and the many foundations, universities, and medical schools he had endowed.

Lee was still working for the Rockefeller family when he also died in 1934. He sometimes described what he did as “publicity,” but he also counseled his clients, thus establishing the principle that performance determines what is said in the publicity written by others. But the journalist publicity model was not the only approach.

Preparing the nation to enter World War I, President Woodrow Wilson appointed a presidential commission, the “Committee on Public Information.” George Creel headed a staff of young propagandists whose goal was to unite public opinion supporting the United States entering the war. During those early years, public relations took the form of one-way persuasive communication—“propaganda.” Some staff members, having learned new skills, formed public relations firms after the “Great War.” Even today, many practitioners work with managers and clients who think that public relations is simply one-way communication to persuade others.

Mutual-Understanding Era

One of the Creel staff members who did not subscribe to the one-way communication concept was Edward L. Bernays. Thus began what Bernays labeled the era of mutual understanding.

Bernays, a nephew of Sigmund Freud, had translated his uncle's books on psychology and psychiatry into English, so he had background in early behavioral science that he had not acquired as a forestry major at Cornell University. He, like Lee, recognized that there was a business opportunity in what he called *engineering public consent*. Based on his propaganda work with the World War I Creed Committee, he was ready to apply the lessons learned to the needs of paying clients. Bernays also wrote the first public relations book, *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923/2004), and with his wife and business partner, Doris E. Fleischman, introduced the term *public relations counsel*. If Lee and Bernays are to be called the “fathers of public relations,” which they are, Fleischman surely deserves recognition as the “mother of public relations.”

Bernays saw public relations as an applied social science, drawing on the newly available findings of psychology, sociology, and political science. He was not a publicist. Rather, he sought ways to change public views of what was acceptable or desirable and to change public behavior. For example, he is credited with and was greatly remorseful in his last years for having helped make smoking in public acceptable behavior for women in the 1920s. He also is credited with introducing orange juice as a staple with breakfast, to help Florida growers have a market for their produce that otherwise was fed to pigs. During his long career until he retired from active practice in 1962, he counseled the heads of major corporations, U.S. presidents, and uncounted practitioners aspiring to his status and position in the field. Before he died in 1995 at age 103, *Life Magazine*

included Bernays in its 1990 special issue as one of “The 100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century.”

Doris Fleischman, an early feminist, also left her mark on the field and society. After marrying Bernays, she used her maiden name long before the feminist movement made that fashionable:

During the next three decades, Fleischman continued to sign into hotels—and twice into maternity hospitals—as “Miss Doris E. Fleischman,” and in 1925 she received the first U.S. passport granted to a married woman under her birth name. That was her name on the 1928 book she edited on careers for women and on the seven magazine articles and book chapters she published between 1930 and 1946. (Henry, 1998, p. 1)

Although Bernays credited her as being an equal partner in their firm, Fleischman struggled for professional equality during a time when women simply did not advise males in leadership positions. As she wrote in one of her books, written after she adopted her married name:

Many men resented having women tell them what to do in their business. They resented having men tell them, too, but advice from a woman was somewhat demeaning. I learned to withdraw from situations where the gender of public relations counsel was a factor or where suggestions had to be disassociated from gender. If ideas were considered first in terms of my sex, they might never get around to being judged on their own merits. (Fleischman Bernays, 1955, p. 171)

No list of the pioneers shaping today’s practice would be complete without the name Arthur W. Page. Page had three successful business careers yet found time to contribute his considerable talent to many public service efforts. He was a writer and editor at the publishing company he was being groomed to lead, Doubleday, Page and Company, from 1905 until 1927. Then, he accepted an offer to become vice president of American Telephone and Telegraph Co., from fellow Harvard graduate and AT&T president, Walter Gifford.

Page made it clear, however, that he would accept only on the conditions that he was not to serve as a publicity man, that he would have a voice in policy, and that the company’s performance would be the determinant of its public reputation. As a result, Page is widely recognized as having been the first corporate vice president of public relations. He was among the first to use systematic public opinion polling to probe public perceptions in order to help shape company policy. He later summarized his philosophy in this statement:

All business in a democratic country begins with public permission and exists by public approval. If that be true, it follows that business should be cheerfully willing to tell the public what its policies are, what it is doing, and what it hopes to do. This seems practically a duty. (Griswold, 1967, p. 13)

Even while vice president of AT&T during World War II, he devoted much of his time to the war effort. As Page’s biographer Noel Griese reported, Page’s most widely distributed

news release, written for President Harry S. Truman, was issued in Washington, D.C., at 11:00 a.m., Monday, August 6, 1945:

Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of TNT. It had more than two thousand times the blast power of the British “Grand Slam” which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid manyfold. . . . It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its powers has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East. (Griese, 2001, pp. 229–230)

Page retired on January 1, 1947, after integrating public relations concepts and practices into the Bell System. He died in 1960 at age 77. However, Page’s precepts and principles not only endure in the companies that used to be part of AT&T (broken up in 1984 by court order to foster competition) but also are renewed and promoted by the Arthur W. Page Society, an association of senior corporate public relations executives and leaders.

Although sophisticated opinion measurement methods were not introduced until the 1930s, the postwar work of social scientists contributed much to advance behavioral research and communication science. Page was among the first to apply the new skills and knowledge to public relations practice.

Mutual-Adjustment Era

Even before World War II, research on media effects did not appear to support assumptions about powerful media effects, instead suggesting a limited-effects model with more active and more resistant audiences. More realistic concepts of public relations evolved to include notions of two-way communication and relationships. Definitions began to include words such as *reciprocal*, *mutual*, and *between*, indicating a maturing view. For example, an interactive concept appeared in *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary’s* definition: “The art or science of developing reciprocal understanding and goodwill.” The British Institute of Public Relations defined the practice as an effort to establish and maintain “mutual understanding between an organization and its publics.”

Early editions of the field’s leading text also defined public relations as an interactive concept—“the planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance, based on mutually satisfactory two-way communications” (Cutlip & Center, 1952/1984). Another influential text published in 1984 presented yet another version of the interactive concept—“the management of communication between an organization and its publics” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 6).

Ahead of his time, Yale professor and *Public Opinion Quarterly* founder Harwood L. Childs introduced an even more advanced concept in the late 1930s. Childs concluded that the goal of public relations “is not the presentation of a

point of view, not the art of tempering mental attitudes, nor the development of cordial and profitable relations.” Instead, he said the basic function “is to reconcile or adjust in the public interest those aspects of our personal and corporate behavior which have a social significance” (Childs, 1940, pp. 3, 13). Childs saw the function of public relations as helping organizations *adjust* to their social environments, a concept that reemerged many decades later in contemporary public relations. “Consumerism,” “environmentalism,” “racism,” and “sexism” became serious issues on the public agenda beginning in the 1960s. Add to those “isms,” “peace.” A new breed of investigative muckrakers and powerful new advocacy groups pushed for social change, new social safety nets, and increased government oversight of business and industry. Protecting the environment and securing civil rights became the flagship causes of this era.

Reminiscent of the early part of the 20th century, books led the charge against “big business.” For example, many credit Rachel Carson’s 1962 book, *Silent Spring*, with beginning the environmental movement. President John F. Kennedy directed his science advisory committee to study the book’s documented charges that DDT indiscriminately killed all manner of insects and animals when applied to crops as a pesticide and that DDT had contaminated the entire food chain. Public apathy soon changed to public demand to regulate the pesticide industry and to protect the environment.

General Motors also became a target of protest and public scrutiny, opening the door to greater corporate accountability. Ralph Nader gave birth to the consumer movement in 1965, when he wrote *Unsafe at Any Speed: The Designed-In Dangers of the American Automobile*. Nader charged that the Chevrolet Corvair’s suspension system made the car subject to rolling over. GM’s legal department responded by investigating Nader’s private life. Subsequently, the company’s president had to appear before a Senate subcommittee and apologize to Nader for resorting to intimidation. In addition, the company settled lawsuits out of court for invading Nader’s privacy and agreed to change the Corvair suspension system. Nader used the cash settlement and his book royalties to establish the Project on Corporate Responsibility, staffed by young lawyers and investigators. Corporations suffered many setbacks as “Nader’s Raiders” continued to press for corporate accountability for decades. For example, the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 spelled out safety standards for all vehicles. Congress also mandated safety in the workplace when it passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) in 1970.

However, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is the icon of this era of social change and empowerment. His rise to national leadership began in 1955, when he stood up for Rosa Parks, who was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, to a white passenger. He gave his famous “I Have a Dream” speech on August 28, 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Dr. King gave his prophetic last speech, “I’ve Been to the Mountain Top,” in Memphis, Tennessee, the day before he was assassinated

on April 4, 1968. He became the martyr and symbol of the Civil Rights Movement, which produced, among many other changes, the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the Open Housing Law of 1968. Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement played a major role in defining this as the era of change and empowerment.

Surely the Vietnam War protests were the most divisive of this era, contributing to the “generation gap,” “hippies,” the “sexual revolution,” and—ultimately—Watergate and the impeachment of President Richard Nixon. A popular saying of the time “Power to the People” surely captured the essence of this era.

Public relations textbooks written during this era also reflected a major change in public relations practice from the “journalist-in-residence” model based on telling our story. The changed balance of power in society required a new role for public relations in organizations responding to the heightened change pressures. For example, the sixth edition of *Effective Public Relations* by Cutlip, Center, and Broom (1985) introduced “adjustment and adaptation” as the basis of contemporary practice. Research courses became part of the public relations curriculum on many campuses, and practitioners who engaged in information gathering joined the management decision-making teams in many organizations.

Contemporary public relations deals with adaptation and adjustment both inside and outside organizations, whereas the one-way concept of public relations relies almost entirely on propaganda and persuasive communication. Typically in the form of publicity, the two-way concept emphasizes communication exchange, reciprocity, and mutual understanding. Additionally, the two-way concept includes counseling management on *changes* needed *within* the organization. Although old concepts still dominate in many settings, contemporary practice is increasingly a management-level function that has a major role in determining both corrective action and two-way communication strategy. As the Burson-Marsteller cofounder Harold Burson (1990) observed, early in his firm’s history, clients’ questions changed from “How do I say it?” to “What should I say?” Beginning in the 1980s, however, clients began asking, “What should I do?” That question is a fitting transition to defining contemporary practice.

Concept and Definition of Contemporary Practice

People enter into relationships with others to satisfy mutual wants and needs. The continuum of social systems formed by these relationships runs from the smallest—the dyad, two people—to the largest—the global community of nations. Because these relationships are essential to meeting common needs, establishing and maintaining relationships at all levels of social systems are important areas of scholarly study and professional practice.

For example, *human relations*, *marital relations*, and *interpersonal relations* describe the study and management of

relationships between individuals. Professionals specialize in counseling individuals and couples to resolve relational problems and improve relationships. At the other extreme, *international relations* deals with relationships among nations in the largest social system. Likewise, there are specialists and political leaders who practice the art and science of helping nations deal with their ever-changing and sometimes threatening relationships. Courses and books are devoted to the study of all these relationships, as well as relationships in families, work teams, groups, organizations, and other social entities.

Public relations deals with the *relationships between organizations and their stakeholder publics*—people who are somehow mutually involved or interdependent with particular organizations. The social system of interest comprises organization-public relationships, and public relations deals with establishing and maintaining those relationships. It is one of the fastest-growing fields of professional practice worldwide.

Elements of the Concept

Hundreds have attempted to capture the essence of public relations by listing the activities that make up the practice—what public relations does. Such lists provide little guidance to help define public relations conceptually. A blue-ribbon panel of Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) leaders in 1982 wrote a definition that stresses public relations' contributions to society—the “Official Statement on Public Relations.” The many definitions suggest elements common to the underlying concept. Public relations

1. holds membership on an organization's management team;
2. focuses on the organization's relationships with its stakeholder publics;
3. monitors knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and behavior inside and outside the organization;
4. assesses the impact of the organization's policies, procedures, and actions on stakeholder publics;
5. counsels management on the establishment of new policies, procedures, and actions that benefit both the organization and its stakeholders;
6. facilitates two-way communication between the organization and its stakeholder publics to change knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and behavior both inside and outside the organization; and
7. produces new and/or maintains relationships between the organization and its publics.

Public Relations Defined

Definitions help us understand the world around us and to argue for a particular worldview of how one concept relates to other concepts (Gordon, 1997, p. 58). Consequently, the following definition of public relations

describes what public relations is and does, as well as sets parameters for deciding what is not public relations. “Public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends” (Broom, 2009, p. 7). This definition positions the practice of public relations as a *management function* and implies that management in all organizations must attend to public relations. It also identifies building and maintaining *mutually beneficial relationships* between organizations and their publics as the moral and ethical basis of the profession. And finally, it suggests criteria for determining *what is* and *what is not* public relations.

Relationship to Marketing

Marketing is the management function most often confused with public relations. Whereas public relations is charged with taking into account all of an organization's stakeholders, marketing typically focuses on customers or clients. It is as if marketing uses a telephoto lens to zero in on the target customers, while public relations uses a wide-angle lens to scan the scene for all the stakeholders.

Confusion is common, however, as job openings for “public relations representatives” turn out to be positions as sales representatives or telephone solicitors. In many small organizations, the same person does both public relations and marketing, often without distinguishing between the two. Practitioners add to the confusion themselves when their business cards say that they do “marketing communications” (often referred to as “marcom”) or “integrated marketing communications.” Some public relations firms have “marketing communications” or “marketing public relations” in their titles and on their letterheads.

Although the two are not always clearly defined in practice, public relations and marketing can be distinguished conceptually and their relationship clarified. Fundamental to the concept of marketing is the marketer delivering a product or service to a customer in *exchange* for something of value. According to the marketing scholars Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong (2008), “Exchange is the act of obtaining a desired object from someone by offering something in return. . . . Marketing consists of actions taken to build and maintain desirable exchange relationships . . .” (p. 7).

Successful marketing attracts and satisfies customers on a sustained basis to secure “market share” and to achieve an organization's economic objectives. It is the special relationship—two parties *exchanging something of value with each other*—that creates quid pro quo relationships in which ownership changes hands that distinguishes marketing from public relations: “Marketing is the management function that identifies human needs and wants, offers products and services to satisfy those demands, and causes transactions that deliver products and services in exchange

for something of value to the provider” (Broom, 2009, p. 6). Product publicity and media relations are among the tactics used to support marketing. Because public relations specialists typically know how to write for the news media, how to work with journalists, and how to plan and implement internal communication programs for sales staff, marketers call on them to help in the marketing effort. Apple Computer, for example, capitalized on the news value of their new products by using publicity to launch new models and new products—even getting CEO Steve Jobs on the cover of *Time* magazine and in the lead stories of television news programs. Mattel used press conferences and other publicity to defend the company and to announce product recalls during the marketing crisis associated with lead paint on toys made in China as toy sales plummeted during the holiday shopping season.

Effective public relations contributes to the marketing effort by maintaining a hospitable social and political environment and by dealing with the news media. For example, a hospital that maintains good relationships with volunteers, nurses, physicians, local employers, local government, and community groups will likely enjoy success in the marketing effort to attract patients, physicians, and referrals. Likewise, successful marketing and satisfied customers help build and maintain good relations with employees, investors, government regulatory agencies, and community leaders.

On the other hand, misguided marketing strategies and gimmicks illustrate how these efforts can backfire and create public relations problems. “Joe Camel” may have been an effective marketing tactic for reaching children and teenagers, but it may have been the straw that broke the camel’s back for the tobacco industry as it defended itself in numerous court cases. Nestlé’s marketing of the Nan™ baby formula—ignoring the World Health Organization’s Code of Marketing Milk Substitutes—prompted the National Alliance for Breastfeeding Advocacy to charge Nestlé with “using a vulnerable population for a grab at market share” (Jordan, 2004, n.p.).

Confusion With the Parts

The contemporary concept and practice of public relations includes many activities and specialties. Some practitioners, for example, focus on relations with employees—the “number one public” or “the organization’s most important asset.” They work in departments called “employee communication,” “employee relations,” or “internal relations.” They plan and implement communication programs to keep employees informed and motivated and to promote the organization’s culture. “Internal relations is the specialized part of public relations that builds and maintains mutually beneficial relationship between managers and the employees on whom an organization’s success depends” (Broom, 2009, p. 10).

Much news and information in the media originates as *publicity*. But because sources do not pay for the placement,

they have little or no control over *whether* the information is used; *when* it is used; and *how* it is used, or misused, by the media. Media gatekeepers may or may not use the information, based on their judgment of its news value and interest to their audiences. From the perspective of readers, listeners, or viewers, the medium carrying the information is the source.

Publicity is information provided by an outside source that is used by the media because the information has news value. This is an uncontrolled method of placing messages in the media because the source does not pay the media for placement. (Broom, 2009, p. 11)

Events also generate publicity by attracting media coverage. Groundbreaking ceremonies, ribbon cuttings, open houses, reunions, dedications, telethons, marathons, ceremonial appointments, honorary degrees, contract and legislation signings, protest demonstrations, press conferences, and other “media events” are designed to be “news.” Successful publicity events have real news value; appeal to media gatekeepers; offer photo, video, or sound opportunities; and communicate the source’s intended message.

Unlike when using publicity, *advertising* gives the source *control* of content, placement, and timing by paying for media advertising time and space. “Advertising is information placed in the media by an identified sponsor that pays for the time or space. It is a controlled method of placing messages in the media” (Broom, 2009, p. 13). Organizations use advertising for public relations purposes when they want to address criticism in the media—over which they have no control, when they feel that their point of view is not being reported fairly, when they feel that their publics do not understand the issues or are apathetic, or when they are trying to add their voices to a cause. For example, when Andersen Consulting changed its name to Accenture, the company placed advertisements in business publications announcing the new name. Kuwait’s embassy in the United States purchased full-page advertisements in major U.S. newspapers announcing “America is our ally” and supporting “the international effort to eradicate terrorism.” Merck & Company used advertising to announce its withdrawal of VIOXX™ from the market. The American Cancer Society has long relied on advertising to achieve its public awareness goals:

The society was the first traditional health charity to engage in paid advertising and, to be sure, for years our ad budget, which is less than 2% of our revenues, was spent raising awareness of things such as colorectal cancer and breast cancer screenings and tobacco prevention. (Wender, 2007, p. A17)

In *Walking the Tightrope*, the late Hollywood publicist Henry Rogers (1980) summarized his view of *press agency*: “When I first started, I was in the publicity business. I was a press agent. Very simply, my job was to get the client’s name in the paper” (p. 14). In other words, the goal of press agency

is to create the perception that the subject of the publicity is a newsworthy subject deserving public attention. Press agency is creating newsworthy stories and events to attract media attention in order to gain public notice.

Negative publicity seldom has positive outcomes, however. Press coverage featuring the antics of Britney Spears, Michael Vick, and one-time presidential candidate John Edwards may bring public notice—even celebrity—but surely will not positively affect their respective lives and careers. Confusion results when press agents describe what they do as “public relations” or use that term to give their agencies more prestigious titles. As a result, many journalists still mistakenly refer to all public relations practitioners as “flacks,” even though the *Associated Press Stylebook* defines “flack” as “slang for press agent.”

The armed services, many governmental agencies, and some corporations use *public affairs* as a surrogate title for public relations. This title is part of a name game dating back to the 1913 Gillett Amendment to an appropriation bill in the U.S. House of Representatives. The amendment stipulated that federal funds could not be spent for publicity unless specifically authorized by Congress. The historian J. A. R. Pimlott (1951/1972) concluded that limitations imposed on government public relations “springs from the fear lest programs undertaken in the name of administrative efficiency should result in an excessive concentration of power in the Executive” (p. 76).

In fact, the 1913 amendment did not refer to public relations. Many federal, state, and local governmental officials nevertheless confuse publicity with the larger concept of public relations. As a result, governmental agencies typically use titles such as “public affairs,” “public information,” “communications,” “constituent relations,” and “liaison.”

In corporations, *public affairs* often refers to public relations efforts related to public policy and “corporate citizenship.” Corporate public affairs specialists serve as liaisons with governmental units; implement community improvement programs; encourage political activism, campaign contributions, and voting; and volunteer their services in charitable and community development organizations.

Public affairs is the specialized part of public relations that builds and maintains relationships with governmental agencies and community stakeholder groups to influence public policy.

An even more specialized and often criticized part of public affairs, *lobbying*, attempts to influence legislative and regulatory decisions in government. The U.S. Senate (2008) defines lobbying as “the practice of trying to persuade legislators to propose, pass, or defeat legislation or to change existing laws.” Registration laws and their enforcement vary from state to state, but all who engage in lobbying the U.S. Congress must register with the Clerk of the House and Secretary of the Senate. Twice a year, lobbyists also are required to report their clients, expenditures, and issue-related activities.

News stories sometimes report illegal or questionable cash contributions to legislators, lavish fund-raising parties, and weekends at exotic golf resorts. However, lobbying more often takes the form of open advocacy and discussion on matters of public policy.

Lobbying is a specialized part of public relations that builds and maintains relations with government primarily to influence legislation and regulation.

Issues management requires early identification of issues with potential impact on an organization and a strategic response designed to mitigate or capitalize on their consequences. As originally conceived, issues management included identifying issues, analyzing issues, setting priorities, selecting program strategies, implementing programs of action and communication, and evaluating effectiveness (Chase, 1977). Conceptually, if not always administratively, issues management is part of the public relations function.

Issues management is the proactive process of anticipating, identifying, evaluating, and responding to public policy issues that affect an organization’s relationships with its publics.

Another specialized part of public relations practice is also the highest paid. Sometimes referred to as “IR” or “financial relations,” *investor relations* is part of public relations in publicly held corporations. Investor relations specialists work to enhance the value of a company’s stock. This reduces the cost of capital by increasing shareholder confidence and by making the stock attractive to individual investors, financial analysts, and institutional investors.

Investor relations is a specialized part of corporate public relations that builds and maintains mutually beneficial relationships with shareholders and others in the financial community to maximize market value.

Investor relations specialists keep shareholders informed and loyal to a company in order to maintain a fair valuation of a company’s stock. They track market trends, provide information to financial publics, counsel management, and respond to requests for financial information. Those aspiring to careers in investor relations typically combine studies in public relations with coursework in finance and business law. An MBA degree is often necessary preparation.

If investor relations helps finance publicly held corporations, fund-raising and membership drives provide the financial support needed to operate charitable and nonprofit organizations. *Development* specialists work for charities, public broadcasting stations, disease research foundations, hospitals, community arts groups, museums, zoos, youth clubs, universities, and religious organizations. Organizations that rely on donations, membership fees, and volunteers often have a “director of member services and development.”

Development is a specialized part of public relations in nonprofit organizations that builds and maintains relationships with donors and members to secure financial and volunteer support.

Toward Recognition and Maturity

Whatever name is used, the basic concept and motivation of public relations are similar from one organization to the next—large or small, local or global. *All organizations strive to establish and maintain relationships with those identified as important to their survival and growth.*

Some scholars credit public relations for the heightened attention to public accountability and social responsibility among government administrators and business executives. Others emphasize the function's role in making organizations more responsive to public interests and more accepting of their corporate social responsibility. As one business leader long ago said,

We know perfectly well that business does not function by divine right, but, like any other part of society, exists with the sanction of the community as a whole. . . . Today's public opinion, though it may appear as light as air, may become tomorrow's legislation for better or worse. (Cutlip & Center, 1958, p. 6)

So public relations also helps organizations anticipate and respond to public perceptions and opinions, to new values and lifestyles, to power shifts among the electorate and within legislative bodies, and to other changes in the social and political environment. Public relations also makes information available through the public information system that is essential to both democratic society and organizational survival. Finally, the practice serves society by mediating conflict and by building the consensus needed to maintain social order. In summary, public relations' social mission is to facilitate adjustment and maintenance in the social systems that provide us with our physical and social needs.

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THEORIES AND EFFECTS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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This chapter introduces public relations theory and effects and is divided into three sections. Section 1 covers a brief review of some of the social and economic effects of modern-day public relations—what students who chose public relations will walk into in terms of job availability, pay levels, and the like. The second and third sections then look at theory. The second section explains how often unconscious or unnoticed assumptions about public relations combined over time to create misunderstandings about the field in the minds of students, the general public, and some supervisors. These unconscious assumptions often function as lay theories. A lay theory is an informal theory that lay (i.e., nontrained) groups and individuals develop on their own to explain how things work or are related. The third section is a short summary of more formal public relations theory based on a longer review of public relations theory that was published by Maureen Taylor and this author in 2004. This section uses a bit more field-specific jargon, although it has been reduced to a minimum. The reader needing additional formal academic discussion of public relations theory is referred to the Botan and Taylor article in *Journal of Communication* (2004) or to two public relations theory books coauthored by this author, *Public Relations Theory* (Botan & Hazleton, 1989) and *Public Relations Theory II* (Botan & Hazleton, 2006).

Social and Economic Effects of Public Relations

Public relations affects a society in many ways, from direct economic contribution, such as promoting a product or company, to public diplomacy and nation-building campaigns. Public diplomacy is the branch of public relations in which one government seeks to influence the policy of another government by first influencing the publics of that other government through a public relations campaign in the hope that those publics will, in turn, influence their own government. Nation-building campaigns are those used to help build underdeveloped nations or nations trying to rebuild from civil war or some other large disaster. Such large-scale effects are interesting and have been addressed by many authors (e.g., Kunczik, 1997; Signitzer & Wamser, 2006; Sriramesh & Vercic, 2003), but the effects of primary concern in this chapter are ones that affect the work experience of those in the field.

This overview of the social and economic effects of public relations is divided into two parts: makeup, which affects practitioners and publics alike, and pay. Not discussed under these headings are several attributes of the field that are not central to the argument developed in this chapter but that are still discussed briefly in the conclusion—that public relations has become highly international and intercultural, that public relations has become a research-centered field,

and how much public relations has moved up the organizational and corporate ladder.

Makeup of the Field

Public relations has grown and changed at an amazing rate in the past quarter-century. It is a field on the upswing, and its changing composition is one indicator of that. The resulting effects include substantial opportunities for women and a growing role in areas that have previously been the domain of journalism and advertising.

Gender Composition

A long time ago, the public relations field was predominantly male, but the 2006 report of the National Curriculum Commission's (Curriculum Commission, 2006) report on public relations education said that in "a field that was once predominantly male, females now constitute almost two thirds of all practitioners and as much as 70 to 80 percent of undergraduate enrollment in some university programs, an imbalance that has been increasing since 1999" (p. 13).

Growth Compared With Other Areas Within Communication

Public relation has grown to the point that "public relations' large enrollments often are used to fund other subject areas" (Curriculum Commission, 2006, p. 16) in departments of communication, mass communication, and journalism. The large enrollments of public relations are easy to see and well documented, particularly in comparison with another popular, career-focused specialty in communication, advertising. The May 2005 newsletter of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication reported that in just the 197 universities responding to a survey, there were 281 programs and that of these there were 133 for public relations, 95 for advertising, and 53 for joint programs. Most important, however, the newsletter went on to report that between 1992–1993, the number of public relations programs increased by 14, while advertising dropped 25. The Public Relations Student Society of America, the campus branch of the primary national professional organization, the Public Relation Society of America, has grown to 275 chapters (Curriculum Commission, 2006).

In fact, public relations' growth has been so great that the National Curriculum Commission identified finding enough qualified faculty to teach public relations as one of the major problems the field faces. The Commission saw this problem as so great in 2006 that it issued the following warning in its report:

In the past, teaching vacancies in the field have too often been filled with instructors without the PhD or research and theory knowledge, without actual practitioner experience, or both. Absent documented and specific public relations experience or graduate study in public relations, a degree in English, business, advertising, journalism, mass communication, or another professional field, is *not* evidence of preparation to teach public relations. (p. 14)

The high growth rate of public relations is not surprising in light of the expanding number of jobs (and the increasing pay scales). The 2006 *Occupational Outlook Handbook* published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) predicted that public relations employment will grow from 18% to 26% between 2004 and 2014 while jobs for news analysts, reporters, and correspondents, for example, are expected to be relatively flat over the same period, growing only 0% to 8%.

The BLS's *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2008–2009* currently lists 243,000 jobs for public relations specialists, exclusive of the 50,000 or so jobs for public relations managers (BLS, 2008). This same source projects 286,000 jobs for public relations specialists in 2016, an increase of 43,000 and a growth rate of 18%. In the same period, jobs for public relations managers are expected to grow 24.1% (www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs030.htm).

Pay Scales in Public Relations

What was once a fairly low-paying field has divided into two quite distinct groups, both much better paid than in the past. Public relations specialists include the lower ranks of pay and those who choose to make their living doing only technical-level work such as layout or clipping files. Public relations managers, however, are those who either manage the public relations function within an organization in which public relations is just a subdivision or have a management role in a public relations firm. Because a very common goal of those taking university public relations courses is to achieve such management-level jobs, this discussion of pay scales will focus mostly on the pay of public relations managers.

While *median* hourly earnings for public relations specialists are about \$24.05 in 2008–2009 (BLS, 2008), *mean* hourly wages of public relations managers are \$46.71 for a mean annual income of \$97,170 (BLS, 2008). During the 2005–2007 period that Labor Department source ranked public relations managers, then earning mean annual salaries of \$85,548, as the 17th most highly paid profession, well below physicians and surgeons (\$139,849) and lawyers (\$126,530) but well ahead of economists (\$79,585), engineers (\$79,381), nuclear technicians (\$73,271), physical scientists (\$71,660), and advertising and promotion managers (\$67,018). In some markets, such as Washington, D.C., public relations pay is appreciably higher, and the field may rank

among the top 10 in income, but in other locales public relations pay scales may drop below the top 20.

Such highly competitive pay scales and the rapidly increasing number of public relations jobs suggest that the field is having greater and greater effects both on the organizations it is part of and on society as a whole. For example, two reasons for the higher pay scales of public relations specialists and managers in recent years are the greatly expanding use of social scientific research methods in the field and the growing internationalization of the practice of public relations.

As public relations has increasing effects on society and the economy, and more and more people are called on to use it, learning about the assumptions and lay theories that color the day-to-day practice of public relations becomes important. These assumptions and lay theories are what a student often walks into on a new job, and we turn our attention to them in the next section.

Assumptions and Lay Theories

Assumptions about what public relations is and how it should be used often rule the workplace, and sometimes even the college classroom when teachers lacking proper public relations credentials are hired because of the teacher shortage. The assumptions of nonprofessional lay people often come from lay theories. Some lay theories are based on hundreds of years of experience and are quite sophisticated, such as some of those involving folk medicines. Some lay theories, on the other hand, are not based on much more than wishes and superstitions—even those affecting life and death matters. For example, some of our ancient ancestors believed that wearing blue face paint or human sacrifices would appease otherwise angry gods. Some lay theories are very widely accepted but are still wrong. Kerlinger (1986) used the example of a coin that has come up heads five times in a row when flipped and the commonsense (i.e., lay theory) notion that according to something they call the law of averages it is due to come up tails. Naïve bettors no doubt keep many gambling casinos in business by doubling or even tripling their bets on the fifth flip—when the odds of a tail are the same 50% as they were on the first flip.

Thus, sometimes assumptions, and the lay theories that are often behind them, are useful, and sometimes they are not. The same is true regarding the assumptions many people make about public relations, so this second section of the chapter examines the technician approach, the most commonly held assumption about public relations and the one most frequently run into in the workplace and in the mass media.

Technician Approach

The most commonly held assumption about public relations is that it is just a set of technical writing and publicity

skills, so public relations practitioners should be called on to implement the technical aspects of plans only after these are made. This assumption is most commonly called the technician approach or technician role, although it is sometimes also referred to as the functional approach.

The technician view sees public relations from a non-strategic and nonethical perspective as just a set of technical journalism-based skills to be hired out. Most important among these is the ability to write press releases well, but organizing and hosting news conferences, laying out or editing publications, taking pictures, and handling media relations are also important skills (Botan, 1994). In effect, the practitioner becomes no more than a hired journalist-in-residence or a mechanic for media relations whose job is to get as much free advertising as possible. In fact, the productivity of public relations practitioners working for this kind of employer is often assessed by reporting the amount of dollars that it would have cost to buy advertising of the same length. This is known as advertising equivalency in the trade and is disparaged by most experienced public relations people as the second weakest way to evaluate public relations work (the weakest is by just measuring the output of public relations workers, such as how many news releases they send out).

In the technician approach, the practitioner cedes unquestioned authority to decide major ethical and strategic matters to someone outside themselves, in most cases to corporate leaders. In doing so, the public relations department usually accepts a one-way communication role and ensures that it will have little voice in strategic planning, deciding what is ethical or exactly how public relations will be practiced. Those making the calls under this model are often organizational leaders with little or no training in public relations who, thus, rely on lay theories and assumptions.

Hired-Gun View

The technician approach is based on what Sullivan (1965) and Pearson (1989) called craft and partisan values. Good public relations is defined as being loyal to the employer and doing good craft work such as writing good news releases. So this approach is often likened to the hired-gun stereotype of the Old West. The assumption is that public relations should try to make bad practices look less bad than they really are and poor practices look positively dazzling—thus the term *spinmeister*, or to spin a story. When teaching public relation students, I often refer to this kind of practice as perfuming the pig—making something smell better than it really is. I tell my students this is bad public relations, at best, and that if you allow yourself to be trapped into perfuming other people's pigs not only will you probably never work your way out of the sty but sooner or later enough the sty will rub off on you: that others will start to think you smell worse than the pigs and, thus, should not be allowed even to work perfuming other pigs.

Lay Theories Behind the Hired-Gun View

There are at least three lay theories behind the hired-gun/technician approach to public relations: If they only knew what I knew . . . , hypodermic needle or silver bullet, and the court of public opinion.

*If you only knew what I know,
you'd make the same decision . . .*

One of the lay theories underlying the technician approach to public relations is reflected in the management assumption that they know more than publics do, that their interests are the most legitimate, and that the company has already looked at all aspects of a problem. Thus, they assume, if the publics only knew these truths, they would come to the same decision. With this assumption, they feel that what all public relations practitioners have to do is get their story out effectively and everyone will fall in line. Unfortunately, they also often believe the inverse—that when publics do not go along with them the public relations staff is at fault, since their own actions and decisions are beyond reproach. Clearly, then, the hired-gun view is not good for publics, not good for clients, and certainly not good for practitioners. In fact, this line of reasoning has been debunked many times, including by Gaudino, Fritch, and Haynes (1989).

This lay theory, that the only problem is that publics do not understand things as they should, is inherently paternalist and assumes that publics need only to be informed about how smart management decision making really is in order to be convinced to buy the product, vote for the candidate, quit smoking, or the like. This lay theory about public relations, in turn, draws on two others, one from mass media and one from public relations.

Hypodermic Needle or Silver Bullet

Although these are actually two different ideas, they serve somewhat the same role in assumptions about the practice of public relations, so they are treated together here. Actually, the hypodermic needle/magic/silver bullet was at one time a formal mass communication theory (see Bineham, 1988, for a review) that said that individuals are directly and very heavily influenced by what they see and hear from the media. In the academic arena, this theory was debunked long ago and replaced by what came to be known as the limited-effects model of media influence (Bauer, 1964; Klapper, 1960).

Although no longer generally accepted by researchers, the old silver-bullet view—that in each situation a single mass media message exists that can shape how people think—remains firmly entrenched as a lay theory in the minds of many. Those who argue that television or particular music causes violence and leads our youth astray may be essentially arguing this view. Thus, if a silver bullet exists,

it only makes sense to hire the technically most proficient public relations practitioner available and assign him or her the task of finding and using it. Furthermore, since these same folks often assume that “if they only knew what we know, they would agree,” there is, of course, no need to do any research on publics, to check the organization’s motives or practices, or take any other steps except search for the magic bullet. Real public relations professionals reject this and do research on both the public and the organization hiring them.

Court of Public Opinion

Public relations practitioners are sometimes cast as the hired advocates of a company that merely deserves its day in [the] court [of public opinion]. Thus, this lay theory holds, the job of a public relations practitioner is to pull out all the stops to get their client off, just as television lawyers do for their clients. When combined with “If you only knew what I know” and the belief that a magic bullet exists if you can just get your story out, this last lay theory offers justification for some very backward public relations practices.

Of course, this analogy between a court of law and a court of public opinion falls down when examined closely. First, in a court of law, both sides are nominally equal because they both can be represented by a trained attorney. In the public domain, on the other hand, single individuals or small groups of citizens and activists have nowhere near the resources of the large corporations and government bodies with which they contend and do not typically have equal access to the media. Second, there is no assurance of a trained, objective, and disinterested authority (a judge) who can see through the two one-sided presentations in a court of public opinion. The weakness of the court of public opinion argument becomes even more evident when one of the parties involved in a public policy dispute is a government body. Not only does government often have the sole authority to pass judgment on its own behavior, but it also can use tax money (including the taxes of those who are disagreeing with a particular government action) to defend its practices.

For example, many developing countries complain bitterly about how they are portrayed in the media of developed countries such as the United States. Since their complaint is against the multibillion-dollar media conglomerates that control access to the channels of mass communication by virtue of owning them, it can be difficult for them to even get into the court of public opinion, let alone get an impartial verdict. Interestingly, however, an increasing number of developing countries are hiring U.S. public relations firms, possibly because some of them also buy into this lay theory. In addition to these and other lay theories, there is a whole body of academic theory about public relations to which we now turn.

Formal Public Relations Theory

Academics have discussed a number of competing approaches to public relations all the way from the level of paradigms (Botan, 1993b) to four specific models (Grunig & Hunt, 1984) and from systems theory, critical models, and the rhetorical approach (e.g., Crable & Vibbert, 1985) to the very backward and unprofessional hired-gun approach discussed above. But how is such a varied theoretic history best organized for understanding?

We faced a similar challenge some years ago, when Maureen Taylor and I (Botan & Taylor, 2004) reviewed the state of formal public relations theory and summed it up in what we called the *functional and co-creational perspectives*. To do this, we first reviewed the five major meta-analyses of public relations theory that had been published up to that time. A meta-analysis is an analysis of analyses, a doublespeak way of saying that a meta-analysis is a summary and evaluation of previous analyses. The five we looked at, in chronological order, were Pavlik (1987), Botan and Hazleton (1989), Pasadeos, Renfro, and Henily (1999), Vasquez and Taylor (2000), and Sallot, Lyon, Acosta-Alzuru, and Jones (2003).

A Short Summary of Public Relations Research and Theory

Contrary to the assumptions of those with a technical perspective on public relations, this specialty is one of the most researched in the broad field of communication and mass communication. In 2003, for example, there were more than 250 scholarly research papers presented at conferences just in the United States (Botan & Taylor, 2004) with many more in Europe, Asia, Australia, and elsewhere. Public relations is taught in several hundred universities in the United States, but the densest public relations enrollments may be in Australia and, increasingly, in Korea. There are two international academic public relations journals (*Public Relations Review* and *Journal of Public Relations Research*), with a semi-academic journal (*Public Relations Quarterly*) and the closely allied *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, as well as two primarily public relations journals in Britain, one dedicated journal in Korea, and others. All these journals and academic papers mean that lots of work is published on public relations theory each year. Far too much, in fact, to go into any kind of detail here, so this chapter resorts to very broad strokes and generalities in the interest of readability. For more detail, see the five meta-analyses referenced in the last paragraph as well as Botan and Taylor (2004).

The history of public relations was covered in the previous chapter, but public relations theory has its own history. Public relations theory began to come into its own in the United States in the late 1970s and early to mid-1980s, sparked in part by the work of Scott Cutlip and his students coming out of the University of Wisconsin. These scholars

produced some of the first real theory work in public relations and contributed to overthrowing the technical approach, which had, up to that time, largely dominated college campuses as it did the practitioner community. Drawing mostly on existing social science and mass communication theories, these and other scholars began to develop a recognized area of theoretic work in public relations in the 1980s and 1990s. They also identified some of the major questions the field is still wrestling with today, including whether public relations should be focused on relationship building (Ferguson, 1984), whether it should be practiced from a symmetrical or asymmetrical model (Grunig & Hunt, 1984), and what roles public relations practitioners play and should play in the workplace (Broom & Smith, 1979).

Botan and Taylor (2004) looked back on the evolution of public relations theory and said that it could best be summarized as representing two very different views of what the field is and what it should be. The first of these, the functional, was based on the technician view discussed above. The second, the co-creational, represented a sea change from the old message-and-sender focus of the technical view. It adopted a new and much more humanistic focus on the role of publics—particularly the role of publics as co-creators of meaning. Thus, a co-creational view sees publics not just as groups that react to what an organization does but as equal players in defining the environment in which they and the organization interact as equals.

Functional Perspective

Of the functional perspective, of which the technical approach discussed above is a part, Botan and Taylor (2004) said,

The most striking trend in public relations over the past 20 years, we believe, is its transition from a functional perspective to a cocreational one. A functional perspective, prevalent in the early years of the field, sees publics and communication as tools or means to achieve organizational ends. The functional perspective traditionally uses public relations theories to achieve specified outcomes. The focus is generally on techniques and production of strategic organizational messages. Research plays a role only insofar as it advances organizational goals. (p. 7)

In spite of the weaknesses of the lay theories and assumptions underpinning the technical approach (discussed above), it remains overwhelmingly the most popular lay theory about public relations. Thus, there was a major lay theory supporting the functional approach, and some of the works in the early body of academic literature accepted it.

Co-Creational Perspective

Of the co-creational perspective, Botan and Taylor (2004) said,

The cocreational perspective sees publics as cocreators of meaning and communication as what makes it possible to agree to shared meanings, interpretations, and goals. This perspective is long term in its orientation and focuses on relationships among publics and organizations. Research is used to advance understanding and the field embraces theories that either explicitly share these values (e.g., relational approaches or community) or can be used to advance them. The major relationship of interest is between groups and organizations, and communication functions to negotiate changes in these relationships. The cocreational perspective places an implicit value on relationships going beyond the achievement of an organizational goal. That is, in the cocreational perspective, publics are not just a means to an end. (p. 8)

We went on to state,

Examples of cocreational research include the shift to organizational-public relationships, community theory, coorientation theory, accommodation theory, and dialogue theory, but the most researched cocreational theory is symmetrical/excellence theory. (p. 8)

A co-creational approach to public relations assumes that the ability to construct what Boulding (1961) has called mental images is a fundamental part of the human experience and that public relations practices that facilitate this process inside publics are more ethical than those that inhibit it. It shares the view that humans are uniquely equipped to use symbols and that it is this ability that sets humans apart from other creatures (Burke, 1966; Wieman & Walters, 1957), so in many respects it is the antithesis of the technician perspective, which focuses on the capacity of a message to elicit the desired behavior from publics, often by short circuiting rational decision making or manipulating publics.

The reader should also note that the co-creational approach did not simply evolve after the functional because one focus did not disappear before the next took hold and a given theory might reflect aspects of both of these at once. One outstanding historical example of how a single theory or body of work with a theory implicit in it began at a functional level and moved to a more cocreational level is found in role theory.

Role Theory

The technician view of public relations might be thought of as assuming a single, invariant role for the public relations practitioner as a technician. The natural next evolutionary step then was to study other possible roles, often by comparing them with the technician role. Thus, roles research is important in the history of public relations theory because it represents one of the earliest points at which widely held nonacademic assumptions come face-to-face with solid scholarship.

Role refers to the repetitive set of behaviors a person plays out within an organization (or elsewhere). For example, you might have the role of a boss at work; the role of a

friend with certain people; and the role of a husband, wife, or parent at other times. As a boss you are called on to display one pattern of behaviors, while as a friend you live out a very different set of behaviors.

Although roles were first discussed in other fields in the organizational context, public relations research into roles is primarily associated with the work of Broom and various coauthors (see Broom & Smith, 1979; Dozier & Broom, 2006). For a more in-depth discussion of public relations roles, see Dozier and Broom (2006). From this point of view, practitioners might fill any of several roles within an organization, including communication technician, media relations expert, writer, and so on.

As public relations grows both in practice and theory, more and more roles will emerge, and our sophistication in identifying them is likely to grow as well. For example, from the simple technician versus manager dichotomy of early role research, an understanding of the difference between the tactical and strategic approaches to public relations has evolved. As we move more into a cocreational approach, other roles and role relationships may be studied including, possibly, the interdependent roles involved in co-creating meaning itself.

Conclusion

This brief survey of the theory and effects of public relations has necessarily left out many of the effects and theories that characterize the field. It has, however, discussed the effects and economic impact of public relations and examined the assumptions and lay theories behind some of the common understandings—and misunderstandings—of the field. In the last section, a quick look at formal public relations theory was offered.

There are several very important issues affecting the public relations field and its theory that have been left out of this chapter. This has been because they did not fit well before this point or because it would take whole books such as this one to cover them adequately. Among these are the following:

1. *Political campaigns:* Public relations has always played a major role in political campaigns, but that role is becoming more and more central each year as public relations becomes more strategic, moving up the ladder from a simple technical practice to one located at the very center of strategic campaign planning and execution. Nowhere was this ascendancy clearer than in the 2008 U.S. presidential elections. During the Democratic primary, the pollster Mark Penn—who is also the CEO of the world's largest public relations firm, Burson-Marsteller—emerged as a key, or the key, strategist in the Clinton campaign (Washingtonpost.com, 2008) and drew front-page coverage of his own for representing the governments of other nations.

2. *Centralization*: The major public relations firms are rapidly becoming centralized in the hands of a few multinational conglomerates, much as has been happening in journalism and mass media. There are a number of reasons for this trend, but one that is often mentioned has to do with the tremendous growth of public relations, making its firms good investments, while another has to do with the need to diversify in the face of the information revolution. As new information technologies contribute to the demassification of messages, both traditional media outlets, such as printed newspapers, and the advertising industry, with all the waste coverage inherent in mass-media ads, are being confronted with economic challenges. The public relations industry, however, is experiencing a virtual golden age, in part because of the communication revolution. Thus, public relations firms with their record of stability and growth in the face of new information technology have become particularly attractive acquisitions for large conglomerates that are heavily invested in traditional media and advertising.

3. *Health*: Public relations techniques have always been important in public health campaigns, such as those for wearing seat belts or cardiovascular health campaigns. As public relations has become more strategic and research based, it has become an even more prominent area within public health. In fact, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA, www.prsa.org) has a whole membership section dedicated to health campaign practitioners. In many areas of health, however, the term *public relations* is not used; the more common term is health marketing or social marketing (Centers for Disease Control, 2008). Health and social marketing practitioners often take as their starting point advertising or marketing models, sometimes without noticing that the parts of those models were, in turn, taken directly from public relations.

4. *Intercultural Work and Diversity*: The rapid internationalization of public relations practice was mentioned above, but the important and closely related concept of intercultural public relations was not. International public relations work is also always intercultural public relations. In addition, some of the public relations practiced within a large multinational state such as the United States or Russia is also intercultural public relations. The field has become increasingly attentive to the need to respect cultural diversity and to tailor campaigns to the needs of diverse audiences. For example, the 2006 National Curriculum Commission Report "A Professional Bond" (Curriculum Commission, 2006) said, "Diversity in public relations often takes two forms: intercultural/multicultural communication and diversity management" (p. 28), with the latter including human resources, staffing, and personnel decisions.

5. *Research*: Nowhere is the evolution of public relations from a mere technical field into a management and strategic

area more clear than in the important role that research has come to play in all aspects of the field. In fact, as the National Curriculum Commission (2006) report also said, "Training in research methods should now be only a half step behind writing training as a priority in the public relations curriculum because sophisticated research is central to strategic planning and evaluation" (p. 14).

For the reader who wishes to explore the theory base and effects of public relations in more depth, a list of further reading follows.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH

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Public relations research (also known as public relations measurement) is a hot topic. This comes in light of the demand for accountability and transparency in organizations. Campaign decisions are not and should not be made in the dark but instead require research to make informed decisions. Public relations research focuses on the entire public relations process and examines the relationships that exist among and between an organization or person and their target publics (Lindenmann, 2006).

Public relations research is the preparation and gathering of “data” in support of a campaign to inform or change a public’s or audience’s perception or behavior. Public relations research differs slightly from what most would call research in that it has been primarily set in the field in support of business objectives. Academics have argued that its focus needs to shift from descriptive to inferential. That is, public relations research has focused on the here and now, describing what the products of a campaign or program were instead of inferring the impact of those products on the outcome of interest. (A *campaign* for our purposes is defined as a public relations effort that has specified beginning and ending points. A *program*, on the other hand, is a public relations effort that once begun continues for an unspecified time span. As such, public relations campaigns are typically associated with agencies, while programs are associated with corporate [internal] public relations efforts.) For instance, a research might describe the number of press releases submitted and printed or video news

releases (VNRs) distributed and shown—explaining what was accomplished as a simple description and not providing evidence that the public relations activities actually influenced the final outcome.

Regardless of the argument, research in the practice of public relations differs from academic public relations research in that its focus is often on establishing the impact of public relations on return on investment (ROI). The key to understanding public relations’ impact on ROI is to view public relations as a mediating factor in the introduction, change, or reinforcement of conditions that will affect the outcome of a client’s bottom line. As such, public relations seeks to provide the information, motivation, and behavioral intent necessary to get a specific targeted audience to act (or not act) in a particular way. This has moved public relations from a technical production skill to a strategic managerial position in the corporate environment and a counselor position in the agency environment. Thus, public relations strategy focuses on the effects of actions rather than on the production of products supporting those actions.

The role of public relations research from the early 20th century to date has shifted from the simple act of counting publicity materials to a more sophisticated evaluation of public relations’ effectiveness. This shift, however, still relies primarily on the descriptive nature of the communication as “published” in the mass media, often aimed at establishing a “buzz” for the client or product. This activity has in

the late first decade of the 21st century become known as “word-of-mouth” promotion, and its value is seen in the marketing industry’s taking it over as one of its tools.

Today’s public relations research activities, although still descriptively entrenched, have moved toward making inferential predictions of effect. This has resulted in a new breed of practitioner and academic who is well versed in advanced methodology and statistical applications.

History and Theory

Although we can trace the history of public relations to the ancient Egyptians and its more modern practice to the Romans, time has resulted in a chasm between public relations education and public relations practice. In tracing contemporary practice, one goes back to the early-20th-century “pioneers” such as Edward Bernays, Paul Garrett, John W. Hill, Doris Fleishman, Ivy Lee, and Arthur W. Page. Although there were others, Bernays, Fleishman, Hill, and Lee represent one large practice approach, while Paul Garrett (General Motors) and Arthur W. Page (AT&T) represent the other large practice approach. The former were counselors, and from their initial work came the large public relations agencies of today. The latter was the model for what is labeled today as *corporate communications*. The agency represents a number of clients and products, and agencies range from “full service” to those that are specialized in what they handle (e.g., crisis management, travel tourism, integrated communications), often taking on a marketing orientation. The corporate communication practitioner is usually a corporate vice president or senior vice president whose role is the strategic management of corporate communication to a number of key audiences, often split between stock- and stakeholders, employees, governmental agencies, customers, and financial analysts. It should be noted that most of the early public relations practitioners were trained in the journalist tradition, a training that still has an impact on contemporary public relations research.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) offered a historical approach to 20th-century public relations in the form of public relations functions that can still be seen today. They labeled early-20th-century practice as “press agency.” That is, public relations was practiced as propaganda and simple promotion. Reaction to propaganda and promotion evolved into a “press information” function, where information was crafted based on more factual and truthful communications aimed at the press. The role of public relations was to get the client’s message to media “gatekeepers” (editors, opinion leaders) through press releases, media alerts, and the like and then track how many times they were picked up in the media.

After World War II, the public relations function became more strategic. Grunig and Hunt (1984) label this function *two-way asymmetric*; this was where the social scientific method and analysis was first applied to public relations practice. In this model, the effect of messaging was evaluated

through survey research, and the campaign and its messages were reevaluated. Today, the model describes public relations as a “two-way symmetrical” function where public relations is practiced with continuous feedback in the communication environment, and the public relations function has moved from technical producers of messages to the strategic decision-making realm of top management. Furthermore, it has been stated that what should be aspired to is excellent public relations that is “both symmetrical and asymmetrical, two-way, ethical, and both mediated and interpersonal” (Grunig, 2001, p. 30).

Although Grunig and Hunt’s model is simplistic, it does reflect the change in public relations from the early 1900s to date. Over the years, there has been one constant—the public. As Grunig and Hunt (1984) said, “If an organization does not need to be responsible to its publics, it also does not need a public relations function” (p. 52).

Another significant change in public relations has come as a response to new technologies. Both the academic study and the practice of public relations, has never been more difficult; this is because the public spaces in which we compete and communicate have never been more complex and unpredictable. In a matter of seconds, organizations have the ability or obligation to communicate directly to countless stakeholder groups about information that directly affects their success. This includes online forums, chat rooms, blogs, social-networking sites such as Second Life, Twitter, and Flickr, along with collaborative Web sites such as Wikipedia, YouTube, MySpace, Flickr, LinkedIn.com, Writely.com, and Ma.gnolia.com. These allow for two-way communication in ways that are evolving more and more each day.

Research and the Academy

By definition, one would assume that academic research would be based on theoretical formulations. Public relations academic research, however, has been more informed by the practice than by theory. This is not to say that public relations is atheoretical; indeed, public relations has developed a rich theoretical base, but it is a young academic discipline, one that like other communication areas borrows heavily from other disciplines. The vast majority of public relations research is found in descriptive methodologies and simple counts. Historical case studies, surveys, and qualitative approaches emphasizing in-depth interview and focus group methodology were dominant until the late 1980s, as evidenced by articles in *Public Relations Quarterly* (PRQ) and *Public Relations Journal* (PRJ). PRQ and PRJ focused largely on matters of practice. In 1989, the volume that would become the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, the *Public Relations Annual* (Vols. 1–3, edited by Larissa and James Grunig) produced the first academically oriented journal in public relations that looked for a theoretical base to research. As will be noted later, some very sophisticated research methodologies have been employed in the academic side of public relations research.

Research and the Practice

When considered in isolation, public relations research can be described as working along a continuum ranging from precampaign activities through the actual campaign implementation to evaluation of campaign effectiveness and finally to how that campaign helped the business (company, client, product) achieve its overall objectives. Research, then, can be assessed by the methods employed in each of the three phases of a campaign and across the three phases and extended to correlate with the business outcomes of interest. We label these phases as developmental, refinement, and evaluation. The correlation to final business objectives can be looked at phase by phase or continually through the campaign.

This correlation between outcomes and phases represents one of four assumptions public relations practitioners make about research. They also assume that decision making is approached the same way in all organizations, that all research is based on measurable objectives from which communication strategy is formed, and that public relations research is behavior driven and knowledge based (that it is formulated in public relations and social science theory). To understand this, you must first understand how business objectives drive research objectives, which, in turn, contribute to ROI.

Research Objectives

The goal of public relations research is to meet the larger objectives of a client (person, organization, or brand). As such, public relations research focuses on the perception of the client in three areas: (1) information (awareness, knowledge), (2) motivation (internal reasons for action), and (3) behavior (predictive of actual behaviors). Research objectives must include a clearly stated causal relationship: what is done (“outputs” such as press releases, VNRs, blogs) to influence the messages of opinion leaders (“outtakes” such as editorials, analyst reports, experts) that lead to certain ends (“outcomes” such as purchase behavior, reputation ratings, relationship evaluation, trust). The general notion is that informational objectives must be met prior to motivational objectives, which must be met before behavioral objectives can be met. That is, behavior that is not motivated by key messages is idiosyncratic and random.

To write clear, concise, and measurable objectives, one must be familiar with the differences between outputs, outtakes, and outcomes. According to the *Dictionary of Public Relations Measurement and Research* (Stacks, 2006, pp. 14–15),

outputs are what is generated as a result of a public relations program or campaign that influences a target audience or public to act or behave in some way—this is deemed important to the researcher (also known as a “judgmental sample”), the final stage of a communication product,

production, or process resulting in the production and dissemination of a communication product (brochure, media release, Web site, speech, etc.);

outtakes are the measurement of what audiences have understood and/or heeded and/or responded to in a communication product’s call to seek further information from public relations messages prior to measuring an outcome; audience reaction to the receipt of a communication product, including favorability of the product, recall and retention of the message embedded in the product, and whether the audience heeded or responded to a call for information or action within the message; and

outcomes are quantifiable changes in awareness, knowledge, attitude, opinion, and behavior levels that occur as a result of a public relations program or campaign, an effect, consequence, or impact of a set or program of communication activities or products, and may be either short term (immediate) or long term. (p. 14)

Thus, through the use of properly written objectives, a public relations campaign uses research to establish benchmarks against which to gauge campaign effectiveness, check for progress during the actual campaign, and determine whether or not the campaign contributed to the client’s overall business objectives. Depending on the specific objectives, different types of research methodologies are employed across the campaign.

Methods

There are three general types of research methods employed in public relations research. Public relations methods include historical/secondary, qualitative, and quantitative approaches to research. Historical/secondary research is usually found at the developmental stage, where previously published research is reviewed to establish industrylike benchmarks. Sometimes the client’s needs are such that no historical or secondary research is available and the practitioner must conduct primary research of his or her own to establish benchmarks—through in-depth interviews, surveys, focus groups, or even participant observation. Conducting primary research, however, is more expensive than conducting historical or secondary research. Although experimental or simulation methodologies are also available, currently they are rarely conducted in public relations.

Phases

During the refinement phase, surveys and polls, in-depth interviews, and focus groups may be employed at regular intervals across the campaign to verify that informational and motivation objectives have been met. If they have not been met, then the outputs associated with campaign strategy are reexamined, and the strategy is altered. Research at the various intervals has targeted goals set against preestablished benchmarks.

Initial research across targeted audiences may first establish that the information being communicated has been seen or heard (information awareness objective) and is understood (information knowledge objective) through a poll or survey or through requests for more information contained within the outputs being used (press release, VNR, paid advertisement, 1-800 call numbers, or mailer cards). While this can ascertain whether large numbers of people are aware of and understand key campaign messaging, more qualitative data may be required through the use of focus groups (moderated group discussions) and possibly in-depth interviews with key influentials. Focus groups and interviews may be used to gather more in-depth information about whether the strategies employed are on target.

If it has been ascertained that the campaign's informational objectives have been met, then motivational objectives can be tested. Generally, this is done through audience surveys, through either one-shot surveys or longer, more expensive panel surveys where the same participants are questioned over a set length of time. The surveys attempt to gauge attitudes and beliefs toward the campaign's client and serve as a way of establishing predispositions toward behavior. If attitudes have been modified or maintained (depending on the campaign's goals), the research then attempts to gauge the behavioral intentions of the audience. Will they purchase the product? Did they change their opinion of the company? Will they vote for a candidate or for an issue?

Fairly unique to public relations research is the use of *content analysis* as a research method. Content analysis provides a way to objectively measure the messages of opinion leaders across the media. Contemporary public relations has gone beyond simply counting the number of press releases printed or minutes of client airtime (outputs); now the campaign's key messages (Were they picked up? If so, how?) and the general tone of the messages (positive, negative, neutral) are evaluated as outcomes. Content analysis can be used on anything written or observable, such as corporate communications or media content. This can take the form of an analysis of the content or the tone or looking for a mention of certain things. This analysis can also include prominence (the location of the coverage), quality (includes tone, volume, prominence), and competitive analysis (looking at comparisons between coverage of competitors). Content analysis methodology can be conducted by human coders after extensive training or through the use of computer programs such as NVIVO7, *Diction*, or *The Ethnograph*.

Measurement

The topic of measurement has been controversial in public relations research. As the profession has moved from counting the products of a campaign, such as the number of clips or minutes of air time, to measuring the effects of a campaign, the question has become whether

public relations can be measured. And if it can be measured, what exactly is measured and how should it be measured? Part of the measurement conundrum lies in the definition of what public relations is: Is public relations the free placement of messages, or is it more the management of relationships, reputation, trust, or credibility?

Outputs or Outcomes?

Since the first publicity campaign, success in public relations has centered on the producing of outputs. It was often measured by showing the client the "clipbook," or copies of the output that had made it into print, on air, or in whatever mass medium was targeted. Those who buy into the definition that public relations is the free placement of messages in the media tend to refer to public relations' success in terms of what it would have cost to place such messages in the media as a marketing strategy to provide estimates of influence as *financial indicators*. Hence, this point of view would measure success in terms of the cost of advertising in targeted media, or the "advertising value equivalency" (AVE) of the placement of the message. Another measure often used in this "measurement" is the "opportunity to see" (OTS) measure, which estimates message exposure.

Impressive piles of outputs were thought to have demonstrated public relations impact and probably did have some impact on a client's perception of public relations success. Simple counting, however, cannot demonstrate an impact on the client's public relations ROI. To demonstrate impact, the public relations campaign or program must demonstrate how its strategic use of those outputs has affected client final financial outcomes.

Complicating the matter are controversies related to what is an appropriate measure of public relations. There are two problems with AVE and OTS, and both are based on the way they are "calculated." First, both are heavily influenced by circulation numbers in the print media. That is, an AVE's monetary value is a function of circulation, which is a function of sales, and sales drive advertising costs. This can be a problem because circulation numbers are often exaggerated to drive up advertising costs. Second, circulation is often defined differently for street versus home sales, which are often multiplied by the average family size, insinuating that all members of a family will read or see the message. The same is true of broadcast media. Internet-produced messages have yet to yield a good way of measuring their impact, although "hits" and "key throughs" (going to a second page or site on the Internet page of question) have been examined and found lacking in validity or reliability.

Outtakes as Predictors of Outcomes

A different definition of public relations focuses public relations' strategic place as a management tool. Stacks (2002), for instance, defines public relations in terms of the

management of a client's credibility. Others define public relations in terms of the management of client relationships and trust. Still others define public relations in terms of the management of client reputations. As such, public relations is seen as mediating the expectations that target audiences have of the client.

Stacks (2005) argues that a client's credibility is a function of the public's perceptions of trust in the client's actions and products, its relationship with the client, and how it perceives the client's historical reputation with the public. It is the role of public relations to manage these *nonfinancial indicators* to the client's best interests. These then interact to influence the public's perceptions of the client, which in turn affect the client's ROI for public relations activities. He further argues that ROI comes from not only financial indicators such as sales, profits, and expenses but also from nonfinancial indicators and how they influence stock-and-stakeholder perceptions of the client.

Thus, from a management (as opposed to marketing) definition, public relations seeks to influence through the strategic production of key messages targeted at influentials (anyone who a target audience would see as a credible source of information), where the messages are factors that (1) set expectations and (2) help predict outcomes that establish public relations' impact on client ROI. As noted above, the targeted audience in such instances would be editors or stock analysts, or anyone who might serve as an influencer (outtake) for a particular target audience or public, and measurement then would be whether the client's key messages were communicated in the manner expected.

What is measured today in this approach is typically the content of influentials' messages. The methodology employed is *content analysis*, a research method that provides both qualitative and quantitative interpretations of messages and is particularly important from a strategic management of the communication approach to public relations. Content analysis provides a measure of not only how many (counting) times a client's name is found in the media but also how the client's key messages have been received and communicated to the target media audiences. Thus, content analysis can provide several measures of public relations success across informational, motivational, and behavioral objectives and provide information for the refinement phase of the campaign.

The first measure establishes whether the client's key messages were picked up and understood. If the messages were not being relayed to the larger target audiences, the influential was not serving a mediating purpose, and the public relations strategy must be rethought. Hence, the first measure provides feedback on whether public relations strategy is actually working. If the influential has picked up on the client's key messages, how are those messages being internalized by the influential? Generally, content analysis today looks beyond the "clipbook" number of media mentions and tries to establish if the influential's message about the client is positive, neutral, or negative.

An excellent example of this is found in Michaelson and Griffin's (2005) measurement of a MetLife media relations campaign.

Second, measures of public relations success can be established by comparing the client's "share of voice" or the client's share of messaging in the client's particular industry against that of competitors (Jeffrey, Michaelson, & Stacks, 2006, 2007). Share of voice provides evidence of how the client's key messages are being picked up and where they are being picked up, and then the share of voice is correlated with that of other competitors.

Third, measures of information/key message success can be assessed to see how the influentials are internalizing the messages and thus are motivated to extend the client's credibility, trust, and reputation through relationships with the publics and relationships with the influentials. This yields a "third-party endorsement" strategy that provides extra credibility to the client's messages (see Cameron, 1994; Grunig, 2000; Hallahan, 1999; Michaelson & Stacks, 2007).

Finally, the results of the measurement can be used to establish whether or not the public relations campaign has had an effect through surveys, focus groups, or in-depth interviews of selected individuals from the targeted publics in order to establish if the expected behavioral intent is strong enough to predict the outcomes as expected for the client's business interests, thus either confirming public relations' success or providing the feedback necessary to make changes in the campaign. Measurement, then, becomes an integral part of public relations practice.

Applications

Evaluation Methods

Evaluation methods and tools differ greatly depending on whether the research is being conducted by an academic in the pursuit of extending knowledge or by the practitioner as a way of conducting a client campaign.

Academic Research

As noted earlier, scholars have criticized academic research as being too descriptive and not inferential; that is, academic public relations research has not defined or tested those mediating factors such as credibility, relationship, reputation, or trust enough to provide causal evidence of effectiveness. This is the result of two things: a lack of theory for an area as large as public relations and difficulty in measuring actual results in a very competitive practitioner world. It is also difficult to engage in theoretical research when the issue under study deals with crisis communications in today's politically correct academic environment. Imagine if you will be trying to get, through a human subjects committee, a study that might cause confusion, concern, stress, or even embarrassment on the part of students (who make up most experimental study populations). Consider, too,

whether a company would want its name or brand associated with a negative news report or negative rumor.

These problems leave most academic research in the realm of content analysis of public relations practice or descriptive methodologies employing in-depth interviews and focus groups or surveys. Some research (e.g., Carroll, 2006) has used industry data to model public relations outcomes, but getting access to data is often problematic and getting into the “real world” to conduct experimental research is both difficult and costly.

Michaelson and Stacks (2004, 2007), for instance, have conducted two studies seeking to establish whether a “multiplier effect” actually exists that provides public relations with an advantage over advertising. Practitioners have argued that public relations is anywhere between three and eight times more effective than advertising, but the “multiplier effect” has never been really tested. If the effect was obtained, they wanted to know how large the multiplier was. They questioned whether the industry-wide practice of arguing that public relations’ ability to inject a third-party endorsement would increase the client’s credibility, homophily (a variable that reflects how much individuals see a product brand as similar to themselves and their friends), product knowledge, and intent to purchase a product. They conducted two experiments. In the first, they randomly exposed undergraduate students to a public relations editorial endorsement of a product against a print advertisement, an Internet advertisement, and a radio advertisement and found no differences on *any* outcome. Furthermore, when conducting the study, they asked the students their media uses and then analyzed student use against that reported for the general public; they found no differences between student and general public media uses, thus ruling out that the students use of media could have influenced the results (and if there were differences, they should have come out in the Internet and print media exposures).

Intrigued by this finding, Michaelson and Stacks (2007) attempted a field experiment. A field experiment controls the content of the experimental stimuli but cannot control the location or distractions and must employ a convenience sample of research participants. They felt that the initial experiment was too complex—that is, it had too many different stimuli messages (although each student was exposed to one and only one message, the number of students per exposure was reduced due to the number of messages), so they focused only on the print editorial and print advertisement, exposing participants to *only* the editorial or advertisement in isolation from any other stories or advertisements. A total of 351 participants who read newspapers on a regular basis were recruited from six major malls across the United States. An equal number of participants (150 each) were randomly exposed to either the editorial or the advertisement; 50 participants were randomly assigned to a control group that received no experimental stimulus. Results found that exposure to either editorial or advertisement produced significantly higher ratings for product credibility, homophily, product knowledge, and intent to

purchase the product. However, there were no differences between editorial and advertisement, except for higher homophily from participants exposed to the editorial. A third study that puts the editorial and advertisement on actual newspaper spreads is currently being conducted.

Although content analysis in practice typically looks at media coverage of an organization, person, or event, in academia, researchers often look at coverage of multiple organizations, people, or events or multiple messages about any one topic. DiStaso (2007) took this one step further when she conducted a content analysis looking at earnings releases from Fortune 500 companies compared with press coverage of earnings. She found that the local media paid greater attention to the positive aspects of the earnings releases (e.g., an increase in sales), while the national media focused on the negative aspects (the litigation and the decrease in net income).

Another example of academic research is Carroll’s (2006) study using structural equation modeling (SEM) to predict the influence of familiarity on corporate equity. By analyzing a sample of 1,500 participants, she found that familiarity does have a positive relationship with citizenship, reputation, and personality.

Practice Research

Evaluation methods and tools will differ from research phase to phase. In the developmental phase, the research may be based on extant secondary materials. Materials such as previous research conducted by the agency or corporation, industry publications, annual reports, and governmental publications may provide enough information to begin to plot public relations strategy for the problem at hand. Sometimes, secondary sources are not available, and primary data must be collected, typically in the form of in-depth interviews with influentials, focus groups of individuals from targeted audiences, or surveys of larger audiences or publics. In either case, the research conducted during the developmental phase should establish the baseline against which future research will be compared to measure success or failure during targeted dates in the refinement phase.

During the refinement phase, content analysis of key messages and surveys of intended audiences should be undertaken. Research at this phase establishes if the three major research objectives (information, motivational, behavioral) are being met as expected. Content analysis provides data on whether the client’s key messages are getting out and if they are understood (output to outtake). If not, then the campaign’s messaging strategy needs adjustment. Surveys and focus groups provide the data necessary to establish whether the information has caused the motivational outcomes anticipated in the campaign. Have attitudes or beliefs changed or been reinforced as required to meet the motivational objectives? If so, then, has the target audience through survey and focus group methodologies indicated an intent to behave as predicted?

At the evaluation stage, the public relations campaign's results are then examined to see if they did indeed influence the business objectives. If the campaign was carefully researched and research was conducted throughout the refinement period, to include assessment of audience behavioral intentions, then the campaign should have a demonstrated impact on the client's business outcome and ROI.

Statistical Tools

Understandably, the primary statistical tools used to analyze public relations research are simple descriptive statistics—frequencies, percentages, proportions, and now correlations (e.g., share-of-voice research). For the most part, the research does not use inferential statistics, but that trend is slowly changing as more statistically sophisticated academics and practitioners enter into public relations research. The movement from a stress on outputs to outcomes/outcomes provides both sets of researchers with the ability to use advanced statistical tools, and the movement toward measuring mediating variables has introduced into the research literature a number of highly sophisticated inferential tools.

Academic Tools

The drive to measure “what we cannot see” (Stacks, 2002) in terms of attitudes and beliefs and concepts such as credibility, homophily, purchase intent, trust, and even operationalizing relationships has introduced factor analysis as a statistical tool in the academic literature and slowly into the practice (particularly through the literature available from the Institute for Public Relations Commission on Measurement and Evaluation, www.instituteforpr.org/about/measurement_commission). From this, academic research has moved from exploratory factor analysis, whereby the underlying structure of measuring instruments is determined (Stacks, 2002), to confirmatory factor analysis, where the historical instrument's measurement structure is confirmed for the particular sample being observed (Stacks, in press).

The ability to create measures that are reliable and valid has led to the use of multivariate statistical tools such as multiple regression, path analysis, and sequential equation modeling (SEM). A number of academic researchers have used multiple regression as a tool to establish the effect of multiple mediator variables on public relations outcomes. Path analysis, which is best when used with “hard” data (e.g., economic, sales), takes the multiple regression and creates causal models of the direct and indirect impact of mediating variables on outcomes of interest (e.g., David, Kline, & Yang, 2005; Lee, 2005; Wan & Schell, 2007). Furthermore, path analysis has no limitation on the number of cases that it can analyze. SEM analysis, on the other hand, is best used with “soft” data (e.g., mediator variables such as attitude or belief measures) and begins by testing the measurement

instruments' reliability and validity and then produces causal models of the impact of direct and indirect mediating variables on the outcome of interest (e.g., Ki & Hon, 2007; Kim, 2001; Yang, 2007). Two other things differentiate path analysis from SEM. First, SEM is “theory driven,” that is the models created use theoretically derived relationships between the mediator and outcome variables, while path analysis is not. Second, SEM can only handle a limited number of cases, whereas path analysis can handle all the data that are available. Marketing definition-oriented researchers, then, should use path analysis as their modeling tool, while management, mediated-related definition-oriented researchers should use SEM as their modeling tool.

Practice Tools

The statistical tools used in most daily public relations practice are simple descriptive statistics. This is due mainly to the lack of research sophistication in the average practitioner and an even greater lack of knowledge of statistical tools and their uses. Seldom will research be reported to a client that includes inferential statistics, and such research usually employs analyses on what has been labeled *categorical* data—data that are differentiated by categorization; variables such as sex (male/female), income (high/middle/low), and occupation (blue/white collar) are examples, as would be age or income when broken into categories. The statistical tools used in such research are not typically presented to the client, although they may be used when asked about confidence in the findings.

There are exceptions to the elementary use of statistical tools, and they are found mainly in the corporate communications side of public relations. Companies such as General Motors, Microsoft, and Texas Instruments use advanced statistical tools to model their data and are increasingly using the models to establish the impact of their practice on business outcomes and ROI in particular. This makes sense when considered from an internal communications perspective, where years of organizational communication and industrial psychology research have established management theory on what makes a successful organization. Interestingly, there are research firms that are taking the sophisticated modeling capabilities of path analysis and SEM and looking for causal indications of reputation and trust. The research basically lacks a good theoretical base and often attempts to put all possible variables into the model, hoping to find which variables offer direct causal paths to the outcomes of interest.

Comparisons (Global/Topical)

There are no data available that allow for a comparison of public relations research other than what has already been discussed. A study by the International Public Relations Association is examining the research needs of practitioners

at various levels of experience, but for the most part, public relations research in the United States is far ahead of other country or region practices (Stacks, in press).

Future Directions

As noted above, public relations research is at a crossroads of sort. Interestingly, the Internet may provide the impetus for movement toward more sophisticated research methods and analytical tools (DiStaso, Messner, & Stacks, 2007). Before the Internet and the new social media, influentials were easily identifiable. Today's influential is more often than not a blogger who has gained a following from what he or she has written. Before the Internet, an influential's impact was felt on the circulation numbers associated with the media for which he or she wrote or aired in, and as we know, circulation numbers may not provide an accurate picture of influence or impact.

Today's social media blogger influence can be directly assessed from how many people visit the blogger's site, how many engage in communication with that blogger (indicating a relationship and credibility that builds quickly to a reputation and trust), and how long the blogger stays on the Internet. There are ways to assess the blogger's number of communications, trace the blogger's social network, and actually measure the density or capacity of the links between the blogger and his or her readers (Stacks & Watson, 2006). Social network analytical tools now provide ways of plotting, describing, and predicting blogger influence. Such data, once captured and analyzed, can then be used in other sophisticated modeling tools to establish predictive models of influence.

Conclusion

Public relations research encompasses all the traditional research methodologies and, increasingly, some of the more sophisticated analytical statistical tools. As the practice matures and settles on a direction, the practice of public relations research will become more sophisticated. Future research will still demonstrate the effect of public relations by simple counting of outputs, but more and more, it will move toward understanding and predicting the effects of mediating variables on business outcomes and establishing the effect of public relations on business ROI.

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ETHICS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Public relations ethics has much in common with the wedding tradition in which the bride wears “something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue.” Although the “something blue” is problematic, the “something old” is ethics, the study of which dates to the dawn of philosophy. The “something new” is public relations itself. Unlike older, related professions such as advertising and journalism, public relations wasn’t recognized as a distinct discipline until the 20th century. The “something borrowed” has been the ethics codes of other professions: As public relations practitioners have struggled to find the ethical foundations of their young profession, they have looked to disciplines such as journalism and the legal profession for guidance. And—for better or worse—the union of something old, something new, and something borrowed has created a sometimes stormy marriage between public relations and ethics.

Part of the dawn of philosophy that introduced the concept of ethics occurred in classical Athens—the Athens of Plato and Aristotle. Both of those philosophers began their intellectual explorations by defining key terms. In a discussion of public relations ethics, for example, each might ask us, “What do you mean by public relations? And what do you mean by ethics?” By *public relations* (defined elsewhere in this book), we generally mean the management of relationships between an entity (an organization or individual) and the publics essential to its success. By *ethics*, we mean the concept of identifying and acting on our core values. In fact, Aristotle defined ethics as an activity: He believed

that ethics was the process of defining our most important values and ensuring that our actions reflected those values.

Public relations ethics, then, involves identifying the profession’s core values and, subsequently, acting on those values. The ordeal of how to develop and where to find those values, however, has led to continuing debate and uncertainty about the concept of public relations ethics. Traditionally, values exist at five sometimes-overlapping levels:

1. *International*: For example, the Caux Round Table, an organization of international business leaders, has drafted a set of international business standards that rests on two values: human dignity and *kyosei*, a Japanese word that means cooperating for the good of all.
2. *Societal*: For example, the Pledge of Allegiance, which many readers of this book would have recited every day in grade school, specifies values that ideally motivate U.S. citizens: liberty and justice for all.
3. *Professional*: For example, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) specifies six values for the profession of public relations: advocacy, honesty, expertise, independence, loyalty, and fairness.
4. *Organizational*: For example, Levi Strauss and Company, the maker of Levi’s jeans, asks its employees to act on four values: empathy, originality, integrity, and courage.
5. *Personal*: These are the particular values that motivate individuals. In fact, the English word *ethics* comes from the Greek word *ethos*, which means moral character.

The Search for Values: Journalism and the Law

In its search for values during the 20th century, the young profession of public relations turned to two related professions: journalism and the law. Many of the earliest practitioners of public relations had begun as journalists who, of course, communicated ideas to separate groups, so the logic of adapting journalistic values to public relations seemed obvious. Likewise, many of the earliest practitioners of public relations saw themselves as advocates, so the logic of embracing the values of the legal profession also seemed reasonable. Unfortunately, the objectivity of journalism and the advocacy of the legal profession had all the compatibility of fire and water, and those conflicting values struggled to control public relations ethics in the early decades of the profession.

Journalistic values informed Ivy Lee's 1906 "Declaration of Principles," in which that journalist-turned-public-relations-practitioner (1877–1934) declared,

We aim to supply news. This is not an advertising agency. . . . Our matter is accurate. Further details on any subject treated will be supplied promptly, and any editor will be assisted most cheerfully in verifying directly any statement of fact. Upon inquiry, full information will be given to any editor concerning those on whose behalf an article is sent out. In brief, our plan is, frankly and openly, on behalf of business concerns and public institutions, to supply to the press and public of the United States prompt and accurate information concerning subjects which it is of value and interest to the public to know about. (Guth & Marsh, 2009, p. 67)

The advantage of journalistic values is credibility: If public relations could have the reputation of delivering the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the profession and its communications functions might gain almost unrivaled respectability among targeted publics. However, the disadvantage of journalistic values is practicality: Few, if any, organizations or individuals can afford to tell the whole truth. For example, should organizations reveal legitimate trade secrets? Should individuals disclose embarrassing information that no one has a right to know? And does all the communicated information have to be balanced, like the best stories in journalism? Are public relations practitioners responsible for telling all the relevant sides of a story, even those that oppose their employer's viewpoint? Furthermore, are public relations practitioners storytellers—or are their duties more diverse? On close examination, journalistic values don't seem wholly appropriate for public relations ethics.

Competing with journalistic values for a key role in forming public relations ethics were the values of the legal profession, primarily advocacy. If we cast public relations practitioners as advocates for their employer/client's viewpoint, the relevance of legal values seems logical. And just

as we presented Ivy Lee as the symbol of a journalistic ethos within public relations, we do no great harm to accuracy by presenting Edward L. Bernays (1891–1995) as the symbol of a legal/advocacy ethos within the young profession. As the author of the books *Propaganda* and *The Engineering of Consent* and part of the husband-wife team that coined the term *public relations*, Bernays (1947) offered this definition of "the engineering of consent":

This phrase quite simply means the use of an engineering approach—that is, action based only on thorough knowledge of the situation and on the application of scientific principles and tried practices to the task of getting people to support ideas and programs. Any person or organization depends ultimately on public approval and is therefore faced with the problem of engineering the public's *consent* to a program or goal. (p. 114)

In fairness to Bernays, he also advocated reverse engineering—the process of helping an employer/client to change in order to help win consent from a recalcitrant public.

Just as lawyers are advocates for their clients, striving to engineer consent within the courtroom, public relations practitioners—in the legal/advocacy view of the profession—engineer consent within the broader court of public opinion. In fact, if public relations practitioners are advocates for their employers/clients, several passages from the Model Rules of Professional Conduct of the American Bar Association (2008) might be adopted as governing values and principles for public relations ethics:

- [A] lawyer shall abide by a client's decisions concerning the objectives of representation and . . . shall consult with the client as to the means by which they are to be pursued. . . . (Rule 1.2)
- A lawyer shall not knowingly: (1) make a false statement of fact or law to a tribunal or fail to correct a false statement of material fact or law previously made to the tribunal by the lawyer. (Rule 3.3)

In the mid-1990s, a thought-provoking and controversial article in *Public Relations Review* contended that public relations had indeed adopted the values of the legal profession and thus had little obligation to help society discover large truths on particular issues. Instead, the article argued, public relations practitioners had acknowledged that they were simply one of many adversaries in the struggle for control of public opinion. Although they could not ethically lie, they could ethically present selective facts, withholding (within the limits of the law) any facts that might weaken their arguments. The responsibility for creating a fully accurate, comprehensive assessment of a situation rested with the public, which should gather information from many adversarial sources. After all, the article argued, lawyers are in an adversarial profession, and they don't attack their own cases. The article concluded that, for public relations, advocacy was a greater value than truth.

Among public relations practitioners and scholars, however, reaction to that article showed that public relations was not entirely comfortable with the values and adversarial nature of the legal profession. Four arguments in particular seemed to challenge the importation of values from the legal profession:

1. In many organizations, public relations practitioners serve as counselors on ethics and social responsibility. If, however, they have the reputation of withholding damaging facts, their credibility as counselors is at risk.
2. Not all publics are external. Within the subset of public relations known as employee relations, why would employees trust the claims of a colleague who was known to ignore or downplay damaging information?
3. For more than 2,000 years, teachers of persuasion theory have taught Aristotle's belief that the persuasive value of a speaker's good character (ethos) is more powerful than appeals to logic or emotion. If public relations practitioners damage their perceived characters by focusing only on employer/client interests and perspectives, they may sacrifice their most potent means of persuasion: their ethos.
4. Finally, the importation of legal values seems to rely on the notion that the purpose of public relations is to advocate an employer/client's viewpoint and to engineer consent. However, if we return to the definition of public relations presented at the beginning of this chapter, advocacy seems a secondary concern. Many practitioners believe that, properly understood, public relations is the profession of building relationships with particular publics that possess the needed resources. In *that* view of public relations, advocacy is not the goal and end of the profession; rather, advocacy is a means—one of many—that may be involved in building productive relationships.

At the end of the 20th century, then, this much could be said for public relations ethics: It was a work in progress, certainly not comfortable with the values of journalism and not entirely comfortable with the values of the legal profession. The evolving nature of public relations ethics was (and is) evident in the evolving ethics code of one of the world's largest public relations organizations: PRSA.

The Advocacy Debate

PRSA was created in 1948 through the merger of the National Association of Public Relations Counsel and the American Council on Public Relations. The new organization adopted its first ethics code in 1950 and then—indicative of the profession's struggle to find its ethical foundations—revised the code in 1954, 1959, 1963, 1977, 1983, 1988, and 2000. The current version of the PRSA ethics code, as noted above, specifies six core values for the profession:

1. Advocacy
2. Honesty
3. Expertise
4. Independence
5. Loyalty
6. Fairness

Similar values are inherent in the ethics code of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management. Formed in 2000 through the joint efforts of PRSA, the International Public Relations Association, and other organizations, the alliance created a global protocol for the practice of public relations that rests on five values: advocacy, honesty, integrity, expertise, and loyalty. Clearly, the concept of advocacy continues to play a significant role in the evolution of public relations ethics. The title of one of the few books devoted solely to public relations ethics is *Ethics in Public Relations: Responsible Advocacy* (Fitzpatrick & Bronstein, 2006).

Again, the controversy regarding the ascendance of advocacy as perhaps the dominant value in public relations ethics relates to the definition of public relations itself: Are public relations practitioners primarily advocates for their employers/clients? If so, then the value of responsible advocacy would seem to be the logical primary value of public relations ethics. However, if public relations practitioners are relationship builders, striving to build and maintain the relationships that deliver essential resources to their employers/clients, then perhaps the primacy of advocacy—at least in the one-way, legal-profession sense—should be downgraded somewhat. This debate over the definition of public relations and the role of advocacy as a core value is evident in the constructive tension between two dominant, competing visions of the nature of public relations: excellence theory and contingency theory. Though the two philosophies are not entirely mutually exclusive, excellence theory is closer to the relationship-building view of public relations, while contingency theory is closer to the legal/advocacy view of public relations.

Excellence Theory

Excellence theory has grown out of an ongoing research project begun in 1985 by the Research Foundation of the International Association of Business Communicators. Led initially by Professors James E. Grunig, Larissa A. Grunig, and David M. Dozier, the project has, essentially, studied the practices of organizations known for excellent public relations and communication management—particularly as those practices relate to four different philosophies of public relations. Identified by James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt, the four philosophies, or models, of public relations are as follows:

1. The press agency model, which has only one mission, positive publicity for the employer/client
2. The public information model, in which practitioners act almost as in-house journalists, distributing unbiased information about an employer/client
3. The two-way asymmetrical model, which uses research to create messages that will engineer consent, winning essential publics over to the employer/client's viewpoint
4. The two-way symmetrical model, which uses research to create, maintain, and improve dialogue-based, mutually beneficial relationships with essential publics

The excellence project, as the research study came to be known, concluded that the most effective model of public relations was not the two-way asymmetrical model, with its value of one-way advocacy. Rather, the most effective model was the two-way symmetrical model, with its values of mutual understanding and two-way advocacy. In the two-way symmetrical model, practitioners not only advocate on behalf of their employer/client, they also may advocate on behalf of the public, urging their own employer/client to change in the interests of creating, preserving, or improving a relationship.

Significantly, although the excellence project determined that the two-way symmetrical model was the most effective philosophy of public relations, the project did not assert that excellent public relations and communications departments unfailingly used two-way symmetry. Instead, the project maintained that excellence often involved a "mixed-motive" model that preferred and predominantly used two-way symmetry but that occasionally also employed two-way asymmetry.

Also significant for public relations ethics is the excellence project's conclusion that the two-way symmetrical model incorporates an idealistic social role that rests on a simple core value: the public interest and social good. Therefore, if the dominant philosophy of public relations is the two-way symmetrical model with its mixed-motive option, the fuzzy picture of public relations ethics clears up a bit: If ethics means acting on core values, then public relations ethics involves ensuring that the profession works for the public interest and social good.

As studies of two-way symmetry have continued, that particular model has accumulated a set of core values that, ideally, should motivate the actions of ethical public relations practitioners. Those values tend to fall into two overlapping categories: values that guide relationship-building activities and values that characterize good, productive relationships. In addition to mutual understanding, two-way advocacy, and public interest/social welfare, values of relationship-building activities include loyalty to the employer/client (not simply acquiescing to whatever a public wants) and openness, in the sense of being willing to listen to and seriously consider a public's requests.

Regarding the values that characterize good relationships, the public relations scholars Linda Childers Hon and James E. Grunig have identified six core concepts:

1. Control mutuality, meaning that each party believes it has some control over the quality and future of the relationship
2. Trust
3. Satisfaction
4. Commitment
5. Exchange, in the sense that benefits are given and received by each party
6. Communal feeling, in the sense that each party would act for the benefit of the other without any immediate idea of reciprocation and payback

In brief, public relations ethics within the two-way symmetrical and mixed-motive models would involve acting, as much as possible, on these public-interest and relationship values.

Contingency Theory

As the dominance of excellence theory with its inherent two-way symmetry has grown, contingency theory has become an increasingly important reaction to that influence. One difficulty with excellence theory is that some critics believe that it describes and champions only a pure, undiluted form of two-way symmetry; they overlook the mixed-motive model that, according to the excellence project, characterizes excellent public relations departments. Other critics believe that two-way symmetry means acquiescence and radical accommodation, with an employer/client's public relation practitioners essentially taking orders from targeted publics. This mistaken belief overlooks both the mixed-motive model and two-way symmetry's core value of loyalty to the employer/client. Though contingency theory does not lapse into these errors, it does address the concerns they represent.

Contingency theory challenges the core values of two-way symmetry by offering a more situational model; contingency theory resists the idea that there is one best way to practice public relations, even if that one way has the flexibility of the mixed-motive model. The theory asks practitioners to imagine a spectrum with accommodation at one end and advocacy at the other. Unlike two-way symmetry and the mixed-motive model, contingency theory maintains that no one spot on that continuum is perpetually the best; instead, the best position on the continuum varies from situation to situation. In fact, contingency theory has identified more than 80 separate variables that can affect which point on the accommodation-advocacy continuum seems best for a particular situation.

For public relations ethics, a crucial difference between contingency theory and excellence theory is that contingency theory places a higher value on one-way, asymmetrical advocacy, especially when that approach may benefit the employer/client. And compared with excellence theory, contingency theory seems to place greater value on loyalty to the employer/client, placing lesser—though not insignificant—emphasis on the values of public interest, social responsibility, control mutuality, and exchange. Contingency theory, therefore, offers a different set of values for public relations ethics—a set that may actually be closer to the core values of PRSA, which, again, lists its first value as advocacy. Some proponents of contingency theory argue that it is more realistic than excellence theory; after all, employers/clients may not always be eager and willing to pay their public relations departments to sometimes advocate outside, competing ideas and viewpoints.

Some critics of contingency theory maintain that—perhaps like PRSA—the theory diminishes the nature of advocacy by defining it as a one-way process, with the practitioner being an advocate only for the employer/client. The PRSA ethics code, in fact, includes the phrase *responsible advocates for those we represent*. Absent in this notion of advocacy, responsible or not, is a practitioner's advocating the interests of an important external public to the leaders of his or her own employer/client. That expanded view of advocacy is more consistent with two-way symmetry and the mixed-motive model.

Another criticism of contingency theory is that it sometimes seems to mischaracterize two-way symmetry as being synonymous with uncritical accommodation of the wants and needs of key publics. Advocates of two-way symmetry note that because the model tempers the value of a public's well-being with the value of loyalty to the employer/client, the model is not synonymous with uncritical accommodation.

As frustrating as the clash between excellence theory and contingency theory may be for those who seek a clear understanding of public relations and the ethics of that profession, the debate is healthy: It focuses on finding the best definition of a young profession as well as identifying the values that must be inherent in that profession's ethics. Again, if ethics means identifying and acting on core values, ethical public relations practitioners must begin by defining what those values are.

Challenges to Ethical Behavior in Public Relations

The concept of public relations ethics begins with the identification of values—but the concept remains incomplete until public relations practitioners act on those values. Challenges to ethical behavior in public relations tend to emerge from seven broad areas:

1. *Ignorance*: Some practitioners, new or otherwise, are unaware of the values and even the laws that guide the profession of public relations; perhaps they have even failed to identify their own values and are unaware of the values of their employer/client. For example, a practitioner unaware of the core value of loyalty to one's employer/client might easily commit actions that his or her employer would view as unethical.
2. *Overwork*: Hard work is certainly a value for many public relations practitioners. However, when a workload becomes so overwhelming that it allows no time for reflection on the connection of core values and current actions, then hard work becomes a potential cause of unintended unethical conduct.
3. *Legal/Ethical Confusion*: Illegal conduct often is unethical because it tends to violate social values. But the converse—all legal actions are ethical—is, of course, untrue. For example, an employee of Levi Strauss and Company who did not act on that organization's core values of empathy, originality, integrity, and courage would probably not be guilty of illegal conduct. In the eyes of the company, however, that employee probably would be guilty of unethical behavior. Legal/ethical confusion also can extend to the troubling notion that an ethical action might be illegal. The concept of "civil disobedience" involves the intentional, peaceful breaking of laws by those acting on what they believe to be higher values.
4. *Cross-Cultural Situations*: Related to ignorance, this source of possible unethical conduct occurs when members of different cultures interact—an increasingly common occurrence in public relations. Acceptable behavior in one culture might violate important values in a different culture. For example, a non-Muslim practitioner who values sensitivity to other cultures may mean no disrespect by unthinkingly wearing shoes into a mosque, but in doing so, he or she has violated an important cultural standard.
5. *Short-Term Thinking*: Aristotle was among the first to identify this challenge to ethical conduct when he condemned individuals who opt for immediate pleasure or relief at the expense of long-term pain. For example, a member of PRSA might violate that organization's value of honesty by telling a lie to resolve, seemingly, a difficult, embarrassing situation. Because that action would go against a core value, it would be unethical. Furthermore, if the lie were revealed, the practitioner would have done long-term damage to his or her reputation, as well as the reputation of his or her employer/client.
6. *Virtual Organizations*: These entities are temporary groups of, usually, far-flung associates, perhaps united only by online media, who come together to complete a project. For example, to produce a corporate annual report, a freelance public relations practitioner hired to oversee the project might commission freelance writers, editors, photographers, illustrators, and printers. The group might never meet in person, and

because it is temporary, it almost surely would lack a written ethics code and any sustained discussion of core values that might unite its members. At worst, the actions of some members might seriously violate other members' core values.

7. *Dilemmas*: Dilemmas are problems that lack painless, win-win solutions. In ethics, dilemmas involve clashing values; they arise from situations in which no matter what course of action an individual takes, his or her actions will be inconsistent with at least one core value. Of all the challenges to ethical behavior, dilemmas can be the most painful. For example, a public relations practitioner who embraces the concept of two-way symmetry might experience an unpleasant clash of values if he or she believed that the actions of the employer/client—actions the practitioner had tried to change—were unfairly damaging to an important public. That practitioner might be torn between the values of loyalty to the employer/client and the values, as noted above, of trust, exchange, and, in a broader sense, the public good.

Dilemmas demonstrate the need for critical-thinking tools within the broad field of ethics. When core values clash, we sometimes surrender to stress and confusion, and our thinking can become muddled. Ideally, critical-thinking systems can combat that confusion by providing structure. Critical thinking is characterized by four qualities: It is (1) goal oriented (we seek the best solution to the dilemma), (2) objective (we try to temporarily set aside our personal biases), (3) comprehensive (we draw on many opinions and sources of information), and (4) systematic (we have a specific procedure to guide our thinking). The acronym COGS—comprehensive, objective, goal oriented, and systematic—can be used to describe critical thinking.

One well-known critical-thinking tool in ethics is the Potter Box, designed by Ralph Potter, a retired professor of social ethics. In essence, the Potter Box consists of four quadrants: (1) definition, in which we establish what we know and don't know; (2) values, in which we identify and evaluate the values inherent in the dilemma; (3) principles, in which we seek guidance from philosophers such as Aristotle and Immanuel Kant as well as from ethics codes; and (4) loyalties, in which we evaluate the involved publics and consider which ones deserve our loyalty. Using the Potter Box, public relations practitioners can help ensure that their attempt to resolve an ethics dilemma is comprehensive, objective, goal oriented, and systematic.

In 2004, PRSA began to issue Professional Standards Advisories, describing specific ethics challenges of particular concern to its members. To date, the advisories have included these challenges to ethical behavior:

- The overbilling of clients
- The creation of so-called front groups, which don't acknowledge their true creators and financial sponsors
- Truthfulness in war-related activities

- Disclosure by seemingly independent commentators of any payments that might represent a conflict of interest
- Disclosure of the true sponsorship and authorship of blogs

The inclusion of full disclosure of blog sponsorship and authorship demonstrates how technological innovations can pose new ethical challenges for public relations practitioners.

Case Study: Starbucks Coffee Company

Ethics, as we know, involves identifying and acting on core values. In the difficult days that followed the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the Starbucks Coffee Company proved itself to be a positive example of an organization that strives to integrate its core values and its actions.

In the chaotic aftermath of the collapse of the World Trade Center towers, a Starbucks employee in New York City sold bottled water to a paramedic. Starbucks had intended to donate the water, but in the turmoil of that unprecedented day, a company employee made a mistake.

When word of the sale reached Orin Smith, then-president of Starbucks, he contacted the paramedic's employer to apologize and return the money. Smith then contacted New York employees to reinforce the company's decision to donate supplies to rescue workers, and Starbucks issued a news release—a key tactic of media relations—apologizing for the action and announcing its donation policy.

One beneficiary of those supplies was the Emergency Room staff at St. Vincent's Hospital, only blocks from the rubble and smoke of the World Trade Center. Days later, Smith received a letter from a St. Vincent's nurse that included this passage:

I wasn't scheduled to work, but I needed to go to the ER and help. . . . Hours passed and the staff was getting tired. I told my co-worker Jay, "I would love to have a cup of Starbucks right now." We didn't want to leave the ER, not knowing what would come through the doors. An hour later, I noticed my co-worker Karen with a cup of Starbucks! She informed me that the Starbucks on Greenwich Avenue brought fresh coffee and water for the ER staff. Mr. Smith, I cannot tell you how much that cup of coffee meant to me. . . . I want to thank you personally for your generosity and support. ("New Yorker Shows Support," para. 3)

"I have never been more proud of Starbucks [employees] than I am right now," Smith responded in yet another news release, but he still had not forgotten Starbucks' initial, unintended departure from its values. "The decision [to charge the paramedic] is not defensible and is totally inconsistent with what we stand for," he said ("Starbucks

President,” para. 1). As order gradually returned to New York and Washington, D.C., Starbucks donated \$1 million to relief efforts in those cities.

Going the extra mile to ensure that it is acting on its values has become characteristic of Starbucks’s corporate behavior. When protestors rallied at Starbucks’s 2001 annual stockholders meeting, company officials offered to meet with the protestors to evaluate Starbucks’s policies on food additives, which was the issue in question. The protestors, however, were not as accommodating: They refused to meet unless Starbucks agreed in advance to their demands.

Starbucks’s values-driven behavior has helped the company earn a perennial spot on *Business Ethics* magazine’s annual list of “100 Best Corporate Citizens.” In the past decade, the company has won more than a dozen national and regional awards for ethical behavior. Starbucks also issues an annual corporate social responsibility report.

At the core of Starbucks’s values-driven behavior is a mission statement that includes six guiding principles. The succinct statement reads as follows:

Starbucks Mission Statement: Establish Starbucks as the premier purveyor of the finest coffee in the world while maintaining our uncompromising principles while we grow.

The following six guiding principles will help us measure the appropriateness of our decisions:

1. Provide a great work environment and treat each others with respect and dignity.
2. Embrace diversity as an essential component in the way we do business.
3. Apply the highest standards of excellence to the purchasing, roasting, and fresh delivery of our coffee.
4. Develop enthusiastically satisfied customers all of the time.
5. Contribute positively to our communities and our environment.
6. Recognize that profitability is essential to our future success. (www.starbucks.com)

Starbucks also has an environmental mission statement that pledges “environmental leadership in all facets of our business” (www.starbucks.com).

The principles in Starbucks’s mission statement virtually ensure conflict. Emphasizing profits, quality, and corporate citizenship can simultaneously stretch a company in at least three different directions, as Starbucks learned in 2000, when protestors charged that the company paid poverty-level prices to coffee growers in developing nations. A key demand of the protestors was that Starbucks purchase Fair Trade coffee beans. Fair Trade involves paying individual farmers in developing nations a living wage for their crops. Crops grown by large corporate farms cost less and can force individual farmers into poverty.

Starbucks’s response to the situation underscored the creative tensions within its mission statement and principles. Company officials acknowledged that Starbucks had

earlier sought Fair Trade beans but had not located any that met Starbucks’s standards—a direct reference to the company’s mission of supplying “the finest coffee in the world.” However, the same officials promised a more rigorous search—a direct reference to the company’s principles of excellence in purchasing and building better communities. Soon after announcing the new search, Starbucks bought almost 80,000 pounds of Fair Trade beans, and it promised to purchase more if it could locate crops that met company standards. Within a year, Fair Trade coffee became part of Starbucks’s worldwide product lines.

Starbucks’s repeated willingness to evaluate whether its actions incorporate its values earns respect even from potential critics. “The company is often grudgingly considered by many social activists to be a ‘socially responsible’ company,” said one analyst (Maloy, 2001, para. 26). A college journalist offered the same idea in slightly less formal language: “Even though Starbucks exemplifies corporate ickiness, the giant coffee company [has begun] selling Fair Trade Certified Coffee” (“100% Fair Trade Coffee,” 2000, para. 1).

Case Study: Front Groups

Front groups present a continuing challenge to public relations ethics. Such organizations often have noble names and seem independent; however, they receive secret support from a silent partner that hopes to benefit from the group’s advocacy efforts. In the late 1990s, the Associated Press (AP) published evidence suggesting that international pharmaceutical giant Glaxo Wellcome had quietly supported a front group in the hope of influencing federal health care policy in the United States.

Are front groups unethical? If they violate the values of involved individuals, organizations, or professions, the answer almost certainly is yes. By embracing values such as honesty, accuracy, and the public interest, public relations organizations throughout the world have strongly suggested that front groups are inconsistent with the values of the profession. The current PRSA ethics code specifically includes “front groups” among its examples of “improper conduct” for ethical practitioners.

In 1996 and 1997, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) received almost 10,000 letters asking it not to ban a particular kind of asthma inhaler known as an MDI. Because those inhalers contained ozone-damaging chlorofluorocarbons, environmental-defense organizations wanted them removed from the market. In many of the letters, opponents of the possible ban referred to information received from the Committee to Protect MDIs.

According to the AP, the Committee to Protect MDIs was a front group secretly sponsored by Glaxo Wellcome, which had fallen behind its competitors in developing environmentally friendly inhalers. The public relations

consultant who oversaw the Committee to Protect MDIs told an AP reporter that she couldn't recall how her involvement with the organization began, nor would she answer the reporter's questions about the committee's members and financing.

Ironically, in the early days of the MDI controversy, a pharmaceutical-industry newsletter reported that Glaxo Wellcome denied conducting any lobbying efforts to delay a ban on MDIs. The same story, however, noted the aggressive lobbying of the Committee to Protect MDIs, and the story ended with a quotation from the head of the committee—the same consultant who later would not discuss the committee's financing and membership.

To its credit, Glaxo Wellcome answered the AP's questions about its involvement, acknowledging that it did, indeed, finance the Committee to Protect MDIs. And many of the company's later public relations tactics in the battle to preserve the inhalers seemed both legal and ethical: Its representatives spoke with reporters about problems with non-MDI inhalers, and the company openly financed a survey by an independent inhaler-users group.

Repercussions from the AP exposé were few. Glaxo Wellcome endured a handful of negative stories in the news media, but the Committee to Protect MDIs vanished from the headlines almost as quickly as its Web site went dark.

If the end always justifies the means (a dubious notion in ethics), then the Committee to Protect MDIs may have been a public relations success. The FDA delayed its ban on the inhalers, and Glaxo Wellcome won time to continue its development of environmentally friendly alternatives. The company later merged with another pharmaceutical giant and now regularly reports annual sales exceeding \$40 billion.

The public relations practitioner who supervised the Committee to Protect MDIs went on to represent another multinational pharmaceutical company and has been frequently quoted in the news media.

Unfortunately, it's impossible to document the damage to the public relations profession in the minds of those who may have felt deceived or perhaps betrayed by the Committee to Protect MDIs.

Public Relations Ethics: Values in Action

As a relatively young profession, public relations continues to seek the core values that are essential to any concept of ethics for the discipline. Despite the occasional frustrations inherent in the ongoing debate, many participants—practitioners as well as scholars—have come to realize a significant advantage in viewing public relations ethics as a work in progress: Passionate, sustained discussions about values and values-driven actions in public relations help

keep those topics at the forefront of the profession. And voices from many viewpoints must be welcomed to the debate—feminist perspectives, postmodern perspectives, international perspectives, and more. After all, an enduring, high-profile discussion of how public relations can honor the most important values ranging from the international level to the personal level is surely good for a profession that seeks credibility and an honorable reputation.

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ISSUES MANAGEMENT

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Imagine, for the moment, the following scenario. You are in the office of a CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of a major company in the early 1950s. You and other members of the company are feeling pretty good about business prospects. The Great Depression is over. That era in American (and international) business demonstrated that unrestrained business activities could lead to food lines, bankruptcies, and family dislocation of epic proportion. Tons of governmental regulation came about to “prevent” that sort of financial catastrophe from recurring. You were engaged in some of those public policy battles whereby business critics achieved new legislation and regulation. Now, however, those business nightmares seem to be ending. And you and your business colleagues have just helped win World War II. The world brought together millions of military personnel, but several countries, none more than the United States, demonstrated that the ability to manufacture war materiel is a crucial factor in the kind of global war experienced in the 1930s and 1940s.

Imagine that you are the same (or another) CEO a decade later—the mid-1960s. All of a sudden, you sense that the world is at unrest. What seemed to be so tranquil is becoming turbulent. Antinuclear weaponry protests get visibility. The USSR is growing in power. The Civil Rights Movement is becoming more determined. Labor believes that it should have better living and working conditions. And the war in Vietnam is trying to take shape. We read a series of articles that suggest that pesticides are destroying entire species of birds, including the American symbol, the bald eagle.

Imagine yourself now in the mid-1970s. Protests against the war are tearing at the social, economic, and political fabric. Civil rights has made many achievements, but more are demanded. Consumer rights, environmental

rights, women’s rights—heavens! Industry and government are being attacked from every point and for many reasons. The old rationale for the sociopolitical system and the “traditional” political economy is up for grabs. Antinuclear activists are protesting the construction of nuclear-generating plants to manufacture electricity. International strains are occurring over oil and other mineral resources. There are many demands from all sides for something called corporate responsiveness, or corporate responsibility—and even corporate rectitude. So you call in your public relations team. You ask them to offer advice. They say, we simply have no clue. Perhaps we should issue a series of ads blasting protestors. We might even suggest that they are inspired by the Soviets. Let’s paint them as un-American. Let’s tell the activists who are protesting the building of nuclear-generating plants that they can “freeze to death in the dark as far as we care.” Leave us alone. We are the American free enterprise system that defeated the Great Depression and won World War II.

That scenario is more real and telling than you might imagine. During those decades, public relations as it was being practiced by many, but not all, had become merely product promotion and publicity. Starting during the Eisenhower years, public affairs was coined to replace public relations as the corporate function that would deal with the difficulties of companies working with key constituencies. The Public Affairs Council had been formed. Then, some executives, advertising persons, and eventually some public relations people (who were well prepared to at least explore this challenge) asked what discipline is needed, what it should be called, and what functions it must perform. Out of questions such as those arose issues management.

The theme exposed in this opening is both simple and complex. How could corporate America (and other countries around the world) be so caught off guard by the emergence of effective activism at the time when they were renewed in their self-confidence that they were “doing the right thing”? Were the old tools to deal with criticism and dissent inadequate or merely misused? Was something different that required new approaches? Is a communication response the only or even the essential theme of issues management? That point is made in a historical context by the fact that early “issue managers” were surprised that one or two issue ads seemed not only to have no effect on an issue’s life but likely brought out more anger on the part of critics, who thought that companies believed that they could merely communicate away their troubles. Those who supported the creation and the evolution of issues management believe that it offered a “new and improved” approach to controversy.

This chapter explains what issues management is, what its four pillars are, how communication alone is insufficient but nevertheless vital to issues management, and how the future is open to students who want to play important roles in the discussion and debate of public policy themes and bring that knowledge to bear to make organizations both more savvy and more responsive to their changing role in society. To that end, the chapter first addresses the question of whether issues management is something unique in the practice of public relations or merely just public relations. The chapter then progresses to discuss the dominant theoretical underpinnings that support its theory and practice. One of the lessons learned from 30 years of discussion is that public relations practitioners necessarily play a major role in issues management as they help management manage their response to issues. Public relations practitioners cannot carry this load alone, especially if management does not respond proactively as well as reactively. And the major way to blunt or respond ethically to criticism is to change the organization, not merely change the messages put out by the organization.

What Is Issues Management?

Issues management (strategic issues management or SIM)—or as some authors prefer, issue management—got its name in the 1970s at a time when corporate practitioners and those senior practitioners in high-profile agencies were struggling to recraft the discipline to address an era of hostility. The end of the Great Depression and the victory at the end of the World War II left American industry at a high point of public popularity and support. Measures of corporate leadership were high, both for effectiveness and ethics, as the 1960s started. But this age of deference was soon to end. The national poll data on corporate honesty and ethics would plummet. From a time when most people believed that corporate leaders were honest and ethical, the era would dawn when only 16% to 20% of the respondents would so believe.

The anti-Vietnam war sentiment coupled with the Civil Rights Movement to spawn an era where every establishment institution was scrutinized and most were found wanting. Under pressure from all sides, the corporate public relations leadership crafted the term *public affairs* and help found the Public Affairs Council. Among advertising professionals, a substantial debate transpired to coin a name for the practice: issue advertising, controversy advertising, theme advertising. Such debate suggested not only that communication was the best and most effective response to the controversy and loss of confidence in corporate leadership but also that by telling some citizens about this matter those critics would be silenced or would stop their criticism. The opposite occurred. The criticism heated up, and activists created organizations and institutions that formed the foundation for a robust social movement era. Other leadership, especially the work of W. Howard Chase (1984), led to the issue(s) management process. Because Chase’s book was published 20 years ago, as a hallmark of the issues management movement, this chapter is somewhat of a retrospective.

To formulate new ways to meet this challenge of the prerogatives of corporate governance, leading practitioners, academics, and business leaders developed issues management through many heated discussions at the senior executive level. Tradition has it that W. Howard Chase drew on his experience at American Can Company to develop the concept as a means for strengthening large organizations’ ability to monitor, analyze, and respond to the challenges being voiced by myriad critics of private sector practices and policies. His efforts were supported by others, such as John E. O’Toole (1975a, 1975b), who may have coined the term *advocacy advertising*, which was offered to strengthen the corporate voice in response to strident challenges by critics.

In the discussion of issues management, we are wise always to take a management rather than merely a communication perspective. And in such discussions, management can be interpreted as manipulation. In the context of issues management, this balance is important. Management entails choices that make or are selected to make organizations effective given near- and longer-term circumstances. After some initial false starts, issues management under CEO-level leadership began to feature the centrality of management and strategic business planning (regardless of whether the organization is a company, non-profit, or government agency).

Only the naïve practitioner or overly ambitious critic ever believed that advocates of issues management believed that issues could be “managed” to the eternal preference of the sponsor of this organizational function. Most believe that issues are multifaceted and that the playing field consists of multiple publics (stakeholders and stake seekers) who engage in robust competition to influence the direction and outcome of issues. One reality is that issues management must be part of strategic business planning. Issues management practitioners and experts such as Sawaya and Arrington (1988) argued that issues

emerge and take many directions. For this reason, managements must consider issue implications, trajectories, and challenges, looking for opportunity and threat. They made the point that issues can often offer opportunity and should not be seen as necessarily threatening. For this reason, issues management was often seen by such experts as a way of thinking as well as a way of acting.

Issues management has grown as an applied and research discipline to compensate for what some believed was an insufficient approach to the practice of public relations in the mid-1970s. The inadequacy of the then state-of-the-art approach to activist criticism was repeatedly demonstrated by strategic responses to corporate critics through counter-publicity efforts rather than solid issues engagement and corporate strategic planning adjustments. Instead of taking more sound responses to such criticism, many organizations engaged in stonewalling, expressed outrage at what were alleged to be presumptuous outbursts by critics of big business, and blamed the problems of society on the persons who were trying to call attention to and offer ways to solve those problems. This reactionary response that often tried to blame the messenger believed that no civil rights, consumer rights, or environmental rights problems would exist if the critics would cease their clamor.

Despite Chase's influence, issues management was not the brainchild of any one person. In fact, his views were shaped by senior practitioners such as John W. Hill, the cofounder of Hill & Knowlton, Arthur Page, and Harold Burson. Several academics, corporate leaders, public affairs/public relations practitioners, and even some advertising persons decided that a new or renewed array of strategic options was needed to respond to and even combat the broad and resilient challenges to corporate America and the U.S. government that were voiced during the activist era of the 1970s. To review the leadership of this movement, Heath and Cousino (1990) examined several hundred articles and other publications to better understand the analysis and responses that leaders made to the deficiencies they had discovered in organizations' preparedness to respond to their critics.

Critics of government and business eventually reshaped the culture and ideology of society in this era on topics related to civil rights, environmental rights, consumer rights, worker rights—and the list continues. New sociopolitical dynamics began in the 1960s to guide government policies and private sector practices. Businesses lost much of their public policy clout as the result of four dramatic changes. (1) Activists claimed that natural resources, found to be limited and rhetorically defined as the property of the citizens of the nation—and even the world, were to be managed in the collective interest. (2) Society became sensitive to the increasing heterogeneity of values, attitudes, beliefs, interests, and cultures, which destroyed the business-first policy consensus that prevailed at the start of the 1960s. (3) Citizens became more unwilling to act with deference toward business and government; they lost confidence in the ability of large institutions such as government, media, and business to

recognize and solve problems. Citizens placed their confidence in activist groups and called on them to exert their collective power. (4) Standards of corporate responsibility changed (Pfeffer, 1981). This fertile ground fed the growth of business criticism and issues management.

The central theme that is extracted from this literature can lead one to conclude that the rhetoric of issues management examines the rationale, motives, processes, and outcomes of advocacy discourse on public policy matters that influence the relationships between corporate entities and their stakeholders/stake seekers. The ultimate effort of this rhetoric is to forge sufficient concurrence so that interested members of the general public, business, government, media, and nonprofit sectors can forge mutually beneficial policies. The upshot of this dialogue is a constant revision of the expectations the citizenry has of the ways business, government, media, and nonprofit organizations should conduct their business.

From this robust debate, we can determine a definition of issues management. Some define it as a subfunction of public relations. Without much trouble, one can find agencies that list issues management as one of their several functions. Those who do may only think of it as requiring attending meetings and/or issuing press releases on controversial matters. The Issue Management Council defines SIM as follows: "Issue management is the process used to align organizational activities and stakeholder expectations" (www.issuemanagement.org, accessed June 14, 2007). The Public Affairs Council defines it as

the process of prioritizing and proactively addressing public policy and reputation issues that can affect an organization's success. Many large companies, in particular, use issues management techniques to keep all of their external relations activities focused on high-priority challenges and opportunities. (Doug Pinkham, President, Public Affairs Council, http://pac.org/issues_management, accessed June 14, 2007)

Heath (2005; see also Heath, 1997) has defined issues management as

a strategic set of functions used to reduce friction and increase harmony between organizations and their publics in the public policy arena. Issues management entails four core functions: (a) engaging in smart business and public policy planning that is sensitive to public policy trends, (b) playing tough defense and smart offense through issue communication, (c) getting the house in order by meeting or exceeding stakeholder expectations, and (d) scouting the terrain to gain early warning about troublesome issues. Applied properly, it gives organizations the opportunity to reduce the harm of threats and to take advantages of opportunities created as public policy changes occur. (p. 460)

Stressing this view of issues management, the former Allstate Insurance Company executive for public affairs, Raymond Ewing (1987), concluded that it "developed within the business community as an educational task

aimed at preserving the proper balance between the legitimate goals and rights of the free enterprise system and those of society” (p. 5). The battle over public policy and value principle hegemony is best when it seeks and achieves a mutually beneficial middle ground between interested parties. Twenty years ago, Ewing defined it as a new organizational discipline that features “public policy foresight and planning for an organization” (p. 1). Stressing outcomes deliverable by issues management, he defined it as “simply public policy research, foresight, and planning for an organization in the private sector impacted by decisions made by others in the public sector” (p. 18). It can help fill

the policy hole in the center of corporate management, making it possible for the CEO and senior management to strategically manage their enterprise as a whole, as a complete entity capable of helping create the future and “grow” their company into it. (p. 18)

Its greatest contribution is gained by early and proactive efforts “to intervene consciously and effectively and participate early in the process, instead of waiting passively until the organization finds itself a victim at the tail end of the process” (p. 19).

This view, by one of the pioneers in issues management, and a former public relations practitioner, emphasized how SIM is more than communication. He also stressed that the playing field often found activists pitted against companies. However, the battles might also occur within an industry and between industries. From his vantage point at Allstate Insurance, he was able to suggest, for instance, that however tenacious and effective Ralph Nader might have been in increasing automobile safety, the lobbying power of the automobile insurance industry was crucial as a power balance to the Detroit automobile industry. Car insurance companies, among the most powerful industries in the United States, pressed for automobile safety, not only because it was in the interest of those who might be injured or killed but also in terms of the ability of the insurance industry to calculate costs for such injuries. In that case, death is an easier cost to calculate than is long-term spinal injury, for instance.

By definition and as a matter of practice, then, SIM entails strategic business planning; constant efforts to raise the standards of corporate responsibility; issue monitoring to scan, identify, monitor, and analyze issues and trends; and issue communication. The latter function, often thought of as the exclusive role of SIM, embraces a wide array of media and contexts, but it also focuses on efforts to weigh in on matters of fact, value, policy, and identification. A central theme, thus, is the effort to narrow the legitimacy gap (Sethi, 1977) between what companies are expected to do and what they do with regard to matters that affect their stakeholders and stake seekers.

Although the name of the practice was coined in the 1970s, it is not a new practice in principle. Major companies

fought for favorable legislation and regulation during the last years of the 19th century. This was the period called the Industrial Revolution, or the era of mass production fostering mass consumption. Within decades, America and much of the industrialized world went from small businesses to large corporations. For instance, dozens of small oil companies were combined into Standard Oil, as were hundreds of small steel and iron manufacturing companies brought together as U.S. Steel. This was the era of the robber baron. Industrial giants fought over manufacturing and other industrial standards, including the battle of the currents. During that “war,” George Westinghouse fought Thomas Edison to set the standard of electrical generating: a battle between alternating current and direct current. Lobbying and other measures were employed to create a climate favorable to one industrial interest, often at the disadvantage of some competitor and perhaps against the interest of labor. And as it happened during the last half of the 20th century, activism of many kinds fought to make these large industrial giants responsive to the needs of customers, workers, and other stakeholders.

Viewed as such, SIM draws upon resource dependency theory, social capital theory, principles of reflective management, insights into issue monitoring and futurism, a burgeoning body of literature relevant to corporate responsibility, and ethical and responsive issue communication.

The Four Pillars

The logic of issues management rests on a relatively simple assumption. Organizations are stakeholders as well as stake seekers. Other individuals and organizations in society also are stakeholders and stake seekers. A stake is something of value, tangible or intangible. For instance, purchasing dollars are stakes customers can use to lever products and services from companies. A product, as is a service, is a stake. The relationship between stakeholder and stake seeker is resource specific, and the quality of the exchange defines the relationship, as the quality of the relationship may define the quality of the exchange. Companies are stake seekers who need customers’ purchase dollars. Customers hold stakes, but they also seek stakes.

As well as purchase dollars, the stakes might be support or opposition (intangible stakes, but nevertheless powerful). Activists serve as stakeholders who work to use their stakes to lever management policy change from companies, other activist groups, and governmental agencies. Thus, SIM centers on power resource management strategies. It entails the push and shove of interests, seeking through communication in various forms to achieve change and concurrence for that change, if not consensus. But in such battles, companies hold stakes that activists want as stake seekers. The stakes they seek are changes they believe will effectively address some issue.

These battles for stakes focus on issues. The issues are contestable matters of fact, value, policy, and identification.

Strategic Business Planning

Each organization seeks to accomplish some mission and vision. To do so requires an understanding of the policy environment in which the organization operates. For this reason, companies are not only subject to constraints but also are given latitudes or opportunity because of the public policies related to their operations. In short, activists and even other companies often try to change the principles of public policy to influence how the organization achieves its mission or vision. For instance, if a company or industry, sells products that are harmful to customers' health, those customers are predictably going to work to change the policies.

As such, management is the applied and theoretical discipline that works to achieve those ends through savvy planning/budgeting, strategic management, and continuous evaluation and adjustment. Each organization must operate within (as SWOT analysis) the market system and public policy arenas relevant to its ability to acquire and use resources. Each organization is resource dependent. Its ability to acquire resources depends on its social capital, the nature of the systems where it operates, the balances between stakeholding and stake seeking, and the formation of meaning that constitutes and defines activities in these arenas. As such, savvy management works to understand and manage their responses to issues that can affect effective resource acquisition and application. This process is both reactive and proactive.

Issue Monitoring

A wise management team wants to know what is occurring, what thoughts, opinions, facts, identifications, and policies are changing that might affect their ability (positively or negatively) to achieve their mission and vision. Scouting the terrain in which the organization operates is necessary to determine the issues and trends, as well as those power forces that promote and constrain the organization's planning and management options.

Issue monitoring consists of scanning, identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing issues. Issues often emerge well outside the public view. By the time they make their way into popular literature, they are likely to have been discussed and debated for months, and even years. Matrices of key members of the organization (and some outside consultants) are needed so that the most knowledgeable and insightful minds are encouraged to participate in a process often created and managed by public relations specialists. This SIM function keeps the organization vigilant and open to trends, issues, and power dynamics in the environments where it operates. It helps the organization be an open system-letting information

in that can be used to manage the business plan and issues response.

Public relations and public affairs experts need to be central to this issue-monitoring process, but they need to work in matrices with other experts. Most issues are not "communication" issues. They are matters of operation that are likely to be best understood by engineers or other technical experts. They might be legal issues. They might relate to human resources policies such as employee safety and sexual harassment. Public relations personnel simply are not expert on every issue that might affect the organization. Thus, matrices need to be created, maintained, and made effective to keep the organization vigilant.

Corporate Responsibility

One of the most solid aspects of SIM is the fact that the better the organization is (the higher its standards of corporate responsibility), the less it will be criticized or constrained in its operational choices, and the more it will receive the stakes it wants and need to achieve its mission and vision.

The reality of modern issues management depends on the appreciation for activist and social movement efforts to constrain and reward organizations for the quality of their policies and business activities. Senior SIM and public relations practitioners know the value of getting the house in order. That metaphor stresses the importance of organizational character, the willingness and ability to know the high standards of corporate activity expected for the organization to deserve and receive needed resources.

One of the fundamental and historical logics of SIM is that outsiders seek to obtain and use power resources to control or at least guide each targeted organization from the outside. By this logic, environmentalists hold high standards and advocate their wisdom in battles to influence the business planning of timber companies. Similar logics abound, and savvy SIM specialists know that external influence can come from within their industry and from other industries as well. Applying Sethi's (1977) logic of the legitimacy gap, one can argue that as long as organizations do not meet high standards of corporate responsibility, they will be targets for change by groups that advocate for and apply pressure to raise those standards.

Issue Communication

Over the years, issue communicators have engaged in strong offense and sound defense. Organizations have learned that if they don't communicate on some matter, other voices will make statements that create the "public record." Such communication entails bringing facts and opinions into public discourse. It requires thoughtful and reflective policy recommendations. It can appeal for people to identify with one line of thinking as being more constructive than its alternatives. Such public statements are part of what has been called the rhetorical heritage, the

spirit of public debate, collaborative decision making, advocacy, and negotiation. It consists as dialogue rather than monologue.

Issue communication rests on a fundamental assumption. In a succinct statement of that assumption, Lentz (1996) reasoned, “Truth should prevail in a market-like struggle where superior ideas vanquish their inferiors and achieve audience acceptance” (p. 1).

The rhetorical heritage underpins modern organizations’ efforts to cocreate meaning that guides their activities, defines the marketplaces in which they operate, and sets the standards of corporate responsibility. Rather than assuming that the ostensibly dominant voice of industry or one company can drown out others, the reality is that many advocates compete by asserting their facts, values, and policy positions. This wrangle can be dysfunctional, but in its absence, we must accept a philosopher emperor who decides cases for the key players rather than having a system by which we assume that the best ideas triumph—at least eventually—over inferior ones. Jaques (2006), for instance, has argued that proactive and constructive communication can lead to collaborative and constructive decision making. Such outcomes are not accidental but require honest effort at collaboration and a willingness to listen to and regard the ideas of others, and the use of a variety of communication channels, including new technologies. On this point, Jaques (2006) noted,

Professionalism of activism is in some respects a direct response to the growth of stakeholder participation as a key element of issue management. Processes such as community consultation or corporate social responsibility or stakeholder engagement have accelerated and formalized participation by external parties. (p. 414)

The days of issue dominance and intimidation are limited because of the quality of engagement and the power resource management skills of the parties engaged in issue communication.

The Challenges of Issue Communication

At this stage, several points should be clear and apparent. First, issues management is more than communication. Second, public relations practitioners cannot address and solve issues alone. Indeed, issues always are management issues. So practitioners can help management address and respond to issues. Third, issue campaigns are likely to require sustained communication in many venues. One of the lessons learned from the period of inception of the new era of issues management is that one or two cleverly worded and effectively placed ads are unlikely to resolve an issue. In fact, the ads may inflame the fires of criticism. Fourth, the best communication paradigm for understanding issue communication

is argumentation, advocacy, contention, and debate. Fifth, sometimes one side of a controversy is right and the other side is wrong, but don’t count on that paradigm for issue communication. The truth and preferred interpretation of facts, values, policies, narratives, and identification often fall within the points of contention, not in favor of either one. Finally, in all that is said and done, the character of the organizations engaged in the discourse is as much on the line as is the case when two individuals advocate points of view in public. Credibility and character are fundamental principles of effective communication. That leads to two more conclusions. As communicators, we become accountable for the quality of the messages we help craft and put into play. And all of what the organization does and says becomes part of the message, as does the breadth of interest demonstrated in the position adopted.

Issue communication begins with matters of fact. The emergence of an issue often results from someone putting a fact into place that may suggest the presence of a problem or a call for a better solution than what has been advocated. Examining the rhetorical heritage, Campbell (1996) championed this form of discourse as “the study of what is persuasive. The issues it examines are social truths, addressed to others, justified by reasons that reflect cultural values. It is a humanistic study that examines all the symbolic means by which influence occurs” (p. 8). Campbell compared scientists for whom “the most important concern is the discovery and testing of certain kinds of truths” to “rhetoricians (who study rhetoric and take a rhetorical perspective) would say, ‘Truths cannot walk on their own legs. They must be carried by people to other people. They must be explained, defended, and spread through language, argument, and appeal’” (p. 3). From this foundation, Campbell reasoned, rhetoricians take the position “that unacknowledged and unaccepted truths are of no use at all” (p. 3). The rhetorical tradition is founded in facts because since the age of Aristotle, rhetors are required to assert and demonstrate their propositions by producing facts.

Facts are the foundation of issue communication. How they are discovered, addressed, framed, and included in decision making becomes a vital part of strategic issues communication. In such cases, truth counts. How the facts are framed counts because it can suggest that the framing privileges one interest against another. One reality is that if scientists discover facts, such as the harmfulness of a product, activists of various kinds may put that fact into play. Thus, they do so from a position that often seems to have more persuasive impact because they are arguing for “public safety,” for instance. As the company or industry addresses the fact, if they only frame it in terms of the interest of the company or industry, that can weaken the role it plays.

Platforms of fact, and other platforms, are put into play in many communication venues: lobbying, legislative and regulatory hearing, direct negotiation and collaborative decision making with various activist and other interested parties, Web sites’ home pages, special reports, commissioned

studies, books, magazines, general mass media of all kinds, news stories, feature articles, press releases, advertisements, talk show appearances, speakers' bureaus and other public-speaking events, various events that are issue centered such as Environmental Protection Days, Internet e-mails, intranet communication, and on and on. Issue communication happens in many media and venue opportunities. These points of engagement are important places for participating in the dialogue. They are a meeting place where other discussants of issues appear.

Such venues are also an important place for issue communicators to discuss values and evaluations, giving their thoughts, opinions, and recommendations on such matters. In addition to putting facts into play that point to actual or potential problems needing solution, activists play an important role in issue communication as they make their case for a higher sense of value. Such value positions tend to indict organizations for some failure in their sense of what values define corporate responsibility. Part of this battle focuses on the willingness and ability of various organizations to know and implement appropriate standards of corporate responsibility. Thus, timber companies are challenged to engage in logging activities that protect species, promote the heritage of old growth stands that take generations and even centuries to replace, and protect water quality by minimizing runoff of sediment and other pollutants. Sometimes in such value battles, companies respond by arguing that their practices are designed to provide low-cost materials for home owners and to stimulate local economies dependent on the logging industry for jobs and taxes. Such typical debates pit different value perspectives against one another.

We can operate out of the logic that given the facts and the evaluation of those facts, a specific (but often contestable) definition of problems results. Given the awareness of problems, advocates conclude, efforts must be taken to solve those problems by creating, refining, or abandoning policies. Thus, we come to the third argumentative foundation of issue communication: platforms of policy. As mentioned above, some of these policy battles don't occur only when activists press companies. They occur within industries and between industries. One of the most important—and famous—led to the adoption of alternating current as the superior form of electric generation and distribution. That standard survives today and defines the efforts of the electric generation industry. Policy battles focus on matters of workplace conditions, environmental quality, fair business practices, equal treatment of all citizens, and such. SIM is inherently connected to democratic society in which various interests contest with one another over which of many policies is best to solve collectively experienced problems.

Another line of analysis in issue communication focuses on identifications. Each side in a controversy asks key publics to join in their view of the world, to identify with their sense of fact, value, and policy. Activists appeal

to general audiences to join the cause—to identify with the organization, its values, its policy recommendations, and the “cause.” It's predictable that companies and even government agencies call for key publics to identify with them. Political parties are a form of identification, as they specialize in cause-oriented appeals. As power is an important aspect of issues management, the number of persons—and the stature of those persons—can be power, something worth calling for through appeals to identification. Herein may lie the foundations for legitimacy and the power of the legitimacy gap.

At least two general kinds of rhetorical problems (Bitzer, 1968) also are worth mention as we conclude our discussion of the challenges of issues communication. Bitzer suggested that persons engaged in issues to debate should realize the importance of recognizing the challenge of rhetorical problems. A rhetorical problem is a challenge that requires one or more spokespersons to make a statement or engage in extended discourse. If an activist group, for instance, claims that a sports apparel company is engaging in business activities that foster sweatshop working conditions, the company (and industry, and probably related industries) now faces a rhetorical problem. What must and should be said and to what end?

A crisis, and many occur in the history of organizations, necessarily creates a rhetorical problem. If senior management creates business activities that lead them to be wealthy while bankrupting the company and harming employees and stockholders, that is a crisis. If governments are not properly prepared to prevent storm damage and to respond if a storm of the magnitude of Katrina occurs, then one or more government entity experiences a crisis. A crisis requires that responsible organizations provide facts, values, policies, and identifications that demonstrate that they have the character to respond appropriately to protect interests that are affected by the crisis. A crisis is a predictable moment; the actual moment of occurrence is difficult or impossible to predict as is the number of persons who will be affected and the magnitude of the impact.

Crises can focus on fact. Did a crisis occur? Who or what is responsible for the crisis? Was the focal organization properly prepared to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the crisis? Perhaps, in fact, the organization thought to suffer the crisis might not be “guilty.” A crisis might not have occurred, or some other entity might actually be responsible. So the crisis can be contestable, but sooner or later the narrative of the crisis will emerge. Responsible organizations are willing and able to accept responsibility (a matter of character) and demonstrate how they can put matters right.

Another context for issues management is the collective management of risk. We can argue that society is formed to collectively manage risks. That rationale can account for the creation and sale of products. For instance, toothpaste is designed and sold to reduce damage to gums, teeth, and breath. Cars are touted as being safe. And in these ways,

various forms of organizational communication address risks through advertising, promotion, and publicity. Organizations also engage in risk communication targeted at recommending lifestyle changes (such as exercise more and reduce weight) as a way to help individuals be more healthy, a public health challenge. Risks also are defined as exposure to chemicals. Actual or alleged presence of harmful chemicals can lead to a product recall. Recently, a lot of attention has focused on contaminated pet foods, adulterated health products such as toothpaste, and the presence of lead in paints on children's toys. These have been associated with lax or fraudulent business practices in countries that manufacture products to be sold into other economies.

A risk manifested, such as a contaminated product, produces a crisis. A crisis can lead to an issue, what should be done to reduce the risk. Issues can lead to crises. If the automobile industry is saddled with engineering energy-efficient cars, that is an issue that can pose a crisis for the industry.

Because of the many ongoing dialogues in society, there is plenty of work for skilled and ethical communicators. These communicators are challenged to understand facts, know the best form of communication engagement to resolve the issue, aspire to associate with commendable values, understand policy positions that are not only limited to defending the organization but also aim at reducing risks and know how to build the foundations of identification.

SIM and Future Practitioners

The future is open to students who want to play an important role in the discussion and debate of public policy themes and bring that knowledge to bear to make organizations both more savvy and more responsive to their changing role in society. SIM calls on individuals who are willing to constantly strive to master facts that are vital to a wide array of circumstances. It asks individuals to think deeply about the values and policies that actually benefit society and demonstrate sound character. It calls on individuals who love to engage in responsible and responsive debate. The outcome of such debate and discourse, however, is not the individual winner but the sense of the collective good, a stronger sense of society. To this end, persons who engage in issues management are continually called on to make society more fully functional.

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CAMPAIGN DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

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The role of strategic planning in public relations is rooted in today's understanding of the profession, an understanding that can move a practitioner beyond being simply a wordsmith or organizational mouthpiece and into a seat at the management table. Practitioners skilled in strategic planning are sought out to help build relationships and solve problems.

This chapter focuses first on some definitions dealing with projects versus campaigns and then on two types of campaigns, proactive or reactive. This chapter goes beyond *projects*, the tasks associated with public relations, such as writing effective news releases, creating an interactive Web site, or orchestrating a knock-'em-dead special event. Such tasks are important, but they are only the tools of the trade. A *campaign* is a systematic framework that underlies many projects. It offers a planned and comprehensive interaction with an organization's environment. For example, a campaign to reduce underage drinking on campus may have a series of associated tactical projects such as a brochure, public presentation, displays, a television program, and student ambassadors offering face-to-face information. Consciously or not, organizations undertake campaigns every time they attempt to build a new client base, increase membership, raise funds, generate support for positions and policies, respond to criticism, react to crises, or otherwise seek to influence their environment. In short, campaigns are *strategy*, the problem-solving and relationship-building function of organizations that creates messages to be carried by the *tactics*.

Public relations campaigns may be *proactive*, initiating a focus on the opportunities before the organization, or *reactive*, responding to problems or crises. Either way,

campaigns are in a carefully implemented planning process that is part of the management function of an organization. This is a four-phase process that (1) begins with formative research, (2) focuses on strategic decisions, (3) creates and implements a range of communication tactics, and (4) concludes with evaluative research. Some see this as a cyclical process, though perhaps a spiral would be a better metaphor. Strategic planning for public relations involves a series of information gathering, decision making, implementation, and evaluation, leading to another set of information gathering, decision making, implementation, and evaluation, and so on.

Background: What Is a Strategic Public Relations Campaign?

Developing as it has out of journalism, public relations is rooted in the communication of messages: messages about organizations—more specifically, directed messages intended to generate good will, understanding, and support for the organization. Many veteran practitioners made the transition from journalism to public relations rather seamlessly, generally by applying what they had learned in journalism to public relations. It was a simple transfer process. Past job descriptions for public relations often read as a sort of journalist-in-residence, with the most common tasks of the practitioner being to generate news releases, edit internal publications, give speeches, organize displays, and perhaps produce organizational videos. This is the role of a *communication technician*, a specialist in the tasks associated with public relations and

still the role of most entry-level newcomers to public relations. The distinguishing characteristic of technicians is the level of autonomy; they generally do not make their own decisions but rather implement the decision of others, and they seldom are asked for advice beyond their specialty skill.

Public relations' role has evolved as organizational needs expanded beyond mere dissemination and as the knowledge base expanded to draw on organizational communication, persuasion, relationship building, and problem solving. Lean times caused many businesses and organizations to hold public relations accountable for its impact on the bottom line: product sales, enrollment, fund-raising, attendance, membership, and so on. Like other organizational players, public relations was expected to know its role well, perform effectively and efficiently, and document its success.

Meanwhile, books and articles were being written positioning public relations as part of the management function within organizations. Insight was being drawn from the academic disciplines of business, sociology, and psychology. More than simply an organizational mouthpiece, public relations practitioners were becoming seen as counselors and advocates appreciated for their insight and management ability and considered for a seat at the table and a voice among the decision makers. *Tactical managers* make decisions on specific and practical day-to-day issues: news release versus news conference, brochure or Web page, four color or spot color. *Strategic managers* make more nuanced high-level decisions concerning trends, policies, and organizational structure. They determine what issues to deal with, gauge the crisis readiness of the organization, and prepare other executives for media interviews. Strategic managers develop the message, then let the tactical managers decide how best to handle dissemination.

Today, people preparing for careers in public relations have two complementary goals: to master an entry-level skill in order to obtain a job as a communication technician and to begin developing insights and amassing experiences that will move them toward the role of a communication manager. It is no longer enough merely to know how to write effectively, though this certainly is important. It's not enough even to be able to creatively package messages and tactics, though this too is necessary to position an organization or client vis-à-vis the competition. Creativity and excellent writing need to be directed, for without a clear focus, creativity risks becoming mere novelty and writing devolves into wordiness. Careful crafting and creative presentation of messages need to flow from a clear and methodical process of planning. Public relations practitioners must know what is important to their organizations, how public relations fits into the organizational response to problems and opportunities, and who the important publics are. They need to know what to do, why it is important, and how to evaluate its effectiveness. We call this process *strategic communication*.

The job of strategic communication planning calls for four specific skills: (1) understanding the why, what, and how of research and planning; (2) being able to make strategic decisions by setting goals and objectives; (3) knowing how to creatively and effectively implement those decisions and carry the organization's message to its publics; and (4) completing the process by measuring the outcomes and evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

Theory Base: Learning From Other Disciplines

Applying theory to a topic such as campaign management is perhaps a misleading venture, because there is no single source for the theoretical underpinnings. Public relations draws quite naturally from theoretical understandings in both interpersonal communication and mass media. For example, Aristotle's rhetorical concepts of ethos, logos, and pathos give a foundation for organizational choices for message sources and the logical/emotional content of messages. Paul Lazarsfeld's (1944) theory of the two-step flow of communication, later evolved into a multistep flow, provides a base for an organization's efforts to employ both interpersonal communication and mass media in their persuasive campaigns.

The theory of *agenda setting*, associated with Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972), offers insight into how organizations can tap into the issues on which the media focus. Two other concepts are associated with agenda setting. *Framing*, the rhetorical packaging of a message to affect meaning and interpretation, is attributed to Erving Goffman (1974), who drew on earlier work on framing in economics. *Priming*, the role that media-presented information plays in establishing standards for audiences to make political and social judgments, draws on the political science research of Shanto Iyengar, Mark Peters, and Donald Kinder (1982).

Another source of theoretical concepts for public relations is organizational management. From organizational sociology, for example, W. H. Evan (1976) drew the concept of *linkages*, patterns of relationships that exist between an organization and its various publics, and James Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) adapted these into their process for managing public relations.

From classical rhetoric, Keith Michael Hearit (1994) drew on the concept of *apologia*—the formal and public defense of one's positions and actions—as offering organizations a strategic opportunity, particularly in times of crisis. William Benoit (1995) advanced the theory of *image restoration* on the premise that criticism offers an opportunity to rebuild a positive reputation.

Social psychology is another fertile theoretical base for public relations. One framework for analyzing publics is found in Abraham Maslow's (1968) theory of *human motivation*, commonly called the *hierarchy of needs* based on

the concept of *prepotency* (the order in which human needs must be met). Meanwhile, the study of *psychological type*, developed out of the work of Carl Jung by Isabel Myers and Catharine Briggs (Myers, 1987; Myers & Myers, 1980) and the derivative work of David Keirsey and Marilyn Bates (1984), provides a framework for developing persuasive messages based on the psychological predispositions and temperament.

From the study of business and marketing comes the concept of *positioning*, the development of a perception about an organization and its products, messages, and so on. Al Ries and Jack Trout (1987) explained that positioning is not what is done to a product but rather what is done to the mind of a person hearing about the product. The pattern of awareness-acceptance-action in public relations objectives neatly parallels the *AIDA* pattern (attention, interest, desire, action), which has been part of the theoretical base of advertising since the 1920s (Lipstein, 1985).

Education also has provided a theoretical source for public relations, such as measures of *readability*, including the *Fog Index* associated with Robert Gunning (1952), which assists public relations writers in presenting messages that are understandable to readers.

Methods: The Four-Stage Planning Process

There are perhaps as many different approaches to strategic planning for public relations campaigns as there are practitioners. However, the planning process generally involves a four-stage approach, which has become common within the profession. Most contemporary textbooks dealing with public relations encourage a four-phase process. Some use acronyms to outline the process. For example, John Marston (1963) in *The Nature of Public Relations* outlined the RACE (research, action, communication, evaluation) acronym. In *Public Relations Cases*, Jerry Hendrix (2003 and previous editions) used the acronym ROPE (research, objectives, programming, evaluation). In *Public Relations Campaign Strategies*, Robert Kendall (1999) offered RAISE (research, adaptation, implementation strategy, evaluation) as another formula. Most public relations textbooks, however, simply refer to a four-stage process without constraining it into an acronym. In *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*, Smith (2009) offers the model of four phases subdivided into nine steps, the process echoed below in this chapter.

Marketing communication books similarly present a step-by-step process, though with little consistency about the number of steps involved and less reliance on acronyms. In his cross-over text *Social Marketing*, Philip Kotler and his colleagues (Kotler, Roberto, & Lee, 2002) identify eight steps in four general stages that focus on (1) analysis of the environment, (2) identification of audiences and objectives, (3) development of a strategic approach, and (4) development of the implementation plan.

Drawing on the common four-stage process, here is an outline of an approach to strategic planning for public relations campaigns. Essentially, it involves tactics growing out of strategic planning, with the entire process bracketed by preliminary analysis and concluding evaluation.

Phase 1: Formative research

- Step 1: Analyzing the situation
- Step 2: Analyzing the organization
- Step 3: Analyzing the publics

Phase 2: Strategy

- Step 4: Establishing goals and objectives
- Step 5: Formulating action and response strategies
- Step 6: Developing the message strategy

Phase 3: Tactics

- Step 7: Selecting communication tactics
- Step 8: Implementing the strategic plan

Phase 4: Evaluative research

- Step 9: Evaluating the strategic plan

The succession of these steps is deliberate, and they need to be taken in sequence. After identifying a problem, it is tempting to skip ahead to seeking solutions, but leaping over research and analysis can result in unwarranted assumptions and false steps.

Phase 1: Formative Research

During the first phase, attention is on gathering information and analyzing the situation. The planner draws on existing information available to the organization and creates a research program to obtain additional needed information. Fran Matera and Ray Artigue (2000) call this *strategic research*, the systematic gathering of information about both issues and publics that affect organizations, particularly those organizations that are engaged in a two-way communication relationship with their publics. They also identify *tactical research*, which helps guide communication projects and activities that are implemented within the campaign.

Step 1: Analyzing the Situation

The first part of strategic research involves a careful analysis of the situation. This involves a process Aguilar (1967) called *environmental scanning*. Howard Chase (1977) called it *issues management*. Whatever the name, the concept had been around since the days of Ivy Lee. Specific formulations vary, but here is a synthesis of the issues management process: (1) identifying issues that may affect an organization, (2) researching each of those issues, (3) considering options in responding to each issue, (4) developing an action plan for the best option, (5) implementing the plan, and (6) evaluating the effectiveness of the response.

Such analysis plays a particularly important role in crisis management. According to the Institute for Crisis Management, only 14% of organizational crises burst

suddenly onto the scene. Rather, 86% are smoldering situations: white-collar crime, labor disputes, mismanagement, environmental problems, defects and recalls, class-action lawsuits, and similar activities that can be anticipated and thus handled through effective issues management.

Step 2: Analyzing the Organization

The second step in the planning process involves a careful and candid look at three aspects of the organization: (1) its internal environment (mission, performance, and resources), (2) its public perception (the organization's visibility and reputation), and (3) its external environment (competitors and opponents, as well as supporters). The SWOT analysis credited to Albert Humphrey of Stanford University provides a useful format for organizational analysis, with its focus on the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Step 3: Analyzing the Publics

Key publics that interact with the organization on the issue at hand are the focus of this step, which includes an analysis of each in terms of its wants, interests, needs, and expectations about the issue; its relationship to the organization; its level of involvement with various media; and various social, economic, political, cultural, and technological trends that may affect the public. This step revolves around John Dewey's (1927) classic definition of a public as a grouping of people who share a common interest vis-à-vis an organization, recognize its significances, and set out to do something about it. Publics may be internal to an organization (such as employees or volunteers) or external (such as customers or donors). They may serve to support and sustain an organization, or they can be negative forces against it. *Opinion leaders* and *intercessory publics* also play a role in this stage of organizational analysis.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) provided a framework for analyzing publics according to their stage of development: latent, aware, and active publics and nonpublics, based on their level of conscious involvement with an organization over a particular situation. Smith (2003) adds the concept of apathetic publics, those that know but don't care about a situation.

Phase 2: Strategy

The second phase of the planning process presents the decision-making stage of campaign development. It is here that direction is set, options and alternatives are considered, and messages are created.

Step 4: Establishing Goals and Objectives

Ever since Edward Bernays (1955) talked about "engineering consent" in the 1940s, public relations has been

associated with strategic action toward public influence. This step focuses on the ultimate position being sought for the organization and its product or service. In a classic application of management-by-objectives to public relations, Norman Nager and T. Harrell Allen (1984) used the analogy of transportation: Goals provide direction, while objectives pinpoint the destination. Within campaign development, serious attention is given to the identification of goals (general statements rooted in the organization's mission of what the campaign seeks to achieve) and objectives (specific statements that are rooted in the goals, addressed to a specific public, linked to research, and focused on impact that is explicit, measurable, and time definite). Objectives generally are presented in a hierarchical triad that addresses the desired impact on knowledge/awareness, attitude/acceptance, and action.

Step 5: Formulating Action and Response Strategies

In every public relations situation, the organization has a range of options on what to do and say. The "doing" part first involves decisions about being proactive or reactive. Proactive strategies focus on the organization's performance and efforts to improve or adapt to new conditions. Organizations connect with their publics through audience participation and engage their colleagues through alliances and coalitions. Activism is another proactive strategy that allows organizations to engage supporters in advancing a cause. Finally, organizations engage the news media, particularly by exploiting the newsworthiness of information and events associated with the organization.

Reactive strategies often draw on the concepts of apology, reputation, and image. Options include offensive responses such as attacks or threats, as well as defensive responses such as denial, excuse, and justification. Also in this category are diversionary responses such as disassociation and relabeling and vocal commiseration such as expressing condolence, regret, or apology. Responsive strategies also involve rectifying behavior such as investigation and corrective action.

Step 6: Developing the Message Strategy

This step deals with various decisions about the message: identification of persuasive sources who will present the organization's message with credibility and charisma; the message content, tone, and style; verbal and nonverbal cues; and related issues.

Of particular importance to this step is the selection of an appropriate spokesperson. Research identifies three characteristics of a persuasive message source as a person with credibility (based on audience perceptions of expertise, honesty, competence, and status), charisma (based on likability, presumed familiarity by the audience, and similarity to the audience), and control (the degree of authority

or power the message source has over the audience). A related question is the relationship of the spokesperson to the organization—celebrity, typical consumer, organizational official, professional colleague, and so on.

Phase 3: Tactics

The third phase of the planning process deals with tactics, the visible elements of the campaign. Tactics are what the audiences see, the communication vehicles that carry the organization's message and allow the organization to interact with its publics.

Step 7: Selecting Communication Tactics

This inventory deals with the various communication options. Specifically, the planner considers four categories: (1) face-to-face communication and opportunities for personal involvement, using venues such as speeches, seminars, demonstrations, and special events; (2) organizational media involving communication vehicles such as brochures, newsletters, direct mail, Web sites, CDs and DVDs, and other media through which the message content, packaging, and dissemination are controlled by the organization; (3) news media such as newspapers, magazines, news services, radio, television, and online news outlets, through which the organization works with journalists and media gatekeepers to present its message; and (4) advertising and promotional media, another form of controlled media, often with a hefty price tag, involving outlets such as print and broadcast advertising, Web-based promotion, and out-of-home advertising and organization-directed promotional items such as clothing, consumer items, and accessories. While all these tools can be used by any organization, not every tool is appropriate for each campaign, and it is in this step that the repertoire is considered, options are analyzed, and tactical choices are made.

Step 8: Implementing the Strategic Plan

This step focuses on the administration of the tactics identified in the previous step and on managing them into an effective public relations campaign. It involves the development of schedules and the assignment of accountability for tasks. This step includes full budgets that account for personnel (with the fair-market value of pro bono work as well as the involvement of people on the organizational payroll), along with costs of material, media buys, equipment and facilities, and administrative expenses.

Phase 4: Evaluation

The final phase rounds out the process with a focus on evaluation and assessment.

Step 9: Evaluating the Strategic Plan

While formal evaluation cannot be undertaken until the campaign is under way (via progress reports) or completed (final evaluation report), plans for such evaluation are made before implementing the campaign tactics. Generally, this planning involves returning to the goals and objectives articulated in Step 4 and applying them to each of the tactics identified in Step 7. Each tactic is measured and analyzed in light of the expected outcome articulated through the objectives.

Research design for evaluation includes both before-after studies and after-only studies, though the former are generally more useful because they provide a basis of comparison. Research methodologies can begin with judgmental assessments (informal personal observations) and measurement of communication outputs (message production, distribution, and cost). But more useful are evaluations based on the campaign objectives: awareness measures such as message exposure, readability, and recall; acceptance measures such as audience feedback and benchmark studies; and action measures such as audience participation and direct observation of impact, such as voting or attendance figures.

Application: How Strategic Campaigns Work

In the past, public relations existed rather autonomously from other functions in most organizations, whether corporate or nonprofit. Public relations purists considered "marketing" a four-letter word; some academics and some practitioners railed against comingling the two disciplines. As a part of marketing, advertising enjoyed large budgets, which necessitated a high level of accountability. Fewer eyes watched the smaller numbers in public relations. But through strategic communication, public relations has become part of a coordinated plan of action rooted in the organization's mission and focused on its bottom line. Such planning comprehensively uses all the communication tools available, from publicity to advertising and beyond, to present the strategic message.

Tom Harris (1993) called integrated communication an outside-in process that begins with an understanding of the consumer publics, with public relations as particularly effective in building brand equity. Helen Ostrowski (1999) of Porter Novelli found marketing-oriented public relations at the root of public relations. After all, it was the founding father Edward Bernays who engineered a debutante march in New York City's Easter Parade aimed at making smoking acceptable for women so his client, Lucky Strike, could sell cigarettes to a new market.

Examples of strategic campaigns can be seen all around. It is a common feature in the offerings of agencies providing the standard range of public relations services. Other places where integrated strategic campaigns can

commonly be found are in marketing communication, public health and social marketing campaigns, diplomacy and international relations, constituent relations, and ecumenical or interreligious affairs. Public relations itself is sometimes known by alternative names, often linked to auxiliary areas such as media relations or employee communication; businesses call the function corporate communications.

A process of research-based strategic planning is necessary for effective management of all the various subcategories of public relations, including community relations, special events planning and promotion, political campaigns, nonprofit events, and fund-raising and development (Austin & Pinkleton, 2001). Similarly, we can add other elements of strategic public relations that rely on a base of research and strategic planning: public affairs, issues management, crisis communication, public information, consumer and customer relations, lobbying, investor relations, and so on. Some new specialties include litigation public relations, risk communication, and reputation management.

New names are emerging to reflect the emerging multidisciplinary approach, which sometimes is called *strategic communication* or *integrated communication*. Regardless of the label, we look to public relations for leadership and insight in the practice of strategic communication, because most of the related fields and specialties have adopted the set of skills and approaches that public relations has developed over the past 75 years or so (Botan, 1997; Botan & Soto, 1998). Meanwhile, public relations is beginning to more consciously borrow techniques and practices associated with other disciplines, particularly marketing and one of its primary communication tools, advertising.

Strategic planning for communication, based on this integrated model, occurs globally. Philip Kitchen and Don Schultz (1999) reported that the concept is gaining acceptance not only in the United States but also in the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, and India. The author has had personal contact with public relations professors in Russia and Japan, communication doctoral students in Turkey and Hong Kong, and the Azerbaijan Public Relations Association expressing interest in this strategic planning model. Leading public relations agencies in Japan, the Philippines, South Africa, Brazil, and Egypt offer integrated communication services. Companies such as Saturn, Xerox, Motorola, Hewlett-Packard, and Federal Express have been extolled as examples of companies that have effectively integrated their strategic communication.

Case Studies: Real-World Examples of Strategic Campaigns

Some of the most successful corporations integrate into their public relations campaigns a blend of publicity and advertising to present a clear and consistent message to

their publics. For example, when McDonald's introduced its McLean sandwich, it used publicity and other public relations tactics to create awareness through the media and then followed them up with advertising messages. It was publicity that enabled Goodyear to sell 150,000 new Aquatred tires before the first advertisements ran, and it was publicity that led Pfizer to sell \$250 million of Viagra and gain a 90% market share before any consumer advertising began. Crayola Crayons generated \$23 million in sales based on a \$35,000 publicity campaign built around a Crayola Hall of Fame.

Nonprofit organizations also have successfully used integrated communication approaches. One study suggested that nonprofit organizations are particularly open to the coordinated use of public relations and marketing communication techniques (Nemec, 1999). For example, the American Cancer Society used an integrated approach for its campaign for sun block. Similar efforts have been adopted by social campaigns dealing with bicycle safety, teen smoking, animal rights, birth control, utility deregulation, and AIDS research.

Integrated campaigns often begin with publicity, followed by advertising. Al Ries and Laura Ries (2002) noted this in *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR*: "The purpose of advertising is not to build a brand, but to defend a brand once the brand has been built by other means, primarily public relations or third-party endorsements" (p. xiv). "Advertising cannot start a fire. It can only fan a fire after it has been started" (p. xx). They provided an overview of organizations that have achieved success with this format: Wal-Mart became the world's largest retailer with little advertising; Starbucks spent less than \$10 million in advertising during its first 10 years; Harry Potter books soared to previously unheard of sales without any appreciable advertising. *The Art of War* surged onto the best-seller list when Tony Soprano told his psychiatrist in *The Sopranos* TV series that he liked the book.

Comparisons: Public Relations in Different Cultures

Public relations campaigns are created and implemented throughout the world, often with similar approaches. However, effective campaigns also take into account the cultural environment of both the organization and the publics. Thus, public relations planners must be aware of and sensitive to cultural issues, not only how cultures differ but also how those differences affect public relations strategic planning. It is important to keep in mind that public relations practice has largely been rooted in Western culture, practiced by Western-oriented organizations, and intended for Western audiences in Western environments. Yet public relations can be applied to non-Western situations but often with cultural accommodation.

Public relations planning also takes into account cultural approaches based on the oral tradition of non-Western cultures. Metaphor, analogies, and storytelling, for example, are part of an oral tradition more appreciated in Arab, Asian, and Native American cultures than in Western/American society. This is true also of Hispanic culture even in the United States, true also for various geographic/demographic differences in the United States. Thus, public relations directed toward such audiences will employ more strategic use of story, linguistic symbols, and allusion to events and persons relevant to those publics. A campaign aimed at Native American communities, for example, might reflect the cultural appreciation for family, nature, and heritage. Likewise a campaign developed for use in Hispanic communities will take into account the rich diversity within Hispanic America.

Consider an example within an Arab cultural setting. Ali Kanso, Abdul Karim Sinno, and William Adams (2001) noted that public relations campaigns in Arab culture need to take into account the indirect, often symbolic aspect of Arab communication style, the high-context nature of Arab communication that imbeds meaning not only in common language codes but also in interpersonal relationships. The nature of language also is important; English is a practical code useful in transferring information, while Arabic is a more artistic code that fosters the creation of a social experience. They also noted important social differences. For example, Arabs share a common nationality amid many different countries, whereas Americans have a common country but many different nationalities. Americans tend to treat religion as a more private matter than Arabs. America is more youth oriented, whereas Arab cultures give more value to age and wisdom.

A second example is an Asian public relations situation involving a crisis. Amon Haruta and Kirk Hallahan (2004) studied similar Japanese and American airline air crashes that occurred only 10 days apart, each resulting in hundreds of deaths. Japan Air Lines handled its crisis in typical Asian fashion, within a culture that values formal rules, the importance of reputation, the speedy delivery of bad news to the media, the desirability of social harmony, the avoidance (even shamefulness) of litigation, and the importance of public apology. Japanese culture also presumes male organizational leaders who accept responsibility, are visible in crisis situations, and take decisive action. Each of these is vastly different from the typical American response to crisis. Delta Airlines, on the other hand, operated within an American framework, in which CEOs are reluctant to be part of bad news, where litigation is presumed and thus organizations try to remain tight-lipped, where responsibility is avoided and apologies are anathema, and where action is tentative at best.

The third example stems from the 2007 Cherokee citizenship vote that ended in a decision to recognize Cherokee blood as a key element in eligibility for status as a tribal citizen. The decision thus removed citizenship for

the Freedmen, descendants of pre-Civil War slaves whom the federal government had forced into Cherokee citizenship a century ago. Content analysis of media coverage (Smith, 2007) showed that journalists framed the story in different ways—most as a civil rights issue oppressing black Indians, some as a self-determination issue for a sovereign Indian nation, a few as the inevitable result of former federal policy that 100 years ago arbitrarily mixed two distinct and disenfranchised groups. Both the Cherokee and the Freedmen mounted public relations campaigns to give their perspectives on what became the focus of international news coverage. Though pointedly different, each campaign included messages that sought to present historical information in a context to explain contemporary events.

Future Directions

The emerging relationship between public relations and marketing on which integrated communication is founded can be uneasy at times. At the management table, the marketing side has accepted the partnership with public relations, though perhaps still in a subsidiary role. Robert Gray (1998) reported a British survey that public relations is no longer peripheral but rather “one of the most important elements of the marketing mix” (p. 24). The survey by Countrywide Porter Novelli, one of the largest public relations firms in the United Kingdom, reported that 92% of marketing directors believe that public relations is integral to business objectives, 58% said that it is of equal importance with advertising, and 66% expected public relations spending to increase. Philip Kitchen and his associates called this integrated strategic model the major communications development of the last decade of the 20th century (Kitchen, Brignell, Li, & Spickett Jones, 2004).

On the other hand, when the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication suggested integrating public relations and advertising into a shared curriculum reflecting practices in both fields, the Educational Affairs Committee of the Public Relations Society of America quickly opposed such a blending. Nevertheless, the biggest growth area in public relations education is in schools that blend public relations and advertising/marketing communication. A study by two practitioners-turned-academics—Debra Miller, a former PRSA president, and Patricia Rose, the former president of the Miami Advertising Federation—reported that practitioners embrace an integration that leaves the educational community with mixed feelings. They said that practitioners accept integrated communication as both a necessity and a reflection of real-world practice (Miller & Rose, 1994).

More ominously, some unwanted links between public relations and marketing are emerging that give pause. At root is the historic legal reality that the government can place some limits on advertising messages, restrictions that some

are now eyeing as potentially being applied to news- and publicity-oriented communication by organizations. Writing in the *Journal of Advertising*, Kathy Fitzpatrick (2005) noted several legal challenges to integrated communication, in which, because of the blending of commercial speech and political expression, more potential has been created for courts to regulate corporate messages. This is happening both in the states and at the federal level. While the U.S. Supreme Court has not yet specifically addressed the question of whether and/or how to apply advertising limits to organizational public relations, some lower-court rulings could serve as precedents.

A pertinent example is a significant case, *Kasky v. Nike, Inc.* (2002). The consumer activist Marc Kasky sued Nike under false-advertising provisions over its public defense against charges of using child sweatshop labor. A trial court ruled in favor of Nike, which had presented a First Amendment defense, and an appeals court affirmed that decision. But the California Supreme Court overturned those decisions and upheld Kasky's claim that Nike had engaged in "commercial speech" (a legal euphemism for advertising), which enjoys fewer First Amendment protections than other forms of speech (including public relations messaging). This ruling came despite the fact that the company had done no advertising but instead had used traditional public relations practices—news releases, Web site, speeches, and letters to the editor—to defend against the child-labor charges. In essence, the court said that Nike had mixed commercial and political speech, and thus could be held to the narrower regulatory standards allowed for commercial speech. An out-of-court settlement in 2003 ended the 5-year legal battle but did not settle the legal question of where public relations ends and marketing begins.

Fitzpatrick (2005) concluded that "perhaps the most important finding is that public relations expression is not fully protected under the First Amendment as both conventional wisdom and some scholarly studies have suggested" (p. 99). Conversely, she also concluded that

not all public relations communication will be automatically categorized as commercial if a company integrates its communication functions. The Supreme Court has made it clear that corporations enjoy the right to engage in fully protected speech in the political arena. (p. 99)

The future of integrated strategic communication, then, is likely to include greater care on the part of organizations in framing messages that clearly separate the commercial from the noncommercial elements, as well as more potential lawsuits dealing with the balance.

Conclusion

Both the design and management of public relations campaigns are strategic functions that underlie the potential

success of the tactical and task-focused projects associated with them. Well-planned and well-managed campaigns provide the ground bed and structural framework for the public relations activities of every type of organization. Effective campaigns are rooted in knowledge gained through research on the issue, organization, and publics. They are designed to meet particular goals and objectives and to implement carefully crafted action steps and messages that further the organization's mission. They involve a range of tactics that allow the organization to interact with its publics and present its messages. And finally, effective public relations campaigns are evaluated against the intended impact that was sought by the organization for each public.

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CRISIS COMMUNICATION

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A crisis, by definition, is not a mild occurrence; however, the degree of damage caused by a crisis can vary greatly from adversely affecting normal business operations to putting companies out of business or toppling governments. A crisis can cause temporary public humiliation; it can force the resignations of heads of organizations. A crisis can place an individual popular to mass audiences on the road to obscurity.

All companies, organizations, and individuals who depend on image and/or reputation to be successful should always accept the fact that they are always in a stage of crisis.

A crisis has five stages: (1) detection, (2) prevention/preparation, (3) containment, (4) recovery, and (5) learning. These stages can overlap and an organization (from this point on, “organization” refers also to companies, other businesses, and public individuals) can be in more than one stage at a time.

The *detection stage* should be a process of constantly monitoring one’s operation for signs of impending crisis. *Prevention* is taking steps to avoid a crisis, putting out little fires before they become infernos. Closely connected to *prevention* is *preparation* or planning how one would fight the crisis should it occur. The first two stages can only be advantageous to an organization when there is no crisis. It is much too late to plan a course of action when one is forced to communicate to publics immediately, rapidly, and frequently.

Containment is the stage after the crisis has occurred, and the goal is to end it as soon as possible; get out of the newspapers; and not let one’s bad news be a continuing topic of popular conversation.

Recovery is the desire and effort to return to normal operations. *Learning* is the process of being careful not

to make mistakes, oversights, decisions, and omissions that caused the crisis.

If an organization has never suffered a crisis, it is always in the detection stage as well as the prevention/preparation stage. If the organization has recovered from a crisis, it is, or should be, in the learning stage, the detection stage, and the prevention/preparation stages. Consequently, principles to follow, policies to adopt, tactics to make can sometimes, but not always, be categorized into the five stages.

Stage 1: Detection

Develop a policy of watching and heeding prodromes or warning signs. During almost every news-making crisis or disaster, after the initial shocking story, the news media writes about warning signs that were not heeded. After Hurricane Katrina, in 2005, led to devastating floods in New Orleans and killed and displaced thousands of people, the world learned that there were definite warning signs. Joel K. Bourne Jr. had written in October 2004 in *National Geographic Magazine* a narrative describing mass destruction in New Orleans very similar to the way it actually occurred. The *New Orleans Times-Picayune* had written several articles about geologists’ prediction that considering that acres of coastal wetlands had been lost and that the Gulf of Mexico was close to the city, stronger hits from earthquakes were possible, even likely.

There was severe flooding in New Orleans in the years prior to Katrina, and every New Orleanian knew that the levees could fail, that the city was below sea level, that the big one was overdue. That was why Mayor Ray Nagin, in his warning to evacuate, said, “This is the real deal.”

Much has been written and said about the failure of the federal, state, and local governments to respond to the tragedy, but the critical time for these governments to take action was before the hurricane hit, when the levees and flood walls could be rebuilt to withstand strong hurricanes. The warning signs were the previous floods, the weak-looking levees, and the news articles.

Also, in Blacksburg, Virginia, in 2007, when a troubled student at Virginia Tech shot and killed 32 students, faculty members, and himself, news articles appeared about the warning signs that were not heeded. Professor Nikki Giovanni of the English Department had reported the student to her chairperson because of his strange writing and behavior in class. Students, even his roommates, had found him incommunicative and disturbed. One professor called the young man the most disturbed student she had seen in two decades of teaching. All these were warning signs only seen in retrospect. Afterward, the university adopted some security plans, which it is hoped will help. This is much like closing the barn door after the cows escaped.

In recent years, blogging and blog sites became another form of communication to watch, making every blogger what some call a “citizen journalist.” One never knows the credibility or the expertise of the blogger but what information is placed on sites can be damaging. Organizations should monitor blogs to see what is being said about them and respond when necessary. Also, sometimes attack sites are set up by enemies, competitors, irate employees, consumers, and people who merely take pleasure in knowing that they can be noticed. In mid-2007, Apple’s iPhone made its debut in stores with a big publicity blitz that had consumers waiting in line to buy the product. Tim Klein, Vice President of PR at AT&T, said that the company would communicate with bloggers and online influencers, keeping tabs on what they were saying. “We have a blogger and industry analyst/influencer program that we’re . . . implementing. But we’re obviously also reacting to the activity we’re seeing in the news reported out of these sites and individuals,” Klein said.

Watch crises of similar organizations. They are also warning signs. Other universities scrambled after the Virginia Tech shooting to institute security safeguards to avoid a similar incident on their campuses. This is a particular problem at public universities, where the campus is open to the public because the institution belongs to the taxpayers. After Katrina, other cities in the hurricane area took measures to expedite evacuations. West Coast cities renewed their fear of earthquakes and used the New Orleans crisis as a warning to them to be prepared for “the big one.”

When Pepsi Cola was hit by a crisis caused by consumers placing hypodermic needles in cans of soft drinks so that they could sue the company, the hoaxsters were said to have feared contracting HIV from the needles. The virus is not spread through soft drinks, but for sometime, the public was fearful of drinking Pepsi, and this caused a

decline in sales. Pepsi was able to turn the tide and showed suspicious people that it was next to impossible to place needles in their cans. This was a warning to other soft-drink manufacturers and a time to examine their own operation and determine what they would do if such a ridiculous crisis hit them.

Of course, and unfortunately, such responses to warning signs are short-lived and usually die in the fickle minds of decision makers before real solutions are developed.

Watch for the revealing of corporate secrets that may damage the organization’s reputation. Benjamin Franklin said, “Three may keep a secret if two of them are dead.” If an organization learns or knows that it has committed an error that if revealed to the public could cause furor, a decision should be made as to whether it should reveal the error and take the outcome or hide the error and take a chance of the error getting out later . . . and often in a bigger way. The cover-up can shatter reputations more than the original mistake.

For example, during the Watergate crisis, which led to the resignation of President Richard Nixon in 1974, the original error or crime was the break-in of the Democratic headquarters in the Watergate, a hotel/apartment/office complex in Washington, D.C. It was the cover-up that led to the political scandal, lies in congressional hearings, and the downfall of Nixon and his allies. As Franklin predicted, the secret was not really a secret when pressure was applied.

Similar results could have occurred in the case of Johnson & Johnson and the Tylenol poisoning case in 1982. Cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules had killed five people in the Chicago area. Company officials told the news media that there was no cyanide in the plant so the poison couldn’t have come from the production process. Later, the company learned that there was indeed some cyanide in the plant but there was no way it could get into the capsules. If Johnson & Johnson had kept that information secret, reporters may have found out, and the company would have appeared responsible because of the guarded secret. Instead, the company told the news media about the cyanide and how it was used and that none was missing. The crisis was later eased when the bottles of tainted capsules were found to have originated from various Johnson & Johnson plants, making it extremely unlikely that an internal accident or crime had taken place.

The detection stage of a crisis is the time to stop a problem before it develops into a full-blown crisis. This is also issues management. To detect prodromes, organizations form employee committees that function like lighthouse keepers watching for vessels at sea, watchdogs, and whistle-blowers who report warnings in their own ways. Organizations, then, implement plans to avoid the crisis or at least prepare plans to address their publics and the news media.

Stage 2: Prevention/Preparation

Several theorists have identified the characteristics and practices of crisis communications. If an organization adopts these characteristics and practices *before a crisis*, the theories suggest that the organization will either avoid a crisis or suffer less financial, emotional, and perceptual damages than the organization that does not adopt the characteristics and practices. Therefore, these practices are categorized in Stage 2.

Most of the following characteristics and practices are derived from the excellence theory identified by James Grunig and others.

Design public relations programs for all key publics. In 1992, Grunig and Fred Repper wrote,

An organization has a relationship with stakeholders when the behavior of the organization or of a stakeholder has consequences on the other . . . Ongoing communications with these stakeholders helps to build a stable, long-term relationship that manages conflict that may occur in the relationship. (p. 124)

All of an organization's public relations programs and campaigns are, or should be, designed to build positive relationships with key stakeholders, both internal and external, and prevent crises. It is a basic reason for having public relations in the first place.

The airlines have frequent-flyer programs designed to make consumers loyal to a specific airline. There is a communication program aimed at these flying consumers. This is consumer relations, a type of public relations. After consumers have enjoyed the benefits of the frequent-flyer program—upgrades, free tickets, cheap tickets, shorter lines in airports, and so on, they want their airline of choice to be crisis free. If the airline goes into bankruptcy, the flyers want it to recover. They defend the controversial actions of the airline. They are the first to complain, however, if there is a problem such as late flights, untidy planes, holding passengers on the tarmac for too long. This, too, is a positive move because these frequent flyers are part of the detection stage of a crisis. If they are upset, there are numerous other flyers who are also upset and may decide not to fly that particular airline again. So the loyal flyers are a support group. Their loyalty is for a selfish reason, but it still benefits the airline. Other businesses, such as restaurants and credit card companies, have frequency programs aimed at consumers, all aimed ultimately at increasing sales and buying loyalty.

In addition to consumers, organizations should design PR programs aimed at employees (employee relations), volunteers (internal relations), community groups and leaders (community relations), and other publics, which may be crucial to survival and success.

Develop and maintain strong relationships with the news media. The researcher Francis Marra, also building on the

excellence theory, spoke specifically about the news media being one of the key publics with which organizations should have positive relationships. Editors and reporters should know that PR representatives and spokespersons are reliable, that the news releases emanating from the organization have accurate timely information, that they always get back to the media when additional information is needed, and that they respect the news media's deadlines.

Many people realize that news personnel are often supporters of organizations in a crisis; some must be pushed into being adversaries. One of the earliest "textbook" cases of crisis communications was the Johnson & Johnson Tylenol poisoning case. A *Chicago Sun-Times* editorial employee telephoned asking questions about how the company was organized. He did not know how the information would be used, but he told others at the newspaper that Johnson & Johnson had questions. A reporter called the company to alert them that there had been reported deaths from the intake of Tylenol Extra Strength and provided them with the information gathered at the time.

This gave the executives time to make a plan before the newspaper was published later in the day.

The reporter was not obligated to give the company that information. The newspaper could have held the news and let Johnson & Johnson find out when everyone else found out. However, Johnson & Johnson had a positive relationship with the news media. It had a two-way communications ideology with the news media and with its key publics identified and segmented by its company credo.

Identifying and segmented publics are two other characteristics of organizational effectiveness in the time of crisis. The company credo indicated that its first obligation was to consumers, meaning medical personnel, parents, patients, and others who used its products, people serviced by the news media. Its second obligation was to its employees; next was the community—meaning the neighbors of the plants as well as the world community. In other words, people who are not necessarily customers were concerned and are needed to respect and support the company's reputation. Last, the company was obligated to stockholders.

When the *Sun-Times* story was published, it merely gave the facts; there were no claims or charges made of Johnson & Johnson. The *Chicago Tribune* also had the story on page 1 but the name Johnson & Johnson was not mentioned on the entire page. In fact, some stories mentioned McNeil Consumer Products Company, a lesser-known subsidiary of the company.

A similar story of positive links to the news media occurred in 1998, when, in Seattle, a city bus driver was shot by a disturbed passenger, forcing the driver to lose control of the bus, which plunged over a bridge. Three people died, 32 were injured. The Seattle news media positioned Metro Transit as a victim of the crime, and the national media followed suit. The news media could have

made the stories concentrate on the bus system's failure to protect the passengers. Dan Williams, the PR spokesman from Metro Transit, said that the preestablished relationships with the news media and the quick responses to media requests paid off.

Williams said, "Most of the reporters sympathized with what Metro was going through. . . . [It] was important to have credibility with the media as I tried to make the case with reporters and editors for the effectiveness of our security program." He said that only one reporter, one he did not know, was suspicious and antagonistic.

It must be mentioned that if Metro Transit had had numerous incidents of unsafe buses and if Johnson & Johnson had had incidents of possible internal tampering, the news media would have been obligated to cover the stories in a different way.

The head of communications should be important to top management. Some crisis communications experts say this means that the head of communications should report to the CEO or to another title for the head of the organization. Others maintain that it is only important that top management continually confer with the communications department—usually, but not always, the head of communications—on policy matters and decision making.

The experts who advise that the head of communications report directly to the head of management say that it is the placement of the communications department in the company that is crucial, not only the relationship between the CEO and the communications head. If communications is not highly valued, the communications head may leave the company and the new communications head may not have a "dotted-line" relationship with the CEO, leaving the organization open to a failure to communicate externally or internally.

Frequently, crises arise, and the organization's spokesperson has no idea what is going on. He or she cannot respond easily to the news media and must say, "I don't know; I'll get back to you." While the spokesperson is searching for the answers, the news media realizes that there's a communications gap, that the responses might not be forthcoming, and therefore, they look for the story elsewhere. When the organization loses control, issues can become a news-making embarrassment.

Ron Ziegler was Press Secretary to President Richard Nixon. After Nixon resigned following the Watergate crisis, Ziegler, though claiming to be Nixon's friend, said that unlike other White House staff members, he was never indicted and was not part of the cover-up. Yet he had to answer reporters' questions for which he had no answers during the investigation.

In 1991, *The Washington Post* was researching for an investigative article about United Way of America CEO William Aramony, and the PR staff members were like sitting ducks waiting to be slaughtered. They heard through various connections that the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Charles Shepard was gathering information, but they

had no idea what was going to be in the story. They felt from what they had been told by persons who were being interviewed that there were problems and that a scandal might be brewing.

In early 1992, Shepard asked the PR department for some information and an interview with Aramony. The PR staff member said that he got the interview set up and that that process "was much more contact with him than I normally had." The story was primarily positive; Aramony was a man with connections that resulted in a lot of funds being raised for the nonprofit organization. However, the page 1 story had a few paragraphs about Aramony's excessive spending, perks, and large corporate-type salary. It was those few sentences that caused national concern among United Way agencies and the American citizens who donate hard-earned money to charities. This was a severe crisis for United Way and caused the eventual resignation of Aramony.

Develop relationships with communications departments at other organizations that may share the same crisis. If fire is a potential problem, know how to contact the PR people at the local fire department. If a crime is a worst-case scenario, know how to contact the PR people at the police department. This policy paid off for Metro Transit when the city bus went over the bridge in 1998. The PR reps from the transit company, the fire department, and the police department had met prior to the crisis and exchanged phone numbers—office, cell, and home. They agreed that in the event of a crisis, they would only answer questions from the news media that were specific to their own agency's responsibilities. If the question was about the crime that caused the driver to go over the bridge, they would refer the reporter to the police representative. If the question was about rescue, they would refer the reporter to the fire department spokesperson.

This way, there was little chance that the story would have inaccuracies. At the site of the incident, the three met and briefly shared information about the incident, the crime, the number of injured passengers, and so forth. They agreed to inform each other as information changed.

Have a crisis communications/crisis management plan. This is a major step in being prepared for a crisis. The key to the crisis plan is crisis inventory. The organization must decide what the worst-case scenario would be. Too often, organizations are so determined to "think positive" as if thinking positive will prevent something negative from happening. They even say, "It never happened up to now." That's all the more reason why a crisis is likely to occur.

Crisis inventory is a way of determining what crises are most likely and what crisis would be most damaging. A team of key people, not all in management, discuss outcomes and likelihood based on issues and crises befalling similar organizations. Blue-collar workers often see potential crises of which executives are not aware. Then, a crisis communications plan is developed to address the crisis

deemed the most likely and the most damaging. This crisis communications plan can be part of a crisis management plan that would include broader issues such as evacuation and staff changes. More often than not, the crisis communications plan stands alone. It should be handy. Everyone who needs it should have it in advance and should be familiar with it, knowing what each person will do in the event of a crisis.

Some of the crucial components of the crisis communications plan are a director of the crisis communications team and the duties of each member; how key stakeholders will be notified; how the news media will be alerted, who will be the spokesperson(s), talking or speaking points to be emphasized in interviews and news conferences; background data about the organization, and other documents. It should not be so big or unwieldy that crisis team members can't find the information and instructions they need.

During a crisis, many people find that information normally on the tips of their tongues is forgotten. Phone numbers they call everyday are forgotten. Equipment they take for granted is lost during natural disasters when electricity is out. During Hurricane Katrina, Mayor Nagin and his staff not only had no electricity and landline phones, but cell phone towers were also not operative. During an earthquake in Los Angeles, a PR professional had to seek a manual typewriter when there was no power. A crisis plan would indicate alternative supplies and serve as a kind of substitute brain.

One PR practitioner said, "A crisis plan is a waste of paper, a bad reason for cutting down a tree." He and other critics of the plan say that a crisis never happens the way you plan it. This is true, but numerous professionals who had plans and used them through crises say that having a plan for any crisis helps you cope with other crises.

The Pepsi Cola Company never dreamed that hypodermic syringes would be placed in its soft-drink cans, but its worst-case scenarios did include tampering, and the existing crisis communications plan worked well. Often, only the speaking points need to be changed. The stakeholders to be notified remain the same. The crisis team remains the same. Background of the organization is gathered and in one place.

Stages 3 and 4: Containment and Recovery

The tactics of ending the crisis and recovering from the crisis are often similar. In fact, planning recovery is often an effective way of containment. The 9/11 terrorist attacks were not blamed on the airlines, but it was a crisis for the already financially beleaguered airlines because passengers were understandably reluctant to fly. Immediate and increased security, although a nightmare in itself, helped convince potential passengers that airports were making steps to prevent a similar attack. The attack will never be forgotten, but the increased security was a step toward containment and recovery. The airlines/airport communication

personnel notified the public through the news media of the new security standards.

An organizational spokesperson should express sincere concern if there are injuries or loss from a crisis no matter who is responsible. However, the spokesperson should not accept blame if the organization is blameless. The Pepsi Cola Company and Johnson & Johnson both recalled the products in question during their crises even though they did not believe that their employees were responsible. It was important to put the public at ease while the investigation continued.

No one had been hurt by the syringes in the Pepsi can, so there was no reason for an apology, but concern was expressed from the beginning. Carl Behnke, the head of the Seattle Pepsi plant, the site of the first syringe in the can, worked with a PR agency and issued an advisory urging consumers to simply pour the contents of soft-drink cans into a second container before drinking. The crisis cost Pepsi a \$30 million loss in sales, but the communication tactics soon caused sales to rebound.

There had been deaths from the poisoned Tylenol, and the recall was a step of concern that cost the company \$100 million in sales, although Johnson & Johnson's management was certain the poisoning did not take place in its plants. Johnson & Johnson's Corporate Vice President Lawrence Foster also expressed concern and was open and honest with the news media.

Neither Pepsi nor Johnson & Johnson ever accepted blame. The heads of the companies were spokesmen to the news media, insisting that they would be vindicated. Both were.

In *apologia theory*, an organization may make a full apology accepting blame. It may totally deny charges. Or it may try *redefinition*, expressing that it did not intend to commit the misdeed; publics may forgive organizations that are contrite. There is also *dissociation*, in which case the organization informs publics that it may appear that it is guilty but actually it is not. *Dissociation* was the choice Pepsi and Johnson & Johnson made; the public may not have accepted any stronger denial until after investigations were completed.

If the organization has erred, admit guilt and be sincerely sorry. Whether at fault or not, convince publics of a plan to try to prevent a recurrence of the crisis. Make certain the plan is carried out; be true to your word. Again quoting Benjamin Franklin, "How few there are who have courage enough to own their own faults, or resolution enough to mend them" and also "Well done is better than well said." Americans tend to be forgiving as long as the guilty party is truly repentant.

If the CEO of Exxon had come to the site of the Valdez oil spill and cried his eyes out on seeing the birds covered in oil, the newspapers would have written about that, and photographers would have gotten the photo of the man holding a bird and getting oil all over his hands and expensive suit.

And the image of Exxon would have been totally different. As it was, it wasn't the most oil that was ever spilled by a ship, but the CEO's refusal to come to the site told the world that Exxon didn't care.

At the University of Washington in Seattle in 2007, a female employee was shot and killed by a former boyfriend, who ambushed her in her office. As expected, after a couple of days, news coverage turned to security failures at the university. Security at the university became even more urgent because a few days after the news coverage began to die down, a gunman shot and killed students and faculty members at Virginia Tech.

The two shootings were different in that the Virginia shooting was random and the Washington shooting was relationship oriented. Norman Arkans, Vice President of University Relations at Washington, commented, "The Virginia Tech incident magnified our incident. They were different in cause and effect but both occurred on college campuses and were thereby linked in the media."

Immediately after the shooting, senior-level administrative meetings were held to deal with understanding what had happened and to communicate with the family of the deceased, the students, and staff in the College of Architecture (where the shooting occurred), and the broader campus. "It became apparent right away," said Arkans, "that we needed to understand more about relationship violence and how to provide resources." After the university president expressed concern both publicly and directly to the family of the deceased and her colleagues in the college, the president appointed a broadly representative committee to evaluate resources and support mechanisms for dealing with relationship and workplace violence and to implement a more streamlined and focused program for people seeking advice, guidance, and help of any sort.

Some of the improvements were the following: (1) a 24-hour hotline for people in need of protection, (2) a poster distributed widely with the hotline phone number, (3) a reinstated campus Nightwalk program, (4) a new workplace violence Web site, and (5) a plan for annual training of faculty and staff.

Other than the presence of the organizational head in a news-making crisis, the PR specialist should be the primary spokesperson. Crisis communications experts (particularly the theorist Francis Marra) agree that public relations should have autonomy to speak during a crisis. A crisis is often won or lost in the first few hours of communications with the news media, and PR professionals should know how to present themselves to the organizations' advantage. Lawyers tend to be more concerned with their battle in the courts and fears of litigation than with reputation and image. They choose words to limit liability. If the battle in the court of public opinion is lost early in the crisis, the organization's image is negative and the battle in the court will be even more difficult.

If reputation is protected or gained, the lawyer's job may be easier. However, the legal staff and the PR staff

should be in communication before statements are made. During the prevention/preparation stages, the two staffs should discuss actions to be taken during worst-case scenarios so that when a crisis hits, the discussion is not new.

Several corporate crises were adversely affected because PR persons did not have autonomy, including the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the Firestone 500 tire crisis.

Select an appropriate expert to be a spokesperson as well as a person ranking high in management. If there are deaths, significant injuries, and great financial loss, the CEO or some high-ranking officials should be the spokesperson for the company. As already mentioned, this was one of the problems in the Exxon Valdez oil spill crisis. A front-page crisis is not a time for the PR person who is normally spokesperson to represent the organization; the publics expect to see and hear from the head of the organization, a person who can make promises on behalf of the organization and represent its concern. The PR professional can only "represent" the management of the organization and speak words accepted by the public as perhaps coming from top management but perhaps not.

The spokesperson in a front-page crisis should not be an external PR consultant. David Marriott, a PR consultant who specializes in crisis communications at Gogerty Stark Marriott, Inc., advises his clients to never put "the hired guns out front." He said,

I believe companies should speak for themselves—not hired consultants or their lawyers—except in certain cases. The media prefers someone from the company, plus, I believe that a company spokesperson carries greater credibility with the public. Outside PR experts can be a valuable resource to a company going through a crisis and should be used for that purpose.

Often, an organization in crisis will improve its situation by having, in addition to the company representative, an expert in a related field who can persuade publics. This person should not only be highly credible in the subject field but also be able to speak in simple English and not jargon. Often after earthquakes, seismologists are used in news conferences to explain to the public the technical aspects of tremors. After fires, fire investigators explain the causes of fires. Sometimes, organizations err when these experts, though highly qualified in their fields, either speak with foreign accents or are unable to depart from technical language and therefore become nearly useless.

Tropical Fantasy, a New York soft-drink manufacturer, selected the right spokesperson when it was hit by a crisis caused by the outrageous and possible malicious rumor that its beverage caused sterility in African American men. This was 1991, when the city's mayor was David Dinkins, an African American. At a news conference, the mayor drank a Tropical Fantasy drink to prove to witnesses that the drink was safe. In this case, the mayor's credibility was that he was a black man and the most notable black man in the city.

In the case of a restaurant called Snapps in Florida, a rumor circulated among high schoolers that a manager with the AIDS virus had intentionally bled into the hamburger meat. In this case, no one died and no one was injured. The restaurant chain headquarters was located in another state, so an expert was used as a spokesperson. First, all the managers in the restaurant volunteered to be tested for the HIV virus; none were positive. Also, the director of the local health department told news reporters and the public that all the managers tested negative and also that AIDS could not be transmitted through food and that it was safe to eat at Snapps. The news conference was held at the office of the health department, where TV news cameras would focus on its building or its name as an establishing shot.

Don't blame others. Shifting the blame is a strategy tried but rarely successful in the recovery stages of a crisis. First of all, it doesn't end the news coverage; it compounds it. And sometimes the shifting backfires when other organizations or individuals refuse to accept blame. Shifting the blame occurs easily when reporters and others ask the baited question "If you're not responsible, who is?" Don't take the bait.

Exxon's CEO Lawrence Rawl blamed the officials of the State of Alaska and the U.S. Coast Guard for its crisis after the oil was spilled and continued to spread while arguments ensued over who was to clean up and how. Rawl said that Exxon's hands were tied because it couldn't get authorization to clean up the oil or use dispersants. Actually, it was the responsibility of the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, a consortium of several oil companies working on Alaskan waters. Exxon was only part of the consortium. However, the public never accepted any placing of blame elsewhere. Newspapers and television news stations ran photos and footage of the ship that leaked the oil, and it had the name "Exxon" on it. So, to most people, Exxon was responsible. The other oil companies in the consortium were not anxious to share the great public shame Exxon faced.

Be prepared to lose access to normal tools and facilities. During natural disasters, electricity and other utilities are often, very often, not available. During Hurricane Katrina, not only electricity but also landline telephones and cellular phone towers were down. Drinking water was not available. During a California earthquake, PR staff members of one university found their building condemned. They had no phone numbers, media lists, or access to computers. They located an ancient manual typewriter and used a car for an office during the first day of the disaster.

The 9/11 terrorist attack in New York had numerous companies scrambling to locate surviving employees. All employees should know how to report in when the work site is gone or damaged. Crucial information about employees as well as important day-to-day operations should be available offsite at a place known to employees.

Tell your own bad news, first if possible. Telling one's own story has always had its advantages. There is less fear of

misunderstanding and misquoting if the complete story originates from the company in crisis. Some organizations call news conferences and reveal the details of a crisis. Some give the story to one newspaper known to be accurate and let other media get the basics from that newspaper. In recent years, it has become crucial for an organization in crisis to put its own information on a Web site for all to see—reporters and concerned publics.

An Alaska Airlines plane crashed off the coast of California in 2000, and within an hour, its communications team had placed the story on a Web site used by employees but easily accessible by the media. News media, as well as consumers and employees, accessed all the information Alaska had up to that point, before a news conference could be called. The information was updated as new information was acquired. This was one of the first major companies in crisis to use its Web site to get the word out immediately. Crisis Consultant David Marriott said, "It became a huge asset for us in getting out to a variety of audiences. Alaska now has a crisis Web site which can be activated quite quickly."

Stage 5: Learning

The learning stage begins after the crisis is not the subject of news coverage, and phone calls, e-mails, and other communications from publics have subsided. During the learning stage of a crisis, the organization is learning not only about how it has been affected by the crisis but also how its image and reputation have been affected.

Develop strategies to repair and restore reputation and image. This requires research to determine where the organization stands with various publics, including, but not exclusively, employees, consumers, community members, and government leaders. Focus groups, surveys, interviews, monitoring blogs and Web sites, and other fact-finding strategies may be employed. When the strategies determine the problems, the organization can set appropriate programs and policies to make amends.

Sometimes making amends means compensating victims, usually publicly. Sometimes it is announcing a corrective policy or program. William L. Benoit is known for image restoration theory, and he describes restorative approaches. Some of Benoit's approaches are taken during the recovery stage of the crisis, while others are done after the news coverage has ended. Some organizations hope that compensating victims and announcing corrective programs will end the news coverage on a high note.

Other organizations wait until litigation is complete. If the organization does not wait until after litigation, it takes the risk of being seen as taking steps to avoid litigation or improve its position in court. Judges may look on some restoration approaches as a positive indication that the crisis will not recur. This is a decision that must be carefully weighed and timed.

Be prepared for anniversary stories. Following every crisis, the news media will keep tickler files to remind themselves of anniversaries of news-making crises. At first, it will be every year, then perhaps every 5 years, every 10 years, and so on unless another disaster or catastrophe diminishes it. The anniversary of the 1941 Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor will definitely be revisited on December 7, 2011, the 70th anniversary. The 9/11 terrorist attacks of 2001 are still annual revisits; they replaced the Oklahoma City bombing, everywhere except in Oklahoma, where the news media remind the public that the incident is not forgotten. In the rest of the country, that domestic terrorist attack may be remembered if no greater news stories abound.

The organization or country that suffered the crisis is expected to answer questions about progress made since the crisis and convince the public that steps have been taken to prevent future similar crises.

The Columbine High School shooting incident, which left 12 students and a teacher dead, took place in 1999. The head of PR for the Jefferson County (Littleton, Colorado) School district said that in addition to the anniversary stories, there were phone calls or questions by e-mail from the news media or from parents or other school districts every day for 1 year and 2 months; then the rate slowed down to about once a week for many years. When 33 students and teachers were killed at Virginia Tech in 2007, it became the most memorable school shooting, and on April 16 for many years, stories retelling that tragedy will be told, and the news media will want to know about the latest security precautions implemented.

Study the crisis. Analyze the news coverage. What were the difficult questions posed by reporters and publics? Why were the questions difficult to answer? Could the organization have prevented the crisis? If so, by doing or not doing what? What can now be done to prevent such a crisis again? What were the positive and negative outcomes? Could it have been worse? Can the organization make positive moves that will boost positive relationships with publics? If so, make a plan to do so. Devise a crisis communications plan or a better crisis communications plan. Organize a system of notifying management of issues that may become crises and go into Stage 1: Detect the next crisis.

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POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

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Political communication is the exchange of information between a nation's leadership, the media, and the citizenry. As an academic discipline, it draws from research in political science, psychology, mass communication, journalism, communication studies, rhetoric, sociology, history, and critical and cultural media studies.

At the core of political communication scholarship is a fascination with how political elites, the press, and the public persuade each other. To learn more about these patterns of influence, scholars study the texts associated with political campaigns, governance and the formation of public policy, political and social movements, political socialization processes, citizen organizing, political entertainment programming, and politics on the Internet.

Perhaps because of the number of contexts examined, there has been a conscious effort to avoid offering strict definitions of *what is* and *what is not* political communication. Key terms included in most definitions, however, include political symbols and language; elites, press, and publics; political processes; actual or potential effects; the regulation of conflict; and the functioning of political systems.

Assumptions of Political Communication

Political communication scholars generally hold a set of common assumptions about this subfield.

First, political communication is a dynamic process. It is not automatic. At best, a political candidate, the press, or a citizen can control just a part of a message; other political

forces (including oppositional candidates, another political party, adversarial interests), the media, and the citizenry are constantly questioning and challenging any statement. Moreover, political psychologists note that individuals understand messages in complicated ways, often processing incoming data through partisan stereotypes, personal reactions to the speakers, and emotional responses to a message's content. So while political leaders and the press may have the resources to start many political conversations, competing forces also shape the scope and direction of any political discussion.

Second, political communication is tied to power. Most political communication scholars study campaigns, governance, and public policy. In most of these instances, political elites are discussing plans for allocating society's resources. To paraphrase the political scientist V. O. Key, the person who frames the conversation guides its outcome. For this reason, the conversation between political elites, the media, and the citizenry features a constant negotiation for control of the political agenda. Political communication scholars listen intently to this discussion to trace how resources are allocated in a polity.

Third, political communication is guided by a normative concern. How can the exchange of information between political elites, the media, and the citizenry best contribute to effective and just governance? Empirical and theoretical studies, alike, harbor an explicit or implicit desire to locate processes to aid political elites in communicating their messages, help the media best inform the electorate, and encourage citizens to hold elected officials accountable to them.

Fourth, political communication occurs in a context. All messages and processes are influenced by the cultural and social norms of a system, the economic and legal structures in place, and the channel or medium through which entities communicate. While most studies in the United States focus on national concerns, many scholars believe that future comparative work will sharpen what is known about American practices and allow researchers to ask macrolevel questions to advance the theoretical and empirical development of the subfield.

Fifth, political communication is closer to citizens than political activity. To paraphrase the political scholar Murray Edelman, people are more likely to encounter political messages than to engage in political actions (such as voting, volunteering, or protesting). For this reason, the language of politics is critically important, as it introduces political understandings, frames political possibilities, and prevents certain issues or policies from being discussed.

History of Political Communication

The history of political communication can be traced broadly back to Greek democracy or specifically to the formation of institutional divisions in scholarly associations. Scholars also point to seminal pieces in political persuasion such as Aristotle's *Politics* and *Rhetoric*, Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, and Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Foundational works in the American context include The Declaration of Independence, *Common Sense*, *The Federalist Papers*, and the Gettysburg Address.

In tracing political communication patterns in historical contexts, researchers have attended to advancements in information technologies and how these tools have altered both the message landscape as well as the democratic discussion. Notable innovations include the printing press, the political pamphlet, the newspaper, radio, film, television, and electronic technologies (including the Internet, mobile phones, personal digital assistants such as Blackberries, etc.). Each of these developments have increased the reach of political messages, and, according to their specific properties, altered the political landscape. Namely, the printing press helped disseminate information that was largely held by the elites; the partisan pamphlet allowed for political and personal expression; the newspaper accelerated the spread of current affairs; and radio, film, and television transcended literacy levels (and, because of the rich personal cues appearing in these channels, have created a heightened awareness of the personal attributes of politicians). The influence of electronic technologies such as the Internet (including the World Wide Web, e-mail, and instant messaging) has increased the speed with which information is disseminated across and through publics.

A more precise history of the political communication as a scholarly subfield has its roots in (1) propaganda analyses

during World War II, (2) early voting studies in the 1940s to 1960s, and (3) rhetorical analyses of political—often presidential—texts.

To begin, several seminal thinkers were commissioned by the U.S. government to study wartime communications. These projects ranged from the political scientists Paul Lazarsfeld (Columbia University) and Harold Lasswell (University of Chicago) working for the Rockefeller Foundation Communication Seminar to outline an agenda for understanding the nature of propaganda and its effects to Lazarsfeld's work with the sociologist Robert Merton (also at Columbia) in measuring the influence of specific radio, film, and print propaganda (efforts that led to the creation of the *focused interview*, a precursor to today's focus group methodology). This work serves as an early example of many commitments of the subfield of political communication, including *methodological plurality* (these scholars employed quantitative techniques to assess the effects of messages followed by qualitative approaches to understand the nuances of message properties and the unfolding process of influence), *an applied focus* (they employed scholarly approaches to attend to critical issues in the 1940s), and *normative concerns* (they addressed questions connected to the sustenance of a democratic state).

Next, early voting studies also contributed to the development of the subfield. One of the most notable studies in the field is the 1940 Erie County study, a project guided by Lazarsfeld. In this endeavor, researchers conducted 600 personal interviews each month for 6 months prior to the 1940 presidential election (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948). Lazarsfeld's hypothesis was that the media (viz., print newspapers) would have a powerful effect in influencing citizen attitudes and behaviors in that election. His findings revealed, however, that only 54 of the 600 participants interviewed shifted their support from one candidate to another during the course of the campaign. These data suggested that an overwhelming percentage of those studied had chosen their favored candidate prior to the campaign (or its news coverage).

This classic study led to two key findings for the understanding of political communication: the start of a *minimal effects* model, whereby Lazarsfeld and others argued that the press did not have a powerful influence on the electorate, and the *two-step flow-of-communication* model, in which Lazarsfeld's team believed that politically aware opinion leaders pass along public affairs information to others via interpersonal conversations. This *two-step-flow* approach highlighted the *complementary roles* that media and interpersonal communication play in influencing political attitudes and behaviors. While subsequent studies—and the emergence of television in the 1950s as a force in American life—locate a *stronger-effects* model in mass communications research, the Erie County offers an important baseline of the influence of personal predispositions, interpersonal communication, and press coverage during a presidential campaign.

Subsequent voting studies have shifted from an emphasis on interpersonal conversations to the influence of psychological variables. In *The American Voter* (1960), for instance, a group of political scholars from the University of Michigan employed survey data to argue that political partisanship had become the key cue in predicting political choices. Their study is critical for two reasons: (1) Their use of the National Election Studies survey data established the standard for hundreds of subsequent projects examining voter decision making and (2) their identification of partisanship as the critical predictor of electoral behavior continues to be a central finding in political science research. Studies following *The American Voter* have also looked for psychological (and social-psychological) predictors of decision making, focusing on cues such as *gut rationality* (attending to some cues in the information environment; see Popkin, 1991) and the power of personal reactions to political leaders (Hart, 1997). These voting studies have been a primary path for political communication research.

Additionally, rhetorical analyses on political leaders (largely presidents) also serve as a precursor to contemporary political communication scholarship. Rhetoricians have engaged in criticism and theory building, attending to the messages, motives, and styles of political speech. In doing so, scholars have focused on (1) speakers (assessing the development, delivery, and exigencies of political speech) as well as (2) audiences (noting the audiences honored or hailed by specific speeches as well as those denied and negated through political silence) in rhetorical situations.

Why Is Communication an Important Part of Politics, Particularly U.S. Politics?

Political communication plays an important role in ensuring the legitimacy and future of American democracy. The following propositions explain how and why this is the case.

Political communication preserves democratic governance. A first cause for political communication is structural: A dialogue between the government, the media, and the citizenry can preserve a democratic regime. Political theorists contend that a democratic system is only possible when an informed, engaged, and participatory citizenry protects itself from the inevitable greed and power of political elites. They contend that the legitimacy of a system can be gauged by levels of political participation and that the stability of a system can be assessed by participation over time. Political messages, then, help individuals navigate their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Many political scholars note that the role of communication in preserving democratic life is particularly important because democracies are fragile. As Mindich (2005) articulates in his analysis of why young people need to be

engaged in political life, democracies are always just a short decline from potential despotism. A system with a free press and access to robust political conversations and norms of debate can protect itself in the political present and into the future.

Political communication connects leaders with the public. This second point refers to political leaders, candidates for public office, and elected officials. Hart's (1987, 2000) research has shown that political candidates and elected presidents have addressed the public with increasing frequency over the years and that campaign addresses are more direct and detailed than presidential speeches or briefings. The very act of a campaign, Hart argues, forces candidates to consider the needs of the public and to speak to those needs in forthcoming ways.

Studies show that public communications can benefit political elites, as well. In her longitudinal analysis, Ragsdale (1984) found that changes in public approval rankings and national events increase the likelihood that presidents will deliver an address (whereas worsening economic conditions such as inflation and unemployment or expanding military situations decrease the likelihood that a president will speak in public). Intriguingly, she also found that a president's popularity increases significantly with the delivery of a prominent speech. In a similar type of project, Kernell (1997) has studied the process of *going public*—the pattern of presidents talking directly to the American people to gain power (in the form of public opinion) over other branches of government. Kernell notes that this process can allow popular presidents “to soar” (p. 260), but it can also lead to an unstable marketplace, “whose currency is public opinion” if a president encounters a drop in favorability with the electorate.

Political communication shapes political agendas. This third point deals most directly with the media and the scholarship that investigates the ability of the press to put ideas into people's heads and thereby set agendas for publics.

To begin, one of the most widely studied theories in contemporary mass communication is the agenda-setting theory. This line of research was inspired by Cohen's (1963) observation that the mass media may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think but the media are stunningly successful in telling their audience what to think *about*. During the 1968 presidential election, McCombs and Shaw (1972) examined the transfer of issue salience from news media to the public by comparing the most prominent issues appearing in news coverage and what the public regarded as the most important problems in their minds. The study revealed that the issues that are salient in the news become the issues that are salient among the public. Since the initial study in 1968, the agenda-setting theory has been studied hundreds of times across the globe.

One of the theories borne out of the continuous investigations of the agenda-setting function of the media is the attribute (or second level) agenda-setting theory. While the original agenda-setting theory focused on the transfer of *issue salience* from the media to the public, the attribute agenda-setting studies the transfer of *attribute salience* from the media to the public. For instance, Golan and Wanta (2001) revealed that voters' evaluations of candidates were significantly associated with attributes salient in three newspapers in New Hampshire during the 2000 presidential primaries. The study of attribute agenda setting adds a new dimension to the traditional agenda-setting theory, introducing the media's power to influence not just *what to think about* but also *how to think about it*.

Similar to the agenda-setting theory, framing and priming are two other well-researched constructs in mass communication. The theoretical approach of framing examines the presentation, selection, emphasis, and exclusion processes inherent in organizing news stories. To frame a story, writes Entman (1993), is to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52). News frames provide cues as to how to think about dramatized problems; how to diagnose their causes; how to evaluate their generators, victims, and effects; how to cast (or avoid casting) blame; and if and how these problems should be resolved. Indeed, studies have identified how frames influence how individuals think, process topical information, discuss issues with others, and move to public action.

The notion of media priming also has connections to the agenda-setting studies. *Priming* refers to the ability of the media to "isolate particular issues, events, or themes in the news as criteria for evaluating politicians" (Ansolabehere, Behr, & Iyengar, 1993, p. 148). Iyengar (1991) states that news stories have a *priming effect* on the public by guiding viewers into evaluating political leaders by the criteria discussed in news stories. In their experimental examination, Iyengar and Kinder (1987) found that "through priming (drawing attention to some aspects of political life at the expense of others) television news help to set the terms by which political judgments are reached and political choices made" (p. 114).

Another prominent effect of the news media is the spiral-of-silence theory. Conceived by Noelle-Neumann (1993), this approach is best understood in light of the dynamics of public opinion, pressures to conform to majority viewpoints, and fears of isolation. The theory asserts that people are unwilling to express unpopular opinions (particularly on issues that have a strong moral component) because doing so might lead to social rejection and isolation. The process of not sharing unpopular (or minority) opinions can become cyclical; if people do not see their preferred position in the media or supported

by others, they will be less likely to speak out (and, accordingly, their positions become even less likely to appear in the news or in future conversations). Because people evaluate the prevailing public opinion based on the portrayals of public opinion communicated through mass media, the media induce certain opinions to be silenced.

While these aforementioned studies discuss how the media shape public opinion, some researchers also study how publics make sense of mediated messages in light of their own prior predispositions. The constructionist perspective, for instance, asserts that the media and other political elites can set agendas but cannot determine the meaning of politics. In their impressive study of media coverage, candidate speech, and citizen sentiment in the 1992 campaign, Just and colleagues (1996) found that citizens used personal knowledge and experience to actively interpret media messages and candidate images and that as people became more engaged with the election, they drew more on their own experiences—both direct and indirect—to evaluate campaign information. Similarly, Delli-Carpini and Williams (1994) have noted how television viewers *converse* back to television programming and are somewhat self-reflective with regard to how television persuades them. This constructionist approach addresses how people bring some of themselves to their understandings of mediated texts.

Studies show that different types of media can have different effects. Newspaper reading has the strongest association with political interest, knowledge, and many acts of political participation (including voting, attending political meetings, displaying a campaign button, sign or sticker, working for a political candidate or political party, or donating money to a campaign). Television news also contributes to political knowledge and participation, although it is not as strong a predictor of the many acts of participation as print news. Television news has been praised for being entertaining, for breaking through the attention barrier and capturing viewers' attention, for getting people interested in political topics, and for motivating and educating individuals with lower levels of knowledge and sophistication. At the same time, however, television news has been critiqued for unnecessarily heightening the dramatic aspects of politics and restricting coverage to topics that yield easy and compelling visual images.

Research on talk radio suggests that regular listeners have more political knowledge than nonlisteners, although this relationship is not statistically significant when one controls for the reality that most talk radio listeners are highly educated and often consume other forms of media, as well. Studies on the audience of talk radio reveals that listeners are mostly male; that a majority of this audience distrusts the mainstream media; that programs have been created largely for a conservative or Republican perspective; and that programs are more successful in encouraging audiences to oppose a candidate, policy, or idea than support one.

Research on the effects of entertainment media yields mixed findings. On the one hand, viewers of traditional entertainment programming on television are less likely to be politically informed or to participate. On the other, studies on infotainment programming (such as Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show* or the *Colbert Report*) reveal that regular viewers of these programs report higher levels of political information than traditional cable news audiences. An early explanation for this trend suggests that audiences must know something about public life to enjoy and understand these shows; it remains to be seen if the infotainment informs them directly or motivates them to know more in order to enjoy and comprehend the content of these programs.

Political communication can activate citizens. This fourth point addresses how political communication between citizens can protect their individual and collective interests (and even improve their well-being). Classic voting theories suggest that political participation contributes to the personal development of citizens. It has been argued that paying attention to politics and engaging in civic and political acts encourages people to pay attention not only to their own interests but also to those of a community and the country as a whole—a process that is believed to broaden perspectives.

Campaign messages, too, have been credited with being beneficial for the public. In his analysis of candidate, media, and citizen campaign discourses from 1948 to 1996, Hart (2000) contends that campaign communication is good for citizens, as it can *teach* (citizens learn during campaigns), *preach* (democracy is reperformed during campaigns), *sensitize* (campaigns increase public support for political elites and a democratic system), and *activate* (citizens experience higher levels of political efficacy during campaigns). Popkin (1991) advances a similar case, arguing that louder campaigns (with more vibrant and visible political communications) help engage more citizens in the process.

Key studies in this area have examined how political texts (candidate statements and advertisements, news coverage, Web pages, statements from other citizens) and experiences (voting, volunteering, political discussions, serving on a jury, etc.) influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors. Variables of interest here include *political engagement* (often regarded as the activities intended directly or indirectly to affect the selection of elected representatives and/or the development, implementation, or enforcement of public policy through government—such as voting, working for a political party, or contacting an elected official), *civic engagement* (refers to addressing public concerns directly through methods that are outside of elections and government—such as volunteering or working with a community group or neighborhood association), *internal political efficacy* (the sense that one's participation can actually make a difference), *external*

political efficacy (the sense that a political system would be responsive to this participation), *civic duty* (a sense of responsibility and obligation to a system), *political interest* (attentiveness to government and public affairs), *tolerance* (acceptance of difference and diversity), and *political trust* (faith in a system and its leaders).

Additionally, Putnam's (2000) *Bowling Alone* has generated considerable attention in academic and nonacademic settings. The central premise behind his approach is that relationships (social networks) have value (social capital) for people. Specifically, Putnam has traced how strong social networks increase reciprocity (the likelihood that people will look out for each other), information sharing (the opportunities to hear about ideas, jobs, and political happenings), and cooperation (the chance to organize in order to effect change beyond what an individual could do alone). All three of these resources help individuals lead richer and more meaningful lives.

Putnam's research has located specific examples of the value of networks. These intriguing patterns include how (1) joining and participating in just one social group can reduce a person's chances of dying over the next year in half; (2) crime can be as effectively curbed in a community when neighbors know each others' first names as by adding additional police to the streets; (3) educational reforms can benefit more directly from parental involvement than by hiring more teachers; and (4) each 10 minutes of additional commuting time per day reduces all forms of social capital by 10% (meaning 10% less church going, 10% fewer club meetings, 10% fewer evenings with friends, etc.; see Putnam's *Better Together* [2003] advocacy group, a by-product of his *Bowling Alone* [2000] text). Putnam summarizes these patterns by noting that civic engagement is like a "health club for the 21st century" that is free, that improves both individual and community health, and that perpetuates the growth of social ties. Researchers have also explored how deliberation educates and empowers citizens. Gastil (2008) contends that "people deliberate when they carefully examine a problem and a range of solutions through an open, inclusive exchange that incorporates and respects diverse points of view" (p. xi). He maintains that deliberation is an important means of fostering coordination in a democracy and helps citizens to really understand the reasons behind points of view different from their own (a process that is almost impossible without deliberation).

Gastil holds that deliberation has these components: It begins when people have a solid information base to understand an issue; it functions when individuals identify and prioritize key issues to be addressed; and it progresses as individuals locate solutions and address the pros, cons, and trade-offs of these solutions. Research shows that when deliberation is well organized, participants report satisfaction with the process and have greater support for and investment in the outcome. In contrast, when the deliberative experience is not well organized, or when a deliberative

group is not given clear directives, this process can suppress deep difference, discourage frank statements, and exaggerate consensus.

How Are Political Images and Messages Constructed?

Political leaders, the media, and citizens all construct messages in unique ways. Their strategies and goals reflect their unique needs in the democratic conversation.

Political leaders create messages to improve their public image. Scholars have studied these processes in a set of ways. To begin, political marketing—or the application of marketing principles and procedures in political campaigns by various individuals and organizations—has become a major force in elections and policy making (Newman, 1999). Like product marketing, a key goal in political marketing is to have a market orientation, anticipate audience needs, and work to create innovative products and services. Unlike product marketing, however, the goal is not to make a profit; rather, political marketers work to improve the quality of life and create the most benefits at the lowest cost for citizens. A key way of making this happen is by helping candidates acquire political capital through compelling public images and powerful messages.

Research on candidate images has located a set of personality traits that are vital in marketing, including trustworthiness, authoritativeness, competence, sociability, composure, experience, leadership ability, intelligence, and honesty. Scholars have attended to the relative influence of issue stances and personality characteristics on candidate image. While scholars once held a distinction between these two forces, data now show that citizens employ both types of information while evaluating candidates. Moreover, studies show that citizens attend to a candidate's appearance, his or her resemblance (or lack thereof) to an audience, and general expectations of what candidates should be like in reacting to candidate images.

Research is commonly a part of a campaign strategy. Campaign researchers often gauge reactions to candidates via focus groups and surveys (or public opinion polls). Focus groups are a method in which a group of individuals who share a specific characteristic (being of a common age, background, education level, social class, political party, or biological sex) are brought together for a group interview. A moderator typically guides a set of 6 to 12 people in a conversation in which the participants are asked to respond to a situation, a candidate communication, or concerns about a candidate's opponent. Moderators listen for patterns in group discussion, moments when group members question or build on each others' statements and times when the group surprises itself. Focus groups are a valuable way for campaigns to tap into socially created and shared

opinions, and they offer in-depth information from a small set of individuals on questions of interest.

Surveys (or public opinion polls) are another commonly used method to gather broader reactions from the public. Campaigns can poll the public to search for levels of support and patterns of favorability for candidates, issues, messages, and specific campaign communications. While focus groups offer in-depth information for a small number of participants, surveys offer less detailed observations on a much larger group of people.

Scholars have located some best practices for candidate communications. Returning to Hart's (2000) analyses, he found a variety of patterns in leaders' speech, including how *winning candidates* speak as centrists and employ common terms and phrases (they are not rhetorically distinctive, nor do they call unnecessary attention to themselves); *incumbent candidates* are more optimistic and collective in their speeches, whereas *challenger candidates* are more negative and ideological; and *Republicans* speak in straightforward ways (arguing directly from cause to effect), whereas *Democrats* speak in a more complex way (employing more nouns per verb, discussing the nuances of a situation in making their arguments).

Studies on female candidates have shown that they must campaign amidst powerful gender stereotypes. While the number of female candidates and the prominence of office for which they seek have increased, research shows that they are often viewed as less competent and unable to handle the tough negotiations associated with politics. Moreover, they are expected to be less assertive and aggressive than men, and they must use more specific and precise statements than men. To avoid a negative backlash from voters, female candidates typically critique their opponents on issues and avoid making direct charges on their opponents' characters (see Powell & Cowart, 2002).

Studies have also examined the message properties of a variety of genres of campaign discourse (Hart, 2000). Campaign speeches tend to be more direct and optimistic than addresses delivered by elected officials. Campaign ads traffic in images and say things that candidates, themselves, cannot say. Debate performances add prudence to campaign discourse, reduce bombast, and bring focus to the political conversation. Candidate-sponsored Web pages tend to avoid partisan cues, are positive in nature (with candidates placing more negative charges in other forms of discourse), increasingly feature verbal and video content, and can help candidates generate positive news coverage. As Web sites are regularly visited by journalists, a well-organized and detailed Web site can translate into favorable coverage for a candidate.

Media outlets create messages to tell and sell stories. Although they are central to preserving a democratic state, many scholars note that the media are not truly in the *democracy business*. Rather, they are a *for-profit business*, and their need to create an audience to sell advertising influences how news stories are presented.

Researchers have studied how the need to create an audience influences news as a genre of political communication. In so doing, many potential biases in the news have been discussed, including a *straight news* perspective (that news outlets are not biased and that they offer direct reportage of the facts), a *leftist bias* perspective (that most reporters identify as Democrats or Independents and therefore deliver the news through a liberal slant), a *rightist bias* perspective (that media ownership leans conservative to Republican and their business model requires news stories that are friendly to corporate interests and the status quo), an *organizational bias* perspective (that reporters learn reporting strategies from journalism schools and tend to follow the leads of prominent reporters in covering stories), and a *narrative bias* perspective (that the news is a story and must feature certain properties to command an audience). While many agree that a variety of biases can be detected in any story, scholars often gravitate toward the narrative perspective as it helps interpret the news as political texts.

Bennett's (1988) research has been particularly notable on this score. To tell and sell stories, he contends that news stories feature the following narrative properties: *personalization*—such that the “news gives preference to the individual actors and human interest angles in events while downplaying institutional and political considerations that establish the social contexts of those events” (p. 26); *dramatization*—such that “reporters and editors search for events with dramatic properties and then emphasize those properties in their reporting,” so that the content of the news “has more to do with” dramatism than “any natural preeminence they may have in the political scheme of things” (p. 35); *fragmentation*—such that events “exist in self-contained dramatic capsules, isolated from each other in time and space” so that the news resembles a “jigsaw puzzle that is out of focus and missing many pieces” (p. 44); and *normalization*—such that “the news overlays situations as quickly as possible with familiar images (both moral and empirical) of a normal world . . . images that drive bothersome details out of mind” (p. 51).

Since the 1980s, there has been a proliferation of cable news programs on television. To compete in the cluttered media marketplace, several have sought out (and others have simply been perceived by the public as having) a partisan slant. Scholars are beginning to study how these cable news and entertainment shows feature unique programming that may lead to unique effects. Recent work on partisan selective exposure traces how individuals seek out media that matches their partisanship (congenial programming) and that the process of seeking out this media can lead to higher levels of political polarization, differentiated patterns of agenda setting, and distinct issue priorities connected to news-seeking habits.

Citizens create messages to influence the agenda. A key action that citizens have employed to make their voices

heard in a democratic system is the vote. Outside of voting, however, individuals have other opportunities for influence, including writing pamphlets, engaging in assembly and protest, writing letters to the editors of newspapers, calling into radio programs, and donating money to political causes to express political views.

Developments in interactive technology increase the options available to citizens. On the Internet, they can increasingly respond to news articles through interactive Web features, join social-networking groups surrounding civic or political interests, or create a blog (or post to blogs) to share political perspectives.

What Are the Forms and Types of Messages We Should Expect to See in the 21st Century?

Researchers have some expectations as to the future of candidate, media, and citizen communications.

Candidate-centered campaigning. A decline in the power of the political parties in the candidate selection process and the emergence of television and the Internet as disseminators of information have led to an increasing personalization of politics. This process has been widely documented in the United States, and comparative scholars report an increased emphasis on candidate-centered politics across the globe.

An emphasis on the candidate has given rise to new lines of inquiry and theorizing. Two important variables for political communication scholars to attend to in the future include the *likability* and *authenticity* of political communicators. *Likability* is not a new variable for political life. Political theorists have long been suspicious of attempts to gain power through likability (as it can lead to unstable public opinion if a candidate becomes unlikable; see Kernell, 1997; Machiavelli, 2004). Communication scholars, marketers, and advertisers take a different approach to likability, however. Their studies show that likable people (often measured as those who are regarded as attractive, who inspire a sense of identification or commonality with others, and who compliment their audiences) have an increased ability to persuade others.

Authenticity is a second notion that becomes important in an overcommunicated, personalized message environment. In an era of reality television and heightened political cynicism, the news media and citizens have ample opportunities to question the motives of their political leaders. While such questioning surely predates the current candidate-centered era, a proliferation of cable news programs, of personalized and dramatized news narratives, and of a celebrity-driven culture fixates attention on the causes underlying elite political behavior. Early definitions of *authenticity* focus on a candidate's transparency and consistency. Research will surely continue to sharpen this burgeoning concept.

Proliferation of internet applications. Technological advancements have shifted the content and tone of many political discussions. Notably, political Web sites and blogs, social-networking sites, and YouTube (and other political films) have altered the traditional political conversation. For instance, the Drudge Report—a news aggregation Web site run by Matt Drudge—became famous for being the first news outlet to run the story that President Bill Clinton had had an affair with intern Monica Lewinsky. Drudge's doing so broke the scandal, a story that other outlets such as *Newsweek* magazine refused to cover. Future studies will undoubtedly study the content of these political Web sites, trace the content, the information flow, and the intermedia agenda setting of these political sites.

Social-networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook present a new means of organizing online, of developing political capital, and of capturing the attention of the news media and the candidates. Studies will examine who joins these sites, the best practices of persuasion on them, and the effects these networks have on political attitudes and behaviors.

YouTube is a video-sharing Web site. It was created in the winter of 2005 to allow individuals to upload, view, and share video clips. The presence, familiarity, and open access of this site—paired with the ubiquity of handheld digital recording equipment—has created an instinct for citizens to become movie makers and a place for such films to be stored. In the realm of politics, the site holds clips from candidate statements to political groups, candidate interviews with the press, and citizen-created clips about the candidates. Political commentators believe that YouTube played a significant role in the 2006 defeat of Senator George Allen (R-VA) due to a video clip of him making allegedly racist remarks that was continuously replayed by YouTube viewers during the campaign. In the 2008 presidential campaign, citizen-created videos have brought considerable attention to the Obama presidential campaign. As with the other Internet applications, future studies will track the content, dissemination, and effects of these videos.

Citizen reactions to an overcommunicated era. Marketing estimates suggest that citizens encountered 200 commercial-brand impressions on an average day in the 1950s. By the late 1990s, such estimates skyrocketed to 5,000 a day. This overcommunicated environment has created new patterns of information seeking and influence for the citizenry.

Concerning information seeking, citizens (particularly conservatives and Republicans) are reporting an unprecedented lack of trust in the media. This frustration has led to a proliferation of programs with a conservative perspective (on talk radio, on the Fox news cable network, and on the Internet). Scholars have begun to study the aforementioned pattern of partisan self-exposure; the effects of conservatives seeking conservative media and liberals seeking liberal media will be important questions for the future.

Similarly, a lack of media trust, increased political cynicism, weaker partisan commitments, and advancements in information technologies (allowing citizens to self-select their programming and to record television shows and bypass political advertisements) have all challenged the impact of mass advertising campaigns. Scholars have found, interestingly, that in many instances, grassroots campaigning—including door-to-door political canvassing—is a cost-effective means of persuasion and of getting out the vote. Studies will continue to refine what is known about the best practices of face-to-face canvassing as well as grassroots organizing strategies on the Web, broadly, and on social-networking sites, specifically.

Efforts to recruit new stakeholder groups. Another set of questions for future research include demographic shifts in the electorate, including increases in the Latino population, normative and strategic interest in young voters (ages 18–29), and efforts to persuade uncommitted voters (who are less loyal to traditional party allegiances and are often seduced by candidate-centered strategies). Studies will examine the successes and unique challenges of minority and female candidates, efforts to communicate with voters in English and Spanish, and attempts to employ social-networking sites and cell phone text messaging to connect with younger voters. The key question for researchers, here, is how candidates can attempt to recruit and mobilize new voters while honoring the commitments of current stakeholders (to their candidacies or their political parties).

For Additional Inquiry

Research on these new paths of research will likely appear in the journal *Political Communication* (formerly *Political Communication Review*), which publishes quarterly peer-reviewed articles in the field. Research on and best practices for political strategists and consultants appear in the *Journal of Political Marketing* and are presented to meetings of the American Association of Political Consultants. Additionally, political communication is an organized division in major scholarly associations, including the International Communication Association, the National Communication Association, and the American Political Science Association.

Students interested in political communication can seek out the following courses on their campuses: political communication, campaign communication, mass media and politics, political (and presidential) rhetoric, sociology (and history or political economy) of the media, political persuasion, and public opinion.

Finally, key texts reviewing the history, development, and core theoretical and methodological commitments of political communication include Chaffee's (1975) *Political Communication: Issues and Strategies for Research*; Nimmo

and Sanders's (1981) *Handbook of Political Communication*; Sanders, Kaid, and Nimmo's (1985) *Political Communication Yearbook: 1984*; and Kaid's (2004) *Handbook of Political Communication*.

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INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

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On the eve of the 21st century (December 31, 1999), CNN aired live coverage showing how people throughout the world celebrated the New Year at the dawning of a new millennium. Thanks to satellite broadcasting, this 100-hour television event showed a wide variety of festivities at more than 50 locations in the world, including Times Square in New York City, the Red Square in Russia, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and many other corners of the globe. This coverage was available to about 1 billion people in more than 200 countries and territories (CNN News Group, 1999). It is undeniable that mass media plays an important role in providing the social perception of globalization.

In business, globalization is an effective and powerful strategy for businesses striving to be prosperous. Accelerated by global competition and free-trade developments such as WTO (World Trade Organization) and OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development), corporations are eager to create new markets abroad, as well as to find ways to lower production costs. In 1996, for example, more than 8,000 U.S. companies had international operations in foreign countries. Alternatively, more than 8,000 foreign firms operated in the United States. Foreigners have invested more than \$300 billion in the United States in joint ventures and direct investment (Porter & Samovar, 1996). As this trend keeps accelerating, the current world economy becomes more closely connected than ever.

What does this wave of globalization mean to public relations? One of the most frequently cited definitions of public relations is “the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships

between an organization and the publics on whom its success and failure depends” (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2005, p. 6). Many organizations today, both for profit and not-for-profit, operate globally, and the success or failure of their organizational goals and objectives depends on their publics, domestically as well as overseas. The assumptions and principles that organizations hold when practicing public relations in one country may not be applicable when practicing public relations in another country. Even the definition of public relations can be substantially different from country to country. The growing interest in international public relations comes out of the new challenge that practitioners and scholars face—the international and global environment where public relations operates.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the key conceptual developments in international public relations, some major areas of application, and a representative case of multinational organization.

Conceptual Development of International Public Relations

Even as interest in international public relations as a subarea of public relations continues to grow, there has been confusion over the concept of international public relations. To some, there is no such thing as international public relations, and to others, international public relations is “one of the fastest-growing areas in this field” (Vasquez & Taylor, 2001, p. 331). International public relations is a relatively new subarea of public relations that suffers from the lack of

theoretical foundations because public relations itself is still a growing area in the field of mass communications. As Kunczik (1997) pointed out, most articles on international public relations have been based on anecdotal or descriptive approaches, even “scientifically non-serious sources” (p. 24). Wakefield (1996) emphasized that “most of the attempts at scholarly examinations have been country-specific, discussing public relations in a particular country and how it varies from other countries” (p. 18).

To some extent, much international public relations research can be labeled as descriptive because it explores public relations practices in different countries and geographic regions without applying overarching theories and conceptualization. In the early stage of developing the field of international public relations research, a case study approach provides valuable knowledge about what others have accomplished in the field. However, isolated cases alone limit our understanding of international public relations. The current trend is toward more studies based on theoretical frameworks.

Wakefield (1996) identified four theoretical domains for international public relations. They are global society theories, cultural theories, management theories, and communication theories. He suggests that international public relations can benefit from these areas in building theoretical frameworks.

Grunig and his colleagues (J. E. Grunig, 1992; Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002; Grunig, Grunig, & Vercic, 1998; Vercic, Grunig, & Grunig, 1996; Wakefield, 1996) provide a good example of advancing these ideas in their research. They proposed a normative theory of global public relations excellence by combining their original IABC (International Association of Business Communicators) excellence theory (public relations framework) and a structured flexibility theory (management framework; Brinkerhoff & Ingle, 1989). This seminal study identified key characteristics of excellence in public relations as general principles. Their argument was that excellence characteristics of public relations identified by the IABC study hold true not only for the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada (where original observations occurred) but also for other countries; however, contextual factors should be considered when applying these generic principles (specific application).

The generic principles of public relations excellence are (1) involvement of public relations in strategic management, (2) empowerment of public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management, (3) an integrated public relations function, (4) public relations as a management function separate from other functions, (5) PR head’s managerial leadership, (6) a two-way symmetrical model of public relations, (7) a symmetrical system of internal communication, (8) the PR department’s knowledge potential for a managerial role and symmetrical public relations, and (9) diversity embodied in all roles (Vercic, Grunig, & Grunig, 1996).

Involvement of public relations in strategic management means that public relations plays a significant role in identifying organizational goals, leading communication management to achieve those goals, and, most important, building good relationships with strategic publics both internally and externally. *Empowerment of public relations in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior management* means that the public relations unit and the public relations head should be a part of a powerful group of managers who are responsible for strategic decisions for the organization. *Integrated public relations function* means that public relations functions should be operated by a single unit or by a coordinating system. Only this integrated system can adapt to changing strategic publics. *Public relations as a management function from other functions* means that the public relations unit should be independent from other organizational units. In many organizations, public relations functions are subdued to other units (e.g., marketing, law, consumer management, human resource, advertising), which makes public relations less effective. Simply put, communicating with publics is different from dealing with markets. *The role of the public relations practitioner* means that excellent public relations can be secured by a managerial role (strategic program management) not by a technician role (writing and editing publications). *Two-way symmetrical model of public relations* means that excellent public relations uses social scientific research to communicate with strategic publics and actively seek out a mutually beneficial relationship (win-win zone) with them. Mutual understanding is a key purpose of communication. *Symmetrical system of internal communication* means that excellent organization allows autonomy to employees and creates participatory organizational culture to increase job satisfaction. *Knowledge potential for a managerial role and symmetrical public relations* means that excellent public relations practitioners should have acquired a body of knowledge in public relations and be active in professional development. *Diversity embodied in all roles* means that an excellent public relations unit needs variety to effectively communicate with diverse publics in society. Diversity in gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds is highly pursued (Vercic, Grunig, & Grunig, 1996).

Specific contexts for applying the general principles are (1) the level of development in a country, (2) the local political situation, (3) the cultural environment, (4) language difference, (5) the potential for activism, and (6) the role of the mass media (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002). These contexts are defined and elaborated in detail by Sriramesh and Vercic (2003).

Sriramesh and Vercic (2003) elaborated on these specific contexts (environmental variables) in moving international public relations research to the next level. As for political systems, they found democracy and political freedom as very important factors in the growth of public relations because “strategic public relations flourishes in pluralistic

societies” (p. 5). Also of interest to Sriramesh and Vercic is how other types of political systems, such as authoritarian regimes (e.g., China), affect public relations. As for economic development, Sriramesh and Vercic (2003) found that economic prosperity and private entrepreneurship are crucial for the growth of public relations. Activism is considered as both an opportunity as well as a threat to public relations professionals. Organizations can transform and innovate themselves to meet change pressures from activist groups, and as a consequence, they can be more competitive and socially responsible. However, the opposite consequence occurs when organizations fail to successfully adapt to this pressure from activist groups. Public relations in any particular country is influenced by the societal and organizational culture within that country. Knowing cultural norms and assumptions at both the national and the organizational levels is crucial to every stage of strategic planning for public relations. Media environment can be elaborated on by examining three dimensions of media: (1) media control (*Who owns the media?*), (2) media access (*Who can access the media?*), and (3) media outreach (*Who consumes the media?*). All three dimensions vary from country to country. Public relations professionals need to know this environment in a given society because the media is a powerful conduit to influence the target publics.

To test these normative propositions of generic principles and specific contexts, Grunig, Grunig, Sriramesh, Huang, and Lyra (1995) did a meta-analysis of research in India, Greece, and Taiwan and concluded that “the models must be generic to all cultures and that an approach to public relations that contains at least elements of the two-way symmetrical model may be the most effective in all cultures” (p. 182). Similar findings are supported by Grunig, Grunig, and Vercic’s (1998) study of Slovenian firms, Wakefield’s (2000) Delphi panel study, and Rhee’s (2002) study of public relations practitioners in Korea.

More recently, Curtin and Gaither (2007) introduced the circuit-of-culture model as a theoretical framework for international public relations. Taking a broader definition of culture (a crucial concept to international public relations), they identified five moments of “cultural space in which meaning is created, shaped, modified, and recreated” (p. 38). These moments of cultural space are labeled as moments of regulation, production, representation, consumption, and identity. The moments are closely interrelated to create meaning without any prescribed direction of relationships.

The moment of regulation is defined as “controls on cultural activity ranging from formal and legal controls, such as regulations, laws, and institutionalized systems, to the informal and local controls of cultural norms and expectation” (p. 38). This definition is similar to that of the contextual factors or environmental variables as applied to public relations operations. The moment of production “outlines the process by which creators of cultural products imbue them with meaning, a process often called

encoding” (p. 39). For example, technological constraints and organizational culture influence the process of planning public relations campaigns. The moment of representation is “the form an object takes and the meanings encoded in that form” (p. 40). The moment of consumption is “when messages are decoded by audiences . . . target publics in public relations bring their own semantic networks of meaning to any communicative exchange” (p. 40). Identities are “meanings that accrue to all social networks, from nations to organizations to publics” (p. 41). The authors were able to use this framework to explain various cases of international public relations issues and campaigns, which establishes this framework as a good example of theory-based international public relations research.

Along with theory-based studies, case studies continue to expand our understanding of public relations in other parts of the world. This is called a culture-specific approach, focusing on documenting the peculiar and distinct features of individual cultures. The main focus of these studies concerns how social, political, and economic contexts influence the practices of public relations country by country. For example, books titled *International Public Relations: A Comparative Analysis*, edited by Culbertson and Chen (1996), *The Global Public Relations Handbook: Theory, Research, and Practice*, edited by Sriramesh and Vercic (2003), and *Handbook of Public Relations*, edited by Heath (2001) include a lot of excellent case studies using this approach. Other examples include a meta-analysis on public relations in India, Korea, and Japan (Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999), the HIV/AIDS issue and Thailand public (Chay-Nemeth, 2001), the nation building in Malaysia (Taylor, 2000), and the image of public relations in Korean newspapers (Park, 2001).

Major Areas of International Public Relations

Public Relations and Multinational Organizations

Stohl (2001) examined the effects of globalization on organizations by introducing five types of organizations according to predominant national orientation: (1) domestic, (2) multicultural, (3) multinational, (4) international, and (5) global. These definitions can help us understand concepts related to “global” in the organizational context. A domestic organization has identification with one country and one dominant culture. A multicultural organization has identification with one country but a culturally diverse workforce. A multinational organization has identification with one nationality while doing business in several countries. It has a multinational workforce, management, clients, and environment; however, it represents one national interest. An international

organization has identification with two or more countries, each of which has distinct cultural attributes. Workforce, management, and clients are recognized as representing diverse national interests. Finally, a global organization has identification with the global system transcending national borders and is basically a stateless organization. In a global organization, organizational membership supersedes national orientation.

In the early stages of globalization, we observed many multinational organizations. But as globalization progresses, we begin to see more international and global organizations. With dramatic technological advancement in transportation and communication, even the distinction between domestic and international blurs. For most people, multinational, international, and global organizations are considered as one category, although there may be disagreement on what to label the category.

One of the biggest challenges facing multinational organizations is dealing with more diversified publics and stakeholders. Consider Mattel's toy recall in 2007. The company announced several recalls, totaling some 21 million toy products, from the global market due to the presence of excessive levels of lead paint and tiny harmful magnets that could be swallowed. First and foremost, Mattel's reputation was enormously damaged among many angry parents who were deeply concerned about the safety of their children. Governments and regulatory bodies in Asia, Europe, and other parts of the globe raised safety inspection standards due to this incident. Investors sold out Mattel shares, and stock price quickly plunged.

Mattel's initial response was not a good example of crisis public relations because they put much of the blame on Chinese manufacturers and the inadequacies of the Chinese regulation system. It created a lot of concerns about made-in-China products among consumers worldwide due to its tainted image triggered by Mattel's toy recall. Finger-pointing at others without sufficient supporting evidences turned out to be detrimental to Mattel. As the public soon learned, there were a substantial number of mistakes and problems on Mattel's side, such as product design deficiencies and inadequate safety guidelines. Mattel's top executives should have flown to China and apologized to the Chinese leaders and business partners for making such a hasty judgment. The worldwide media coverage of this scandal could not have been more negative, and recovery from this ordeal will seemingly be a tough uphill battle for Mattel for many years to come. Trust can be easily lost but is hard to rebuild.

Corporations are not the only form of multinational organizations. Many nongovernment organizations (NGOs, hereafter) promote their cause globally. For example, Green Peace international is headquartered in the Netherlands and has branch offices in 42 countries and regions. They are very active in influencing environment policy at the national and global levels, and their public relations campaigns often attract worldwide attention.

Consider the antiglobalization demonstration in Seattle in 1999. Activist groups throughout the world organized themselves around the event of the meeting of the WTO in Seattle to express their anti-WTO message to the world.

There are no national borders in cyberspace. Local NGOs or even individual blogs can get international attention overnight. Sony and Dell had to recall their notebook batteries when a few consumers uploaded video clips of burning laptops onto YouTube. The images spread quickly throughout cyberspace, gaining nearly immediate international attention. As the world has virtually shrunk, environmental scanning becomes more and more challenging for public relations professionals.

Public Diplomacy and National Reputation

Public diplomacy (Kunczik, 1997; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992) has some implications in the developing field of international public relations. Signitzer and Coombs (1992) described international public relations as

mainly concerned with practical problems arising from the relationships of multinational corporations with their foreign publics. How nation-states, countries, or societies manage their communicative relationships with their foreign publics remains largely in the domain of political science and international relations. (p. 138)

Public diplomacy is defined as "the way in which both government and private individuals and groups influence directly or indirectly those public attitudes and opinions which bear directly on another government's foreign policy decisions" (Delaney, 1968, p. 3). Public diplomacy is a communicative struggle in "a global marketplace of ideas" (Signitzer & Coombs, 1992, p. 139) to create favorable and intended attitudes and opinions toward a nation. The objective of public diplomacy is "to influence the behavior of a foreign government by influencing the attitudes of its citizens" (Malone, 1988, p. 3).

Building and maintaining a positive national image enable a nation to achieve a more advantageous position in global economic and political competition. A positive national image may drive other nations' foreign policies in favor of a country, increase revenues from trade, and draw tourists and foreign investment (Wang, 2006).

Cognizant of these benefits, many governments are active in practicing public relations to improve their national images throughout the world. Lee (2006) found that in 2002, more than 150 countries signed public relations contracts with agencies in the United States, based on his analysis of Foreign Agency Registration Act (FARA) data administered by the U.S. Department of Justice. He mentioned that "Asian countries were the most active in public relations in the U.S. followed by Western European and Middle East countries. Analyzing individual countries,

Japan was ranked as the first, remotely followed by the UK, Mexico, Taiwan, South Korea, and Germany” (p. 99). He also found that building a relationship with the U.S. partners was the most frequent activity type of international public relations, followed by information dissemination, event promotion, advertising, and media relations. The major U.S. partners were governmental officials, Congress leaders, media owners, journalists, corporate leaders, and investors, who are generally considered opinion leaders in the United States.

The foreign news media have become a major target for governments trying to influence news content about international issues and foreign affairs, especially with regard to their own countries. However, governments also reach foreign publics directly by disseminating information about their countries and launching government-sponsored international broadcasting channels (e.g., Voice of America) and Web sites. Governments also try to influence public opinion in foreign countries through cultural exchange programs (e.g., artistic performances, film festivals, second-language training, and student exchange programs). The Fulbright program, which subsidizes international students’ education in the United States, is a good example of such efforts.

To effectively execute public relations programs overseas, many governments hire public relations firms in target countries. According to Gilboa (2000), contracting public relations firms in the target country is believed to be more effective than any other governmental strategy in international public relations in reaching and affecting both foreign publics and the foreign media because it can “strengthen the legitimacy and authenticity” of the public relations campaigns. In addition, geographic proximity of the resident PR firms operating in the target country enables quick reactions when a crisis related to the target country occurs.

Development communication (Newsom, Carrell, & Kruckeberg, 1993) and nation building (Taylor, 1998; Taylor & Botan, 1997; VanLeuven, 1996) share some aspects of international public relations. Taylor (2000) mentioned that “a public relations approach to nation building focuses on relationships between governments and publics as well as the creation of new relationships between previously unrelated publics” (pp. 183–184). The role of communication in nation building is determined by which “diverse societies, regions, and groups within a country are linked into a national-state system” (Morrison, 1989, p. 18). This approach is now extending its meaning from domestic nation building to international relationship building among nations.

Hosting the Olympic Games has been considered by many countries as an effective public diplomacy tool, through which the host country could promote a desired national identity and image among foreign publics (Kunczik, 2003). Considering the exceptional amount of attention they get from spectators all over the world, the

Olympic Games provide a unique opportunity to appeal to foreign publics through maximum media exposure of the host country. For example, the 1988 Seoul Olympic Committee tried to change South Korea’s image from that of a war-stricken developing country to a prosperous country with economic success and advanced technology. More recently, China did the same by converting her negative image (e.g., that of a controlled communist country with human rights issues, lack of environmental protection, and poor quality of products) into a positive one by hosting the 2008 Beijing Olympics. China promoted the three themes of the Beijing Olympics: (1) green Olympics, which emphasizes China’s effort to improve environmental protection; (2) high-tech Olympics, which highlights China’s economic success and development accelerated by technological advancement; and (3) people’s Olympics, which puts “people” at the center of the Olympic spirit and sends messages to the outside world that China cares about human rights and tries to improve them (Berkowitz, Gjermano, Gomez, & Schafer, 2007). It must be an intriguing question whether the desired outcomes of the host country can really happen. Overall, many studies support “the Olympic effect” (Fishman, 2005; Spà, Rivenburgh, & Larson, 1995).

Culture and Public Relations

It seems generally agreed on that scholars and practitioners interested in international public relations need to look beyond their cultural biases and assumptions—the U.S.-centered understanding of public relations.

Zaharna (2001) suggested that international public relations scholars need to adopt more from the interaction and the processes of intercultural communication perspectives. Adaptation, negotiation, conflict management, and diplomacy are some of the ideas that should be applied to the study of international public relations. Zaharna’s in-awareness approach is focused on sensitivity to cultural differences. Zaharna sees public relations as defined by national parameters (country profile) and by cultural nuances (cultural profile), and then elaborated on with communication components. This approach emphasizes international public relations as a process of intercultural communication between client and practitioner. However, this approach needs to be extended because it is limited in scope to client-practitioner relationships, instead of to the bigger picture of organization-public relationships.

Kinzer and Bohn (1985) described two public relations models in multinational corporations—ethnocentric versus polycentric. The ethnocentric model (Illman, 1980) assumes that there is no difference between motivating people in domestic and in foreign countries. This model supposes that the people will respond similarly to the same message. This assumption leads to the idea that “what is known about public relations in the U.S. or the EU can be

applied in less developed countries” (p. 151). In contrast, the polycentric model ensures more freedom of decision making by local public relations practitioners.

Strongly opposing the ethnocentric model of public relations, Botan (1992) argued that

what has been called international public relations may not actually be the two-way multicultural exercise that its name implies. The practice of public relations across borders often and maybe increasingly, is controlled and directed by the home country based on assumptions inherent to the home country. (pp. 151–152).

Basically, Botan criticized the fact that the majority of international public relations discourse is rooted in the management-oriented definition of international public relations based on Western ethnocentric assumptions.

Simoes (1992) questioned the concept of public relations in a communication and promotion function. Instead, he suggested a “political” function of public relations from a Latin American viewpoint. He claimed that the assumption guiding his view of public relations is conflict based on power relations. In Simoes’s view, relationships between organizations and publics create political dimensions to organizational decisions.

Banks (2000) introduced a socio-interpretive approach as a contribution to intercultural public relations. He suggested that public relations assumptions be flexible and adaptable to whatever the intercultural situation presented. He developed three principles of communication policy in international public relations by focusing on cultural interpretations and community building:

1. Facts and values are culturally conditioned. Development is a Western concept with positive values in the West. But elsewhere, development often looks like exploitation and cultural imperialism.
2. Knowing other cultures’ rituals, languages, social norms, and values is necessary but not sufficient preparation for forming international community relationships. It is necessary also to remain open to the possibility of conducting business within others’ worldviews and effectiveness criteria.
3. The practitioner and researchers should be ready to redefine the nature of public relations situationally. We must leave open to interpretation and negotiation what constitutes the forms and goals of practice, depending on the cultural context. (p. 113)

Banks (2000) continued that

the global/local approach to managing international public relations should be modified to provide for interactivity through genuine dialogue. A first step is for practitioners and host nation officials to jointly create at the beginning of the relationship a public relations matrix for the host society, including its goals, plans, and projects. (p. 113)

A Case of Multicultural Setting

In 1995, there were more than 2,000 multinational companies located along the border between the United States and Mexico (McDaniel & Samovar, 1996). These companies are often called “maquiladoras”—“labor-intensive foreign-owned industries which assemble products for export to other countries” (Kras, 1995, p. xxi). Most maquiladoras are U.S.-owned, but many of the investors are from other countries, such as Japan, South Korea, Germany, and Canada. The two largest Mexican border cities—Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez—have grown from small tourist towns into urban industrial centers within a very few years (Kras, 1995).

Samsung Tijuana Park is one of the many successful maquiladoras in Tijuana. This plant is part of Samsung Group, a large business conglomerate in South Korea. Samsung Tijuana Park was established in 1996, beginning as a manufacturing complex for electronic commodities and components for color television sets, VCRs, monitors, and tuners. There were 100 Korean managers and 6,500 Mexican workers in 2000. Between 1997 and 1999, the number of Mexican workers doubled, and by 1999, Samsung Tijuana Park ranked as the second largest maquiladora in Tijuana (Patta, 1999).

In multinational companies such as Samsung Tijuana Park, two or more cultural factors affect the organizational culture as a whole. Figure 84.1 shows the cultural environment in Samsung Tijuana Park. “Border culture” is treated as a unique culture because people in Tijuana are more Americanized than people in the other Mexican cities, given the area’s proximity to the United States. As a result of many people moving to Tijuana for jobs in maquiladoras, they experience contact with cultures different from their own.

Without a doubt, the two national cultures represented by Korean managers and Mexican employees are the primary factors influencing Samsung Tijuana Park culture. In Samsung Tijuana Park, Korean managers and Mexican workers are cultural strangers to each other. Each cultural group within a multinational company has its own common pattern of cognitive, affective, and behavioral structures and processes. Because of this cultural gap, multinational companies may face challenges or “unintended conflicts” different from, and sometimes more serious than, those in their domestic settings. For example, there might be serious problems in training new employees and in cultural communication between managers and workers.

To measure perceptual similarities and differences between Korean managers and Mexican workers regarding various cultural dimensions such as individualism-collectivism, tolerance to uncertainty, and acceptance of power distance, Lee (2001) developed a new concept, “co-acculturation,” by synthesizing the co-orientation model and adaptation theory. Co-acculturation is defined

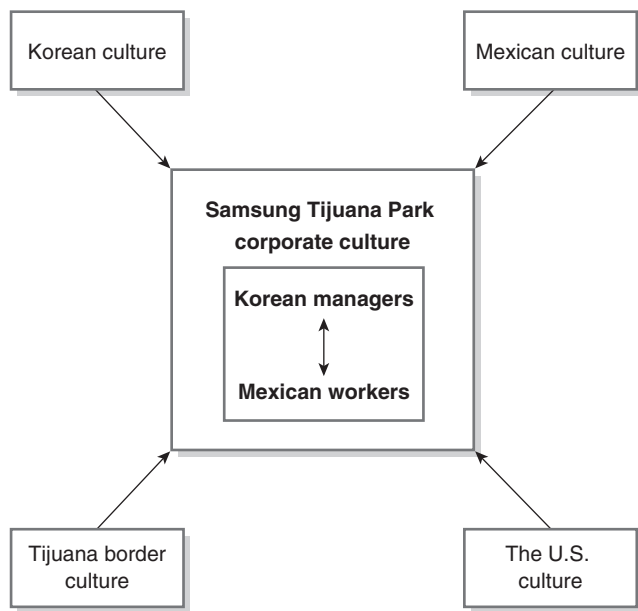


Figure 84.1 Multicultural Setting in Samsung Tijuana Park

as “simultaneous orientation toward each other and cultural dimensions” (p. 17). Co-acculturation is not one group’s acculturation to a host culture or the sum of each group’s acculturation. Rather, it represents “mutual acculturation” and “relational acculturation.” Based on a survey ($N = 255$), Lee found that (1) Mexican workers accurately perceive that they share power-distance values with their Korean managers, but the managers are generally less accurate in that they perceive greater differences than actually exist; (2) Mexican workers perceive that Koreans are as collectivistic as they are; however, Korean managers perceive that Mexicans are more individualistic than Korean managers; (3) Mexican workers perceive that Korean managers are more likely to avoid uncertainty at their job than they actually are; and (4) Korean managers perceive that Mexican workers are less likely to avoid uncertainty at their job than they actually are.

These misconceptions between cultural groups in multinational work settings may interfere with the integration of new workers and cause higher turnover. In this regard, the success or failure of a multinational company cannot be explained by economic factors alone. Effective intercultural communication and mutually beneficial relationship building between cultural groups, especially manager-worker relationships, serve as significant indicators of successful operation of multinational companies in the global economy.

From a public relations perspective, it is now commonplace for multinational organizations to include two or more cultures under a single corporate umbrella. Globalization makes work settings much more culturally heterogeneous. Not surprisingly, manager-worker

communication presents new challenges for both those directly involved and those charged with building and maintaining relationships within the organization—the public relations staff. Old assumptions and communication skills are put to the test when public relations practitioners must build and maintain new organizational relationships with culturally different employees, government entities, communities, and customers.

Furthermore, cultural heterogeneity is not necessarily limited to national culture issues. It also can be extended to other subcultures. For example, in an organization under merger and acquisition, people from different corporate cultures typically confront each other. This confrontation may pose a serious threat to building a new organizational culture.

Concluding Comments

In the field of public relations, the globalization of our world means opportunities and challenges for practitioners as well as for scholars. The fact that public relations practitioners need to communicate with international publics has become a reality for both small and large organizations. As Grunig (1993) pointed out, “The growth of international media, global business and global politics has strengthened the role of international public relations” (p. 141). Multinational organizations are regarded as more vulnerable to hostile reactions or crises than domestic organizations because of the increased numbers and complexities of those stakeholders who oppose them and the necessity for dealing with their cross-cultural contexts (Dilenschneider, 1992). International public relations “may be a necessary part of doing business for the public relations firms of the next century” (L. A. Grunig, 1992, p. 128). This promises to attract more attention and interest to this specific area of public relations and opportunities to build on the significant achievement previously attained.

Although educators are beginning to pay more attention to international public relations, there are only a few cases of international public relations classes being regularly offered in the university curriculum. Public relations educators need to find ways to expose students (future public relations professionals) to more of the various topics and issues related to international public relations because understanding public relations in this globalized world is not optional. It is must-have knowledge.

There is still a long way to go in building the body of knowledge about international public relations. What is missing in many previous studies titled global or international public relations is ironically the “global” or “international” aspect of public relations. It is clear that descriptive studies focusing on one individual country, without any overarching conceptualization, have limited value. Simply adding more and more isolated cases in multiple countries

cannot lead to adequate explanatory knowledge on international public relations.

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THE BUSINESS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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The public relations “business” is a multibillion-dollar industry practiced not only in the United States but also in most other parts of the world as well, with estimates varying for the United States from 158,000 (Seitel, 2007, p. 2) to 350,000 (Wilcox & Cameron, 2009, p. 2). Estimates of the number of practitioners in all countries in the world today, including the United States, are placed between 2.3 and 4.5 million public relations practitioners with an “annual global impact in the area of \$130–230 billion” (Falconi, 2006, p. 8).

In the United States, the two most prominent associations have a combined membership of nearly 35,000, while there are “an estimated 200 national and regional public relations organizations around the world” (Wilcox & Cameron, 2009, p. 3). In the United States alone, in 2005–2006, there were more than 250 colleges and universities offering programs in public relations, with about 34,000 students enrolled as majors in public relations or the allied areas of public relations/advertising or strategic communications (Wilcox & Cameron, 2009, p. 4).

Growth in the profession is expected to continue. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has recently predicted that

employment of public relations specialists is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through 2012. The need for good public relations in an increasingly competitive business environment should spur demand for public relations specialists in organizations of all types and sizes. (Seitel, 2007, p. 2)

That such growth will continue in all “areas” of the profession also seems quite apparent. We have witnessed not only the phenomenal growth in independent firms such as

Edelman Worldwide but the consistent emergence and growth of *new* agencies or firms as well. And, as suggested, this is a growth phenomenon in not just the United States but, primarily as a result of globalization, the entire world.

The Public Relations Agency

Guth and Marsh (2009) have listed the five major “settings” in which public relations is practiced:

1. Corporations
2. Nonprofit organizations and trade associations
3. Governments
4. Public relations agencies
5. Independent public relations consultancies

To this list, we must certainly add the practice of public relations in the international “theater.” This “global reach” will be discussed in a separate section later in this chapter.

This chapter focuses on the *public relations agency*. In the 21st century, the public relations agency is separated into two quite distinct areas: the *in-house component* and the *external agency*. And while there are estimated to be millions of public relations practitioners in the world today (Falconi, 2006), arguably the most recognizable “face” of public relations is that of the *agency*. It is important to note at the outset that the public relations agency is also commonly referred to as a *firm*. For most, the terms appear to be interchangeable. However, the functions are somewhat different in the overall sense. Quite simply,

the public relations *agency* (firm) has been defined as “a company that provides public relations services for other organizations on a per-job basis, by contract or on retainer” (Guth & Marsh, 2009, p. 558).

Clearly the public relations agency is an entity separate from the corporation or organization with whom it contracts. While the size and specialization(s) of a public relations agency (firm) may be argued, for present purposes we will consider a viable public relations agency to be *a structured group of no fewer than two public relations professionals, providing specialized public relations services on a full-time basis under the conditions of a retainer, fee for services, or conditional contract*. While the number of members in an agency (or firm) may be an issue for some, agencies do, in fact, range in personnel from 2 to well over 2,000. With the ability to add specialized contractors to small agencies (as needs may dictate), this seems a relatively moot concern.

Guth and Marsh (2009) continue by adding more concerning the function of the public relations agency. “Public relations agencies assist with the public relations activities of other organizations. Corporations, nonprofit organizations, trade associations, governments, and even individuals hire public relations agencies to help manage and execute various public relations functions” (p. 41).

The Scope of the Agency

There are public relations firms “found in every industrialized nation and most of the developing world” (Wilcox & Cameron, 2009, p. 107). Many of these large firms (such as Edelman Worldwide, Weber-Shandwick, Fleishman-Hillard, and others) earn millions of dollars in their multiple international offices—often as much or more than they generate domestically. In the United States alone, it is estimated that more than 9,000 such agencies or firms generating billions of dollars annually.

Public relations agencies express their vision of the role they should play through the Council of Public Relations Firms. In a statement of principles, revised and published in November of 2006, the Council made the following statement:

In their service to clients, public relations firms play a vital role encouraging public discourse. The professionalism and objectivity of our firms helps clients engage in that discourse, and clients turn to us for our counsel and assistance to vigorously pursue their organizational goals in educating and persuading audiences that matter most to them. Public relations firms help clients as diverse as government agencies, public and private companies, and not-for-profit groups. In a democratic and free society, our clients’ goals often put us in the sphere of such complex issues as thorny policy debates, intense market competition or critical education needs in areas of public health, safety and well-being. (p. 1)

Some of the most notable (independent) agencies, such as Edelman Worldwide, report an income of more than

\$300 million and list the number of employees in excess of 2,200; Ruder Finn reports nearly \$100 million in receipts, with nearly 600 employees; and Waggener Edstrom reports an income of more than \$90 million, with more than 600 employees—to list only three of the nation’s top-producing agencies (Werbel, 2007, p. 9). Modern-day firms, some obviously very large, offer many more services than the early public relations agencies. Such somewhat extensive service offerings include the following:

- Marketing communications (public relations efforts that compliment advertising and sales promotions)
- Executive speech training (helping managers to inspire as they deliver information and persuade orally)
- Research and evaluation (generating information and analysis that informs a campaign as well as data that can assess the effectiveness of that campaign)
- Crisis communication (assisting management in planning for emergency situations and implementing plans when such emergencies arise)
- Media analysis (assessment of media for potential placements of public relations messages as well as determining the effectiveness of the placements)
- Community relations (assisting companies in developing mutually beneficial relationships with their communities)
- Public affairs (developing effective relationships between government agencies and the communities served by those agencies)
- Branding and corporate reputation (establishing a unique collection of perceptions about a product or company)
- Financial and investor relations (the process of information and disclosure management between a corporation and the public)
- Environmental communications (the process of crafting and disseminating messages about the environment and how humans interact with it)
- Homeland security (the process of planning for and implementing those plans in cases of widespread community emergency)
- Litigation public relations (management of public communication related to legal disputes involving corporations)
- Employee-member relations (responding to and informing employees and their families)
- Government affairs (relations between corporate interests and government, especially regarding pending legislation)
- Issues management (anticipating and acting on key trends)
- International and trade relations (reacting to the political and legal aspects of the global-trading environment)
- Development/fund-raising (creating effective messages to spur financial and other contributions)
- Minority relations/multicultural affairs (creating welcoming relationships between an organization and members of a variety of ethnicities and cultures)
- Special events (planning and executing corporate gatherings)
- Health communication (devising messages and campaigns to improve health awareness and promote healthy behaviors)

- Reputation (image) management (using corporate communications systematically to groom an organization's public image)
- Social media management (devising user-created content for social-networking sites in the service of an organizational goal)

It is important to distinguish generally the functions listed above as they might be performed by *independent public relations firms* or *public relations components* in a larger organization from those efforts exerted by advertising or marketing—although such efforts may frequently overlap.

While advertising usually is accomplished through mass media outlets, it does so through the purchase of space and/or time for its messages. Public relations, on the other hand, is dedicated to obtaining coverage through the use of news items, press releases, feature stories, and so on that are printed without charge.

The communication functions of advertising are considerably more general and external than those “targets” of public relations—for whom quite specialized (designed) messages are constructed. Basically, the major goal of advertisements is to sell products and services. And while advertising and public relations often work “together,” their goals, methods, and measurements of success should not be considered the same.

Marketing and public relations often work “together” as well. Here again, the differences between the two are significant. The task of marketing is to identify, attract, and satisfy customers in order to achieve a company's sales goals. The publics with which the marketing functions of an organization are concerned are quite specific and limited. In contrast, the publics with which an organization's public relations efforts are concerned are quite broad and diverse.

These differences relate to *more* than issues of territoriality. For they evolve around both distinctions in the *goals/objectives* established, the *methods* used to achieve such goals, and the *criterion* applied in measuring the relative success of the efforts expended. Wilcox, Agee, and Cameron (2005) summarized this relationship well as they observed,

Although well-defined differences exist among the fields of advertising, marketing and public relations, there is an increasing realization that an organization's goals and objectives can be best accomplished through an integrated approach. (p. 17)

We should not be misled into thinking that the “integrated approach” is one that is accepted by (or acceptable to) all professionals in public relations, marketing, or advertising. For that is not the case. Many still prefer the disciplines to be separate and distinct. Both pragmatically and realistically, however, such integration seems to be a desirable end.

The Development of the Public Relations Agency

This nation's first public relations agency, the Publicity Bureau, was founded in Boston in the mid-1900s by Michaelis, Small, and Marvin and existed for some 12 years (Cutlip, 1994, p. 10). While few records of the Bureau's operations are extant, we do know that the firm represented Harvard University (1900), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1907), and American Telephone & Telegraph (1903). Although the firm did accomplish some worthwhile goals for these three firms, it was attacked by the muckraker, William Kittle, in *Arena Magazine* in 1909 (Cutlip, 1994, p. 19). While Kittle's “report” must be considered in context, it does provide a description of the efforts of this nation's first public relations firm:

The Publicity Bureau, operated by two men—Michaelis and Ellsworth—is an effective organ in advancing the interests of a powerful group of gaslight, water and transaction companies and in prejudicing the public against municipal ownership of any of these utilities. The bureau has offices in Boston, New York, Washington and Chicago and from these centers, arguments, half-truths, and edited reports that are often misleading, are sent out to the press and paid for as regular advertising although they appear as “news.” (Cutlip, 1994, p. 19)

In 1902, William Wolff Smith opened a “publicity business” in Washington, D.C. This was the second public relations agency to start operations in the United States and the first in the nation's capital. Smith was a newspaperman and a part-time law student.

He worked on notable newspapers such as the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, the *New York Sun*, and the prestigious (at that time) *Buffalo News*. Smith was a self-described “publicity agent,” while the relentless Kittle took a different slant, portraying him as “a propagandist for big business” willing to use “something less than ethical means” to achieve the goals of his client (Cutlip, 1994, p. 28).

While other agencies of note emerged in Washington, D.C. (e.g., that of Thomas Roerty Shipp in 1914), as well as other parts of a more business-conscious America, Ivy Ledbetter Lee moved to establish his own firm—separate from his longtime association with George F. Parker. Lee was bolstered by his successful development of accounts with the Pennsylvania Railroad (1906) and the Southern Pacific Railroad (along with Parker, in 1907). Both were lucrative associations that would propel Lee closer to professional independence.

The third public relations agency in the United States was formed in November 1904 by Ivy Ledbetter Lee and George Frederick Parker. Parker and Lee, as the firm was originally called, served primarily to counsel in political and industrial circles. Although the firm was relatively

short-lived, they contracted with some major clients, including the International Harvester Company, Westinghouse, and President Grover Cleveland. In most instances, even though they were members of the same agency, Parker and Lee recruited and performed “press agency” duties for *different clients*. Parker, for example, worked with General Leonard Wood on his unsuccessful presidential campaign, the Filipino independence movement, and the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Lee, as previously mentioned, worked with the Pennsylvania Railroad but gained lasting prominence working with the Rockefeller family (1914) in the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company strike and as counsel in “public relations” on behalf of Standard Oil.

Lee was making a name for *himself* separate from George Parker, and his efforts were very much appreciated by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, as J. Hampton Baumgartner, a publicist for the railroad, praised Lee by saying,

I feel that the work which you have devoted to matters concerning the railroads and their *public relations* [italics added] have been productive of far reaching results, not only to Pennsylvania but to all public carriers by bringing about an intelligent understanding of the problems which confront the railroads and efforts put forth to solve them effectively. (Cutlip, 1994, p. 54)

Following his attempted resignation as counsel to the Rockefellers (1915), Lee’s next venture would be to establish his own firm (1916)—Lee, Harris, and Lee. In charge of the seventh agency to be founded in the United States and the last before World War I, Lee proceeded to pursue new clients. His first was Standard Oil of New Jersey. Lee went on to press for the formation of the American Petroleum Institute (API) and provided valuable counsel to the newly formed Red Cross Council. Lee’s advice was stellar. His level of true “public relations thinking” was outstanding. The principles on which Lee insisted that organizations be based and their business conducted was more than a new chapter in an old book—it was a new book! Needless to say, the success realized through his suggestions cemented both his credibility and his professional utility.

The Nature of the Firm/Agency

There is little doubt that the public relations agency as we have defined it is quite different from a corporate component or public relations division functioning *within* a larger organization. Because of its rather abundant resources, both financially and in manpower, the agency is also considerably different from the sole practitioner. Quite frankly, however, whether a firm is considered *independent* or a large agency *owned by a large holding company*, the operational capabilities seem very much the same.

From an internal perspective, the agency (because of its size and therefore its ability to provide specialization) often organizes “according to industry groupings larger agencies are divided into such areas as health care, sports, fashion, technology, finance, and so on” (Seitel, 2007, p. 96).

Newsom, VanSlyke Turk, and Kruckeberg (2004) discussed the specific nature of the public relations agency (or firm) from the standpoint of operations or functions:

Each agency or firm has its own internal structure, but generally the president of the firm shares the handling of accounts, as do the salespeople, who may be account executives. A firm may employ a bookkeeper, a secretary, a publicity writer, an advertising or graphics specialist and an artist. . . . Large firms have copy editors, media specialists, several artists and a production facility. (p. 6)

In essence, small firms (some as small as two practitioners) necessitate considerably more adaptation and obviously allow for less specialization than do large firms (agencies).

Retaining a Public Relations Firm: Advantages and Disadvantages

Hiring a public relations firm is not a decision that *should* be made without considerable thought. When an organization’s managers consider making such a decision, they should deliberate on both the advantages and disadvantages of retaining outside counsel. Wilcox and Cameron (2006) reflected both sides of the issue (pp. 118–119). Considering the advantages of such a “hire,” they suggest the following advantages:

- *Objectivity*: Because outside counsel is *not* directly connected to the organization, it is often more objective and can provide new perspectives on the issues in question.
- *Multiple Skills*: The larger staff of an outside firm, generally provides a variety of *highly skilled specialists* in given areas.
- *Extensive Resources*: Such resources include not just the talent pool of counselors but also the contacts that exist as a result of regular work in the essential areas of the profession (extended).
- *Office Network*: Public relations firms generally have other offices in other parts of the country—even other parts of the world.
- *Specialized Skills*: Firms are more likely to have practitioners with expertise in unusually specialized areas (crisis management, investor public relations, reputation management, etc.). (For additional discussion, see Seitel, 2007, p. 96.)
- *Credibility*: The proper selection of a public relations firm *should* result in the hiring of highly credible counselors. Such a credible reputation results from past “good works,” ethical behaviors, and the demonstration of high levels of professionalism.

- *Dedicated Time*: In most cases, a firm will have practitioners assigned to a particular client and should be able to devote (dedicate) the necessary exclusive time to the particular case (campaign, etc.).
- *Avoiding Groupthink*: While all internal public relations components do not have this “problem,” it is easy to see why/how they would tend to “go along” with the wishes of upper-level management. An agency (hired from the outside) is likely to offer more original thought.

Admittedly, there are certain “downsides” to hiring a public relations firm as well. As clients, such negatives must be weighed against the aforementioned positive considerations. Such disadvantages, again paraphrasing Wilcox and Cameron (2006, p. 119), might be as follows:

- *Understanding*: No matter how skilled a practitioner or how clear a client’s explanation, goals may be misunderstood. If such goals are not entirely consensual, problems will likely occur.
- *Time*: For both clients and practitioners, *time is money*. Whether justified or not, clients often feel that practitioners often *waste time* planning—perhaps the most important part of a public relations effort.
- It is not surprising that a client wants the firm to “*Get on With It*,” while the firm wants to make sure that they are prepared to achieve the goals the client really wants.
- *Internal Friction (Resentment)*: While it is *not* uncommon for any number of organizations to hire outside counsel *even when they have an internal component*, such an action may cause friction with the internal component. (“Are we not good enough to do this project?”)
- *Strong Internal Direction Needed*: While one of the purposes in hiring outside counsel was to relieve internal pressure and save time, it is possible that the opposite will occur. Rather than experiencing released time from the project, the administration will be called on frequently to provide guidance or make decisions for the agency.
- *Sharing Sensitive Information*: While most certainly *not always* the case, public relations firms may have a need for access to company data that are often *not* for public perusal. Such data may be financial or operational in nature. Needless to say, organizations do not generally share *sensitive* information with someone from outside the company.
- *Cost*: Public relations agencies price their services in a number of different ways (by the job, retainer, fee for services, hourly, etc.). Organizations may consider the cost of an agency prohibitive (\$200–\$300 per hour is not unusual for senior counselors). (For additional discussion, see Seitel, 2007, p. 96.)

The Independent Public Relations Firm

It is worth noting that until the early 1970s, most major firms were independent operations and owned by the principal officers/stockholders of that firm. In 1973, the firm of Carl Byoir and Associates, at that time the country’s third

largest public relations firm, was sold to the advertising firm of Foote, Cone and Belding (Wilcox et al., 2005, p. 115). Since that time, we can consider the “types” of public relations firms or agencies from two different perspectives.

The first is the totally *independent* agency. Such agencies are still controlled by the officers and stockholders of the company. The second is the agency that is “subsumed by communications holding companies” (Seitel, 2007, p. 97). Agencies in this category are “controlled” by the parent company—whether it is a large holding company, a general communications firm, an advertising conglomerate, and so on. Seitel has recognized that the world’s largest public relations firms are all owned by media conglomerates, among them Omnicom, The Interpublic Group, and WPP Group—organizations that tend to get larger each year. Needless to say, there are a large number of *independent agencies* operating in the United States as well as the rest of the world. Below is a list of the 10 firms that are considered the largest *independent* agencies, accompanied by a statement of their 2006 net fees and the number of employees, and those large agencies are owned by “communications holding companies” or conglomerates (see Table 85.1).

Agency Name/City	2006 Net Fees (\$)	No. of Employees
Edelman Worldwide, New York	324,488,483	2,259
Ruder Finn, New York	99,303,000	593
Waggener Edstrom, Bellevue, WA	92,303,000	629
APCO Worldwide, Washington, DC	81,844,117	470
Text 100 Int’l, New York	53,565,704	514
Schwartz Communications, Waltham, MA	26,601,999	172
Qorvis Communications, Washington, DC	23,900,000	85
Dan Klores Communications, New York	20,500,000	127
Taylor, New York	18,006,000	84
Gibbs & Soell, New York	17,908,000	105

Table 85.1 Ten Largest Independent Public Relations Agencies
SOURCE: O’Dwyer’s Directory (2007, pp. 10–11).

<i> Holding Company^a</i>	<i> Public Relations Firms Owned^a</i>	<i> Total Revenues (\$)^b</i>	<i> Nonadvertising Revenues (%)^b</i>
Omicom	Fleishman-Hillard, Ketchum, Porter-Novelli, Brodeur Worldwide, Clark & Weinstock, Gavin Anderson & Co., Cone	8.6 billion	57
Interpublic Access Group	Communications; Carmichael, Lynch Spong; DeVries Public Relations; Golin-Harris; MWW; Tierney Public Relations; Powell Tate/Weber-Shandwick; Bragman Nyman Cafarelli, Mullen Public Relations; PMK/HBH; Rogers & Cowan	5.9 billion	Not available
WPP Group	Burson-Marsteller, Cohn & Wolfe, Hill & Knowlton, Olgivy PR Worldwide; Robinson, Lerer & Montgomery; Blank & Otus Public Relations; The Food Group; GCI Group (as of September 2004) ^b	7.6 billion	40
Havas	Euro RSCG Middleberg, Magnet Communications, Noonan Russon Presence Euro; Abernathy MacGregor, RSCG West	2 billion	60
Grey	APCO Worldwide and GCI Group	Not available	Not available
Publicis Group	Manning, Selvage & Lee, Publicis Consultants; Winner & Associates	4.79 billion	40
Incepta	Citigate (Broadcast, Technology, Public Affairs, Sard Verbinnen, Cunningham, Dewe Rogerson) ^b	305 million	50
Next	Bite Communications; Text 100, ^c Fifteen Communication Group	Not available	Not available

Table 85.2 Public Relations Agencies Subsumed by Holding Companies

SOURCES:

a. Seitel (2007, p. 97).

b. PR Week (2004, pp. 25–29).

c. O’Dwyer’s Directory (2007, p. 13).

Until the 1970s, the largest public relations firms were independently owned by their principal officers or, in some cases, by employee stockholders. A significant change began in 1973 when Carl Byoir & Associates, then the third largest U.S. public relations firm, was sold to Foote, Cone, and Belding.

Table 85.2 demonstrates how that trend has continued into the 21st century. The table lists major public relations firms (considered “nonindependent agencies”) and the name of the “holding company” that owns the firm. Specific earnings by such public relations firms are not public record, although two financial categories are reported below that reflect the size of the overall operation(s).

From an objective perspective, this is *not* to suggest that because a public relations firm (agency) is owned by a larger organization (company) it does not continue to operate as a public relations “agency.” In most cases, an outside observer would not be aware which firms or agencies are “independent” and which are owned by a “holding company.”

Public Relations: 60 Years of Sustained Growth

“During the second half of the 20th century, the practice of public relations became firmly established as an indispensable part of America’s economic, political and social development” (Wilcox & Cameron, 2009, p. 56) as there were 17,000 men and 2,000 women practicing public relations in the United States (see Table 85.3).

The Bureau of Labor Statistics annually provides *national estimates* for some 800 professions in the United States. While such statistics are admittedly estimates and do *not include practitioners who do not use the denotation “public relations”* (included in this group is an estimated 45,000–60,000 government employees), these numbers are still somewhat revealing.

Highly relevant employment and salary data (see Table 85.4) are also available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics concerning public relations managers. The data are listed below in Table 85.5.

Year	Men	Women ^a	U.S. Agencies	Total in PR (U.S.)
1950	17,000	2,000		19,000
1960	23,870	7,271		31,141
1970				75,852
1980	65,000 ^b	61,000 ^a		126,000
1990				172,000 ^c
2005			3,000	350,000

Table 85.3 Growth in Public Relations in the United States

NOTES:

a. In 1979, it was estimated that women made up 41% of practitioners in the field. By 1983, this figure was 50.1%, and by 1993, it had increased to 66.3%. In 2000, this number was reported to be 70% (Wilcox & Cameron, 2006, p. 64).

b. Estimate.

c. Projected (Kendall put his estimate at 385,000. See Wilcox et al., 1989, p. 4).

Notably, this group (47,210) is *not* included in the total numbers listed above. Adding this group of managers, those members of the profession in governmental service (ca. 50,000) and the group of specialists (above) gives us a conservative number of public relations practitioners equaling 325,000 in the United States.

The Future of the Public Relations Agency

There is universal agreement that public relations is a rapidly growing profession. The “Department of Labor predicts that public relations will be one of the fastest-growing fields, with 39.8 percent growth for public relations specialists and 36.6 percent for public relations managers from 2004 to 2014” (Wilcox & Cameron, 2009, p. 56). It is also quite evident that when examining the growth in total income, the number of offices (both domestically and globally), as well as the increase in the number of practitioners over the past few years, the public relations agency will continue to grow at more than a steady rate.

Where will such jobs emerge and agencies develop? There will be a significant number of new positions in virtually all areas of the nonprofit sector. In addition, it is reasonable to assume increases for public relations professionals in the areas of investor relations, health care crisis management, reputation management, and the international theater (Taylor, 2001). “Public relations agencies . . . will continue to expand in the 21st century. Just as a plethora of high-tech public relations agencies emerged in the 1990’s, so, too, is it likely that the move toward public relations specialization among agencies will continue in the 21st century” (Seitel, 2007, p. 99). *Fortune Magazine* (March 21, 2005, p. 131) has predicted that there will be an increase in public relations jobs by more than 20% between now and 2012.

	Mean Hourly Wage (\$)	Mean Annual Wage (\$)	Lower 10% Wage (\$)	Lower 25% Wage (\$)	Median Wage (\$)	Upper 75% Wage (\$)	Upper 90% Wage (\$)
Hourly wage	27.45	57,100	14.22	17.99	23.94	33.17	45.49
Annual wage	29,580	57,100	29,580	37,420	49,800	69,410	94,620

Table 85.4 Public Relations Specialists Salaries: May 2007 (Number of Employees: 225,800)

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

	Mean Hourly Wage (\$)	Mean Annual Wage (\$)	Lower 10% Wage (\$)	Lower 25% Wage (\$)	Median Wage (\$)	Upper 75% Wage (\$)	Upper 90% Wage (\$)
Hourly wage	46.71		21.57	29.55	41.57	58.41	70.00+
Annual wage		97,170	44,870	61,470	86,470	121,500	145,600+

Table 85.5 Public Relations Managers Salaries: May 2007 (Number of Employees: 47,210)

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data last modified on April 3, 2008.

Potential for earning is a normal concern. What jobs will pay the most in the coming years? What areas of the country will provide the most employment in the profession? What will be the future of the agency in the realm of compensation? First, we strongly feel that the development of public relations firms and agencies will be most pronounced, though not exclusive, in the East and West coasts—areas such as New York, Boston, Miami, and Washington, D.C., on the East Coast and Los Angeles, Seattle, San Diego, and San Francisco on the West Coast. Rapidly developing job markets will emerge in the middle of the United States as well as in areas such as Dallas, St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Minneapolis. Most of these areas will be offering salaries above \$90,000 per annum, with some over \$100,000 per year.

Table 85.6 provides 2004 data on salary levels in the varying *areas* of public relations practice, while Table 85.7 provides similar data for practitioner salaries in various parts of the United States.

There is clear evidence that the employment of a public relations *agency* (outside the company or organization) is increasing. Wilcox, Cameron, Ault, and Agee (2007) observe that “a major trend for American corporations has been the outsourcing of services, whether telecommunications,

<i>Area of Public Relations Practice</i>	<i>Annual Salary (\$)</i>
Public relations agency	111,860
Companies/corporations	101,990
Professional organizations	79,820
Philanthropic services	76,870
Colleges and universities	74,780

Table 85.6 Comparative Salaries for Differing Areas of Practice

SOURCE: Seitel (2007, p. 100).

<i>U.S. City</i>	<i>Annual Salary (\$)</i>
Boston, MA	132,087
New York, NY	115,730
San Francisco, CA	108,985
San Jose/Silicon Valley, CA	106,119
Seattle, WA	101,700
Milwaukee, WI	100,500

Table 85.7 Comparative Salaries for Select U.S. Cities

SOURCE: Seitel (2007, p. 100).

accounting, customer service, software engineering, or even legal services. . . . the trend line is for more organizations to outsource their communications activities to public relations firms and outside contractors” (p. 105).

With the rapid increase in the sophistication of equipment (i.e., fiber optics, digital transmissions) and practitioner specializations (blogging, Web page development, and use of the Internet), it is understandable why such a trend is occurring.

The choice facing the entry-level public relations professional whether to work with a *larger agency* or a *small firm* is *not* always simple. Both have advantages. One should consider that the small firm will generally require that the public relations practitioner perform a larger number of differing tasks while on the staff—specialization is often not an option. Public relations professionals (in small firms) may well expect to be *generalists*. On the other hand, one obvious advantage of this environment is that the “new” practitioner is exposed to several different aspects of the profession and most often has greater autonomy in the performance of his or her task. Such autonomy allows for not only the development of new skills but also the application of considerable creativity.

The larger firm, or agency, provides the entry-level practitioner with an opportunity to both specialize more extensively in a given area (once the more fundamental tasks are mastered) and, very important, build a mentoring relationship with veteran professionals—an immensely valuable opportunity. Such a firm will provide an environment in which the more seasoned practitioner can develop and carry out “new” programs, develop new talent (in mentoring situations), and eventually move into upper-level management positions. Arguably, larger firms are generally more financially stable and able to offer higher salaries, benefits, and bonuses.

It is important for young professionals to carefully consider the aforementioned options when selecting the type of environment in which they want to work. Making an initial choice does *not* mean that one cannot change at a later time—and even move “back” if some moves are not satisfactory. Firms, either large or small, are not necessarily alike. Even though one’s experience at a “large” firm is unpleasant or professionally unrewarding, it does not mean that all such experiences will be the same—likewise with any size of firm or agency. Just as individuals are unique, so are public relations agencies.

Preparing for Employment in a Public Relations Agency

University students often decide to major in public relations as preparation for entering the profession. An excellent curriculum in public relations should include developing an understanding of theories of strategic communication; developing an ability to conduct practical research at a high level

of competence; honing writing skills to a level of precision and excellence; developing an understanding of effective teamwork and client relations; and providing opportunities for professional practice, both through classroom assignments for simulated and real clients and through structured, mentored, internships with public relations professionals. Discussion of case studies can prove to be an important learning tool in accomplishing these goals.

Figure 85.1 provides an example of the kind of case that might be studied to introduce students to understanding the business of public relations. The problems described in this case are ones that virtually all start-up public relations agencies encounter, and the case provides a good opportunity to look at the business issues inherent in public relations.

Most of us readily admit that people are the most important element in any business—whether large or small. The public relations profession is certainly no exception. In any organization, from the smallest retailer to the largest corporation, from the start-up business to the multimillion dollar nonprofit association, or from the U.S. government to the government of any number of foreign countries, public relations professionals will be needed to help establish good relationships with any number of relevant publics. The well-educated and highly skilled public relations professionals will find themselves in increasing demand as globalization makes our world much more interdependent and provides many more “seats at the tables” of commerce, politics, and social exchange.

Building the Independent Public Relations Agency

Background. While there are countless public relations agencies in the United States, no two are exactly the same. Frankly, many are quite different from one another. At the same time, there are a number of common concerns that all start-up public relations agencies encounter and must address.

Ron and Terry met in college, and both earned undergraduate degrees in public relations. Terry’s interests were centered in the general areas of media (electronic and print), while Ron’s major emphasis was in the area of management and budget. As juniors in a public relations management class, the two decided to form their own public relations agency on graduation.

Their experience consisted of two summer internships each and working on projects through their membership in the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). In addition, both Ron and Terry had agreed to public relations internships during the summer between their junior and senior years.

Situation. The formation of any business presents some problems or issues. Forming a public relations firm (business) presents some very unique problems that must be dealt with.

An initial issue deals with the *type of organization* Ron and Terry will form. While they understood the nature of other organizational structures including traditional partnerships and corporations, Ron and Terry chose to form their company in line with a more current trend. They chose to form a Limited Liability Company, or LLC.

Second, Ron and Terry needed to develop a realistic *business plan*. Such a plan would include financial matters, location, budget, equipment, income projections (5–10 years), rent/lease considerations, and so on. The SBA (Small Business Administration), the SBDC (Small Business Development Center), and SCORE (Retired Business Executives) helped with this plan. While the plan was general and needed more specifics on both expenditures and income, Ron and Terry felt comfortable with it.

A third concern was their *financial base*. Both Ron and Terry had more than \$10,000 each in college loans to repay, but knew they had to have a fairly substantial amount of money to start their business. With the help of their parents as cosigners and the endorsement of the SBA, Ron and Terry borrowed \$25,000 and established a “line of credit” for another \$50,000. The line of credit would be used only as needed.

Ron and Terry next determined a *specific location* (part of the country and specific city) in which to locate their business. They both loved the city of Charleston, South Carolina, but felt the economic outlook was a bit bleak there. They had both been raised in the Washington, D.C., area but knew the level of competition in the nation’s capital for public relations business was keen and they would be going up against some well-established and major firms. They decided on Denver, Colorado. There weren’t many major public relations firms with branches in Denver and none with their main office located there. Denver seemed to have plenty of businesses to support the efforts of a new public relations agency. Besides, both Ron and Terry liked to ski, and Denver was within an hour of major ski slopes.

Since neither Ron nor Terry has the needed expertise in writing or graphics, they realize they will have to acquire *additional staff*. Options include hiring full-time staff or contractors (as needed). They choose to hire contractors to fill specific roles on an as-needed basis. They believe that there are a considerable number of practitioners in the Denver area who would be able to provide the needed services. Ron will assume the duties of the manager since that is his primary interest, and Terry will handle media relations and electronic productions (video, audio, Internet, etc.).

Problems. Virtually all businesses have problems. The issue is whether and how one can deal with such problems. Listed below are some issues that faced Ron and Terry as they started their venture.

- Was the selection of the business type a good choice? Would the formation of a corporation add more credibility to their title? Does LLC provide legal protection(s) for them and their staff? Would a partnership be fewer “headaches” for the new venture? What about legal implications and liabilities? Is there interest in bringing in a new “partner” for some capital infusion? Is more capital needed at this time?
- Have they chosen their location wisely? Is it more advantageous to start a business venture in an area that has been proven to be willing and able to support such businesses (in this case, Washington, D.C., or New York)? Why is Denver the final choice? Is it a good business environment for their venture?

(Continued)

(Continued)

- One of the major issues in business success or failure is how well the business is capitalized? With the initial loan of \$25,000 and the \$50,000 line of credit, will there be enough money to see the new agency through until it can show a profit. While a public relations firm has no real “stock” or merchandise, there will be considerable expenses. Have such potential costs been addressed?
- How specific should a business plan be? Could a business plan with few specifics in projected expenditures and income potential help in obtaining money from banks or other lending institutions?
- Where will the new organization be housed? Will the principals lease (rent), buy, or even build? Will they try to find a location inside the city or on the outskirts (even a suburb)? Is the location and appearance of the office important? How large an office will be needed at the outset?
- What specific types of equipment will be needed for the new business? Is it wise to lease some of the major pieces of equipment (copiers and laptop computers)? Is it possible to buy used (in good condition) office furniture or equipment? What about expenses for office decorating, telephone and Internet services, and so on?
- Will additional staff be needed (practitioner or support staff)? It is a common practice to hire contractors as needed for a specific job. Is this a good move early in the life of a new business? Is it better to hire full-time staff and build a consistent team than to change the “mix” as different jobs demand? How will the search and interview processes be handled?
- How will salaries be paid? Will salaries be paid from the very outset? Will monies be paid on a percentage basis of business income generated by individuals in the agency? Will a benefit package be offered to members of the agency? What benefits will be offered at the outset, or will such benefits “wait” until profit levels are more meaningful? Will the originating “partners” receive a salary or income from the agency if such monies are generated by the firm?

Figure 85.1 Building the Independent Public Relations Agency

SOURCE: An original case study by John D. Stone.

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PART XIII

ADVERTISING

HISTORY OF ADVERTISING

EDD APPLGATE

Middle Tennessee State University

Colonial American Advertising

Advertising appeared in America in pamphlet and signboard forms. Pamphlets, which were popular, explained in depth what was available. Signboards, on the other hand, resembled in design those used in England. Most of the time, these signs contained symbols as well as addresses, which consisted of brief copy, not numbers. Although these signs were popular among businesses throughout the colonies, the most colorful appeared in cities such as Philadelphia and Baltimore. Signs for taverns were the most visible.

In the early 1700s, John Campbell was a postmaster in Boston and knew several important politicians. Using his position and his friends, Campbell eventually asked the authorities to grant him permission to publish a newspaper. The first *Boston News-Letter* was dated "From Monday April 17 to Monday April 24, 1704," and was printed on an 8" x 12" sheet of paper. Copy appeared in two columns on the front and back. Rough in appearance, the *News-Letter* contained news from newspapers published in London. Often the news was out of date. Advertising received a maximum space of 20 lines. The cost per agate line was about 1.5 cents.

The third *News-Letter*, dated May 1 to May 8, 1704, contained the first paid ads. Although there were three ads, together they occupied only 4 inches of space in one column. The word *advertisements* separated them from the news. Two advertised rewards for the capture of thieves; the other advertised real estate.

As Campbell's paper continued, other kinds of ads appeared, including those for slaves. However, advertising was restricted; even after 3 years, 5 inches devoted to

advertising was rare. Some issues were devoid of any advertising whatsoever.

On December 21, 1719, in Boston, William Brooker published the *Boston Gazette*. The following day, in Philadelphia, Andrew Bradford published the *American Weekly Mercury*. Both newspapers were similar to the *News-Letter* in size and typography. Even the ads were similar, except that Brooker employed brief headlines that actually identified what the various ads concerned.

Two years later, Benjamin Franklin, who was 16, became the editor of Boston's *New England Courant*, which James Franklin, his older brother, had published. James had published controversial political essays and was arrested. Benjamin printed the word *Advertisements* in bold capital letters and separated it from the copy. The word attracted attention. Franklin's editorship ended 2 years later, and he moved to Philadelphia.

Franklin worked for Samuel Keimer, who published the *Universal Instructor in All the Arts and Sciences and Pennsylvania Gazette*. Franklin, with the help of a friend, purchased the paper and immediately shortened the name to *Pennsylvania Gazette*. He improved the writing and typography. Within several months, the paper was considered one of the most attractive newspapers in the colonies.

Advertising in the *Gazette* was important to Franklin. In the September 25 to October 2, 1729, issue, he printed the word *Advertisements* in bold letters, then left about a 1/2 inch of white space. The issue contained nine ads. The first letter of the first word of each ad was capitalized. In addition, each ad had at least a 1/2 inch of white space above and below it.

Franklin increased the number of pages from two to four so he could handle more ads and news stories. He

separated each ad with white space. He used at least a 14-point heading for each ad. Later, he incorporated small stock cuts or illustrations. In the May 23 to 30, 1734, issue he employed a stock cut of a ship for the *Three Bachelors*, which had docked. The ad informed merchants that the ship was accepting freight. Franklin realized that illustrations could enhance an ad, so he used half-column and column cuts made especially for certain advertisers. Readers could determine for whom or what the ad was merely by the illustration. Retailers who normally stayed away from advertising in newspapers realized that they could increase sales by advertising in Franklin's newspapers. As a result, Franklin had to enlarge his newspaper again. Instead of two short columns, he put in three deep columns, which made the newspaper about the size of a modern tabloid.

Franklin published ads for slaves, personal items lost or stolen, and goods for sale, including *Poor Richard's Almanack*, which he wrote and published.

On November 5, 1733, John Peter Zenger published the first issue of the *New York Weekly Journal*. However, Zenger criticized the provincial government and was arrested for libel. His lawyer, Andrew Hamilton, orchestrated a masterful defense, and Zenger was found innocent. Zenger's newspaper was superior to Bradford's. The *New York Weekly Journal* contained 8 to 10 ads, while the *Gazette* contained 2. In addition, Zenger used column rules to separate ads, and he did not restrict advertising to a particular amount of space. One ad was more than a half-page deep. Like Franklin, Zenger realized the importance of illustrations and used various cuts to improve the appearance of certain ads.

One of the most innovative newspapers in the mid-1700s was the *New York Post Boy*, which was founded by James Parker in 1742. Parker, who had apprenticed in Franklin's print shop, received financial support from Franklin. Originally titled the *New York Gazette, Revived in the Weekly Post Boy* and later, *Parker's New York Gazette*, or the *Weekly Post Boy*, the newspaper existed until 1773.

Ads in Parker's paper occupied as many as six columns, or half of the paper. Ads were for real estate, slaves, runaway apprentices, books, wines, medicines, and lotteries. Headlines were capitalized in typesizes of 10 point, sometimes 14 or 18 point.

By 1760, type sizes and typefaces varied within most ads. Headlines were at least 18 point. Display ads filled the columns. The newspaper became so successful among advertisers that ads filled three of the four pages. Parker's paper was probably the first in the American colonies to devote the entire front page to advertising.

The *Pennsylvania Packet and the General Advertiser*, which had been founded in 1771 by John Dunlap, illustrated how advertising could help sell newspapers. Dunlap realized the importance of how an ad looked. As a result, the ads in his paper were easier to read and attracted reader interest. Dunlap's newspaper featured commercial news, too, rather than political stories. Commercial news attracted

merchants. Thus, he was able to attract those who needed to advertise. He revived the illustration; special cuts were created for certain advertisers. Within 2 years, Dunlap's newspaper was so successful that he had to enlarge its size and increase its columns. Advertising accounted for two-thirds of the paper's content. In 1784, the paper, which had started as a weekly, became the first daily to be published in America, primarily because of the amount of advertising Dunlap received.

Another daily appeared a year later. Published in New York by Francis Childs, the *New York Daily Advertiser* contributed to advertising by running headlines as big as 36 point. These headlines, usually one word, were printed in bold to capture attention.

By 1800, the number of newspapers published in the United States was about 300. Most publishers were satisfied with their advertising. Few actually worried about how ads appeared. Thus, advertising remained constant in appearance for numerous years. In most cases, no more than one cut illustrated each ad. The copy was dull and usually small in size.

The Penny Press and Advertising

Benjamin Day started the *New York Sun* in 1833. By the second year, the paper was selling 20,000 copies. The large circulation made it a popular medium for advertisers.

Day wrote most of the copy, which consisted of 10 lines or less, for the ads. He realized the importance of the want ad, which advertisers in London had used. He solicited these small ads from businesses and readers and placed them under the heading "Wants." Day also published ads for theaters and museums. Day had to increase the paper's page dimensions as the number of ads increased.

In 1835, James Gordon Bennett founded the *New York Herald*, which, like the *Sun*, presented news of every type. Eventually, the *Herald* surpassed the *Sun* in circulation, and Bennett was more creative than his rivals in dealing with advertisers. Like the *Sun*, the *Herald* catered to merchants and manufacturers by the kind of news stories printed. Ads were separated by lines but contained no boldface headings.

Most ads carried little, if any, illustrations. Most ads were similar to want ads. They contained small first-line headlines, small amounts of copy, and thumbnail illustrations that identified businesses.

In 1836, Bennett's *Herald* published a two-column ad that contained a two-column illustration for the American Museum. The *Herald* and other New York newspapers published two-column ads, some with illustrations. In the late 1840s, advertisers who placed small ads complained to the publisher of the *Herald* about the few advertisers who placed large ads. The publisher banned all display ads. The paper's advertising columns looked the same and, consequently, unappealing.

In the 1850s, Robert Bonner purchased the *Merchants' Ledger*, a business sheet, and changed its name to the *New York Ledger*. Although he did not accept advertising at first, he made advertising history by publishing stories that appealed to women, which resulted in women becoming more interested in reading stories in newspapers and in ads directed to women. Bonner advertised his paper in other newspapers. He allowed display ads; he experimented with copy and typography, which caused other publishers to do the same. His paper soon had a circulation of 400,000.

Bonner's paper soon went to two-columns with reiteration, then to a full page. Some of his ads included a line being printed more than 600 times. His methods had an immediate effect on advertising.

The First Advertising Agencies

The advertising agency in the United States developed in the 1800s. According to Ralph M. Hower (1949), advertising agencies passed through four stages before N. W. Ayer & Son was founded. The first stage was the newspaper agency, which was inaugurated by Volney B. Palmer, who represented newspaper publishers. The second stage occurred in the 1850s, when agents became independent. Space jobbing, as this stage was called, became popular as agents realized that they could earn more by selling space to advertisers. This stage caused many agents to question their role. After all, they did not work for publishers, and they did not work for advertisers. Yet they referred to themselves as agents. The third stage developed out of the second when George P. Rowell purchased large amounts of space in newspapers and then resold it in small amounts to advertisers. This stage, which has been called space wholesaling, began in 1865. The fourth stage was based on Rowell's idea and appeared in the late 1860s. Called the advertising concession agency, this stage occurred when Carlton & Smith (later the J. Walter Thompson Company) purchased most—if not all—of the advertising space in certain publications for a specified period of time. Consequently, the agency, not the publisher, was responsible for securing advertisers for the entire publication. This practice actually closed the gap between agent and publisher, but the agent worked as an independent middleman nonetheless.

Volney B. Palmer

Volney B. Palmer, who had offices in Boston, New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, was a pioneer. He was the first advertising agent, and he represented more newspapers than did other agents of his day. In addition, he promoted advertising as an integral part of marketing and produced as well as delivered ads to publishers.

Palmer was born to Nathan and Jerusha Palmer in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1799. His father, a lawyer

who held several political positions in Wilkes-Barre, moved his wife and six children to Mount Holly, New Jersey, in 1818, where he published the *Burlington Mirror*, a newspaper on which every member of the family worked. He changed the name of the newspaper to the *New Jersey Mirror and Burlington County Advertiser* about a year later. The newspaper continued to be popular among readers and advertisers, even after Nathan's death in 1842, when it was published by his widow and then his daughter, Eliza.

Palmer and one of his four brothers moved to Pottsville, Pennsylvania, in 1830, where he invested and worked in real estate. In 1841, after he married, Palmer moved his family to Philadelphia, where he attempted to sell real estate in an economically depressed city. By 1842, he had added a coal office as well as an advertising business to his real-estate venture.

Palmer remained in real estate for the next several years, even though his advertising interests were fruitful. In 1849, he used "Advertising Agency" in an ad for the first time. He claimed to be the sole representative of 1,300 newspapers. This, Palmer realized, allowed advertisers to be selective. In addition, Palmer created speculative presentations for these prospective advertisers. The advertiser was informed of the total cost, not just the space rates for each newspaper selected. Palmer received a 25% commission from the publisher on payment. The commission system is used today, except that agencies usually receive 15%, not 25%.

Palmer's agency provided more services than most agencies at the time. He promoted his services by using endorsements from publishers. According to Donald R. Holland (1973, p. 108), Palmer "urged business men to use advertising on a regular basis, to use it to develop new markets, to take advantage of the flexibility of advertising to specific regions or in specific seasons."

By the mid-1850s, Palmer was considered by numerous clients as a godsend, and his agency grew. He opened four offices in four major cities. He maintained the office in Philadelphia and hired others to manage the other three. He visited the other offices at various times throughout the year.

In the late 1850s, John E. Joy, W. W. Sharpe, and J. E. Coe became partners. When Palmer retired in the early 1860s, Joy and Coe operated the Philadelphia and the New York offices, respectively. The latter office was eventually purchased by W. W. Sharpe. The office in Boston was controlled by S. R. Niles.

George P. Rowell

George P. Rowell was born in 1838 in Concord, Vermont. When he was a teenager, he moved with his parents to a farm outside Lancaster, New Hampshire. At 17, he went to Boston to find work. He taught school for several years, then worked in a store. Eventually, he found employment with the *Boston Post*, for which he sold space to advertisers.

Rowell married Sarah Eastman in 1862. Although he earned enough to support his family, he created a theatrical playbill in 1864, for which he sold space to advertisers. He continued the playbill for several weeks and netted a comfortable profit.

In 1865, he left the *Post* and opened an advertising agency with his friend Horace Dodd. They devised a “list system” of newspapers for advertisers to consider. Unlike Palmer, they purchased large quantities of column space from these newspapers, then sold the space in small quantities to advertisers. In short, they purchased space at wholesale, then sold it at retail. They persuaded certain publishers to give them a discount based on continued patronage. The agents received an additional 3% off the card rate if they paid in cash within a 30-day period. The agents did not have to pay more than 25% of the card rate for most of the newspapers they handled. Rowell’s “list system” became instantly popular and was adopted by other agencies.

Rowell and Dodd started the *Advertisers’ Gazette*, a house organ that promoted advertising and the agency.

Rowell sold the agency to Dodd in 1867 and moved his family to New York, which had become the most important commercial city in the nation because of its location. Rowell established the agency George P. Rowell and Company and continued using the “list system.”

Rowell made an effort to make sure that the circulation figures claimed by publishers were accurate. Rowell realized that if his agency could supply exact figures to advertisers, then advertisers would know how much to pay for the space they purchased.

Rowell continued to publish the *Advertisers’ Gazette*, and in 1869, as a service to prospective advertisers, he published the first volume of *Rowell’s American Newspaper Directory*, which listed more than 5,000 newspapers in the United States, more than 300 in Canada the agency handled, and, of course, various advertisements, which defrayed part of the publication cost. Although Rowell had tried to eliminate so-called private lists, he was criticized by other agents for making available at a nominal cost more information than they offered. Rowell was also criticized by publishers for printing conservative circulation figures of their respective newspapers. The publication was updated and issued annually. As a result of this publication, publishers of newspapers eventually changed their circulation figures.

Rowell also published the *American Newspaper Reporter*, which was a house organ that preceded *Printers’ Ink*. The organ contained insightful features about individuals who worked in the advertising and newspaper businesses, as well as other informative articles.

By 1871, Rowell’s “list system” had been employed 6 years and had proved profitable. Rowell himself had accumulated more than \$100,000. Yet the firm continued to add to its various lists of newspapers and clients. Rowell’s firm placed numerous ads for various questionable remedies, for instance, even though Rowell’s opinion toward advertising patent medicine changed dramatically years later.

In 1878, Rowell issued a small pamphlet that expressed the principles and conditions that guided the agency. The same year, he sold the firm’s house organ, *American Newspaper Reporter and Advertisers’ Gazette*, to R. H. C. Valentine, who changed the subhead and design.

In 1880, he purchased a farm in New Hampshire and seldom worked in advertising. However, in 1888, Rowell returned to his office in New York and published *Printers’ Ink*, which contained articles about the business of advertising. The publication became a journal for advertisers and was so successful that eventually it had at least 200 imitations.

Rowell divorced in 1890 and married Jeannette Hallock in 1891. He retired from advertising in 1905 and wrote 52 papers about his life in the business. These papers appeared in *Printers’ Ink*, then in the book *Forty Years an Advertising Agent: 1865–1905*, which was published in 1906.

N. W. Ayer & Son

Francis Wayland Ayer was born in 1848 in Lee, Massachusetts. Nathan Wheeler Ayer, his father, had graduated from Brown University. In fact, Francis was named after Dr. Francis Wayland, one of Brown’s presidents.

Francis Wayland Ayer learned from his father the basic principles that helped him throughout his life. He learned what responsibility, integrity, and honesty meant. When he was 14, he taught in a country school in New York. A year later, he was offered a position in a village school.

In 1867, he attended the University of Rochester. Within a year, he had spent his savings. He asked his father for help, but his father was barely earning an income. Ayer left the university in search of a job. The publisher of the *National Baptist*, a weekly religious newspaper, hired him to solicit ads. Ayer earned \$1,200 in commissions in less than a year. His employer offered him \$2,000 a year to stay with the firm, but Ayer refused; he was certain he could earn more on his own. He persuaded his father to work with him, and on April 1, 1869, he opened the agency N. W. Ayer & Son. He named the agency after his father for several reasons, including because the name sounded more impressive than just F. W. Ayer.

The Ayer agency began with 11 religious newspapers. Like other agents of his day, Ayer solicited ads from advertisers, then placed them in the publications listed with his agency. In addition, he purchased the total advertising space in certain publications, then resold it in partials to advertisers. Thus, he acted as manager of advertising departments of publications. Ayer also placed ads in publications that were not on his list. In such instances, he estimated how much the space would cost, then quoted a price that was slightly higher than his estimated cost to advertisers. Ayer earned income the best way he knew how: by selling and bargaining. By the end of its first year, the agency represented more than

11 newspapers. Growth continued, and in 1870, Ayer had to move to a larger office and hire his first employee, George O. Wallace, a bookkeeper.

Within 2 years, the agency had to move again. It was handling more than 300 publications located in 27 of the 37 states that made up the nation. In addition, ads for clients were placed in other publications through other agents.

In 1873, N. W. Ayer died. Francis purchased his father's interest in the business. The same year, as a result of growth, Ayer asked Wallace to become a partner; Wallace accepted a one-fourth interest in the agency.

In 1875, Ayer married Rhandeen Gilman. The same year, the Ayer open-contract-plus-commission plan was initiated, after Ayer decided to represent advertisers, not publishers. Unlike Rowell, he would inform an advertiser as to how much space cost. Furthermore, he would inform an advertiser as to what the agency received for its services. Instead of being merely a space seller like other agencies, Ayer's agency would become a space buyer and therefore be paid by the client. Through trial and error, Ayer learned how to earn a profit from his commission system. The advertiser had to trust Ayer and vice versa. Ayer would buy space at the lowest possible cost for the advertiser. The advertiser would have access to Ayer's lists of rates. Thus, the advertiser could determine the cost of advertising space in a specific publication and, consequently, the commission to the agency.

This system allowed Ayer to buy advertising space wisely as well as consider the advertiser's needs, which are the hallmarks of modern agencies. The system, although sound, was not adopted by every agency that learned about it, but it forced every agency to recognize that advertisers had interests that needed servicing.

Throughout the 1870s, the Ayer agency grew. By 1876, it could place ads in any newspaper published in the United States or Canada, because Ayer had created a printing department a year earlier so the agency could print most of the ads in-house. This gave the agency an advantage over other agencies; most agencies hired independent printers to print their clients' ads.

In 1877, the agency purchased Coe, Wetherill & Company, another agency in Philadelphia. Coe, Wetherill & Company had succeeded Joy, Coe & Company, which had acquired Palmer's agency. In addition, the agency, like Rowell's, published *Ayer and Son's Manual for Advertisers*, primarily to promote its list of publications, and later, *The Advertiser's Guide*, a quarterly magazine filled with informative features and promotional pieces about advertising.

Ayer, like other agencies, placed ads for makers of patent medicine. Other clients included John Wanamaker, Montgomery Ward and Company, Whitman's Chocolates, Blackwell's Durham smoking tobacco, Singer sewing machines, Harvard College, and manufacturers of farm machinery.

In 1878, Ayer allowed Henry Nelson McKinney to become a partner. McKinney, an expert in sales, believed in the power of advertising and in the open-contract system. He was extremely important to the growth of the agency.

In 1879, Ayer started another service when it conducted a market survey of the nation to entice the Nichols-Shepard Company, which manufactured threshing machines. The survey presented the production of grains by counties and states. In addition, the agency included an in-depth advertising plan. This was the first advertising campaign based on a market survey. The company hired Ayer as a result of the survey.

In 1880, the agency focused on writing advertising copy in addition to printing ads. The same year the agency published the *American Newspaper Annual*, which listed every newspaper and magazine published in the United States and Canada. This annual later became the *N. W. Ayer and Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals*.

Ayer's business policy changed in the 1880s. The agency refused advertising that would discredit the agency or would disappoint the advertiser. Nonetheless, the agency continued to grow, although clients curtailed their spending on advertising because of a recession in the mid-1890s.

In the late 1890s, businesses expanded, including Ayer. In 1899, it handled the major campaign that introduced the Uneeda Biscuit, which was sold in individual, airtight packages. The campaign, which was for the National Biscuit Company and was the largest up to that time, included newspaper, magazine, and outdoor ads. The campaign was an overwhelming success.

Although the agency had stopped accepting beer and whiskey accounts, by 1900 Ayer had become the largest agency in the nation, with more than 160 employees and profits exceeding \$58,000. Ayer opened branch offices in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Cleveland in the early 1900s.

Ayer realized that the agency had become too large to manage, even for his partners and himself. After hiring several managers who failed in their responsibilities, he hired his son-in-law Wilfred W. Fry in 1909. Fry had married Ayer's oldest daughter in 1904. Fry, a hard worker, was made a partner 2 years later. Ayer gave him the responsibility of managing the agency.

After the war, the agency's profits soared to more than \$500,000 in 1919, the year the agency celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Albert Lasker and Lord & Thomas

Albert Lasker shaped and characterized the advertising industry for the first 40 years of the 20th century. Born in 1880, Lasker grew up in Galveston, Texas, where his father was the president of several banks. When he was not in school, Lasker worked as a bookkeeper for his father and as a journalist for the *Galveston Morning News*. When he graduated in 1896, he worked full-time for the newspaper, until he moved to New Orleans, where he worked for the

Times-Democrat. Then he moved to Dallas, where he worked for the *Dallas News*. Eventually, he returned to Galveston. He desired to publish a small newspaper in Texas. His father agreed to buy a small newspaper on one condition: that he try advertising for a brief period. Lasker agreed.

Through his father, Lasker found employment at Lord & Thomas, an advertising agency in Chicago. Lasker worked as an office boy for \$10 a week. A year later, when a salesman left the agency, Lasker asked Ambrose L. Thomas, one of the partners, if he could have the salesman's territory until he found a replacement. Thomas agreed, and Lasker worked diligently. He and a friend, Eugene Katz, created several ads for the Wilson Ear Drum Company, which they showed to the company's president, George Wilson, who used the ads. The company's sales increased.

Lasker married Flora Warner in 1902 and demanded a higher salary. A year later, his salary had doubled. D. M. Lord, one of the agency's partners, retired, and Lasker purchased his share of the agency.

Lasker met John E. Kennedy in 1904 and hired him to write copy. From Kennedy, Lasker learned that consumers needed a reason to buy something. To Kennedy, a good ad contained a logical explanation as to why the consumer should purchase the product. Through Kennedy, Lord & Thomas pioneered "salesmanship in print" and "reason-why" advertising, which other agencies adopted.

Lasker publicized Kennedy's discoveries in the agency's house organ, *Judicious Advertising*, and in other publications. As a result, Lord & Thomas acquired more clients until it became one of the largest agencies in the United States.

Unfortunately, Kennedy left Lord & Thomas after 2 years. Lasker was in charge of editing all copy that was written for clients, even though he did not write any himself. He also introduced ideas, which were used in campaigns.

Thomas died in 1906, and Lasker and Charles R. Erwin purchased his share of the business. Erwin remained a partner until 1912, when he sold his share of the agency to Lasker.

Claude C. Hopkins, another copywriter, was hired in 1908. Hopkins employed Kennedy's style. Lasker paid Hopkins more than he had paid Kennedy. Hopkins enjoyed visiting clients to see how products were manufactured. He created memorable ads for Quaker Oats' products, Goodyear, and various manufacturers of cars and trucks. He emphasized brand images in his ads. He realized the significance of conducting tests and researching copy to determine which headline, which subhead, and which sentence of body copy attracted the most attention. Hopkins's ads were straightforward and simple, with few illustrations. Hopkins employed testing through the use of coupons and samples in numerous campaigns. He traced who responded, and this piece of information benefitted the client. Lasker learned a great deal from Hopkins and vice versa.

Lasker was responsible for Americans purchasing orange juice. Lasker learned that citrus growers in California produced so many oranges that they cut orange trees to limit the supply. Primarily to stop the destruction of the trees, Lasker had campaigns created to encourage consumers to not only eat oranges but also drink orange juice.

Lasker and Hopkins were involved in other campaigns, including the campaign that depicted Palmolive's beauty because of its color instead of its power to clean. For Van Camp's pork and beans, they employed tasting demonstrations as well as the power of suggestion.

Lord & Thomas prospered. Billings rose from \$3 million in 1906 to \$6 million in 1912. The agency had opened offices in New York, Toronto, Paris, London, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

Before he became intrigued with politics in 1918, Lasker had contributed much to advertising. He had been partly responsible for the salesmanship in print and reason-why styles of copy. He and Hopkins had been responsible for "scientific" advertising. He had promoted ethical principles and had been opposed to questionable or dishonest advertising.

After working for the U.S. Shipping Board, Lasker returned to Lord & Thomas in 1923. Although Hopkins had been directing the agency in Lasker's absence, he realized that he and Lasker differed on how the agency should operate. Hopkins retired in 1924.

Lasker hired Ralph Sollitt; then, he fired every employee in the New York office. He was determined to make Lord & Thomas what it once was. He explained his years with the agency to his subordinates. Then, he had ads created to attract new clients. The agency captured additional accounts in the late 1920s.

For Kimberly-Clark's Kotex, the agency created factual ads that informed women that Kotex would be available in plain packages in certain stores. Other ads informed organizations how young women could be taught feminine hygiene. Sales increased as a result.

For the American Tobacco Company's Lucky Strike brand of cigarettes, the agency developed the "precious voice" campaign. Ads contained colorful photographs of opera stars in their costumes and the headline "My living is dependent on my being able to sing, and I protect my precious voice by smoking Lucky Strike." Women began to smoke Lucky Strike cigarettes in public. Within a few years, Lucky Strike became the best-selling brand of cigarettes.

In 1926, Lord & Thomas became Lord & Thomas & Logan, when Lasker asked Thomas F. Logan, who owned the Logan agency, to consolidate with Lord & Thomas. Through Logan, Lasker acquired some accounts, including Radio Corporation of America (RCA), which owned the National Broadcasting Company (NBC). For Palmolive, Lasker had an hour-long program created for radio. When this proved successful, he had programs created for other advertisers. By 1928, the year Logan died, Lord & Thomas

was responsible for about 50% of the advertising placed with NBC. With the help of radio, Lasker's Lord & Thomas agency became the largest agency in the world in the 1930s.

In 1931, Lasker cut salaries by 25%. Two years later, he fired more than 50 employees, a practice to which he had grown accustomed.

In 1936, his wife died. Soon after, Lasker retired from Lord & Thomas. However, when Don Francisco, the agency's president, left to go to work for the government during World War II, Lasker returned to the agency.

In 1942, he met with his three senior executives, Emerson Foote, Fairfax Cone, and Don Belding, and informed them that he wanted to sell the agency. The executives purchased the agency, and Lord & Thomas ceased to exist on December 30, 1942.

Changes in Advertising

Radio grew in popularity as an advertising medium. Commercials changed in the 1920s. At first, commercial messages were similar to lengthy essays. The sales pitch was hidden. Before the decade ended, the commercial message was direct. Consumers were instructed to purchase the advertisers' products.

Advertising agencies suffered during the 1930s, like other businesses. People lost their jobs as clients decreased advertising budgets. However, in the 1940s, America's economy improved as thousands of men and women went to war or to work building military goods. Advertising's role was somewhat akin to what it had been in the Depression. During the 1930s, advertisers had attempted to boost morale through ads. During the 1940s, advertisers informed citizens that products would be available after the war, but their main emphasis was patriotism. Occasionally, they tied the war effort to their business.

Television and Advertising

After World War II, the economy changed. Women were encouraged by the federal government through ads to return home so that others who returned from the war could have jobs. Some women paid attention to these ads; most did not.

Although television was not a strong medium in 1950, advertisers spent \$10 million on it. In the early 1950s, advertisers owned the programs they sponsored and consequently received criticism for manipulating content.

Dramas, mysteries, comedies, and westerns had been heard on radio. As more of these programs were produced for television, radio had to change to a different format. Music was the logical choice.

Advertising on television was not without its critics. Many complained that commercials were annoying, misleading, deceptive, and even manipulative. Critics notwithstanding, television became the most popular medium among national advertisers.

Most of the commercials in the 1950s included an announcer—sometimes a star of a program—who looked squarely into the camera and discussed the product. Copywriters had to be taught how to write for television. Eventually, other kinds of commercials—slice of life, animation, humor—were tried and adopted.

Advertising Concepts

“Brainstorming” was started by Alex Osborn at Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn (BBDO), when the agency started losing clients and personnel in 1939. It was popular at the agency in the 1940s. The concept was continued in the 1950s by Willard Pleuthner of the same agency. This concept simply separated the “creative mind” from the “judicial mind.” The former generated ideas; the latter tamed them. At BBDO, members from all departments participated in an open or free climate—brainstorming sessions—trying to create positive solutions to clients' problems. Some agencies adopted this idea; others did not.

In the 1950s, several agencies in Chicago employed “motivational research.” Pioneered by Ernest Dichter, motivational research employed certain methods from psychology and actually replaced statistical techniques of polling. In addition, when it was used by Leo Burnett, Foote, Cone & Belding, and other agencies, creating campaigns did not begin with products and their benefits. Campaigns started with consumers and what they wanted.

Another concept closely related to motivational research was “image building.” In 1951, David Ogilvy, the founder of Ogilvy & Mather, created one of the most famous ads for men's clothing in advertising's history—the man in the Hathaway shirt. The ad employed a distinguished-looking upper-class man wearing an eye patch. He projected sophistication and wealth. The consumer, if he purchased the brand of shirt, would project this image as well. This style of copy was recognized by others working in advertising as being persuasive. By the end of the decade, most agencies were using it to sell numerous products. Ogilvy also included reason-why copy in ads.

Another concept was the “unique selling proposition” (USP) of the late 1950s and early 1960s, which was promoted by Rosser Reeves, who worked for the Ted Bates agency. Reeves realized that consumers were exposed to hundreds of ads every day. For an advertiser to cut through this clutter, he reasoned, the advertiser's ad had to offer a USP as well as reason-why copy. Thus, the agency had to determine what the USP was and create advertising campaigns employing it. His advertising campaign for Anacin in the late 1950s, which included the now-famous black-and-white television commercial that contained three panels illustrating pain in a person's head and the line “Anacin gives you fast, fast, fast relief,” helped increase sales of the product immediately.

Al Ries and Jack Trout promoted “positioning” in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Positioning was another concept that became popular among agencies. Positioning

implies that the advertising “positions” a product in the consumer’s mind, such as the famous Avis “We’re Number Two. We Try Harder” advertising campaign.

Other concepts, including humor, were tried and shown to work for certain products or services.

Mergers and Conglomerates

Marion Harper Jr., worked at the McCann-Erickson advertising agency in New York and was named head of research in 1945. The research department became the driving force under his leadership. When Harrison McCann became the chairman of the board, he named Harper president. Harper was 32.

Harper became interested in quality control. He initiated review boards for checking work as it progressed through the agency. In addition, he captured larger clients, including Coca-Cola.

However, Harper acquired other agencies, including Marschalk & Pratt, and put them into the conglomerate Interpublic Group of Companies, in 1961. From three departments in McCann-Erickson, he formed three companies that specialized in market research, public relations, and sales promotion. He also founded Jack Tinker & Partners, for the purpose of solving problems and producing creativity.

In the 1960s, he continued to acquire agencies. According to Russ Johnston (1982, p. 261), from the beginning of 1965 to July of 1966, “Harper added new companies at the rate of one a month. The parent company could boast of 200 offices in 100 cities in 48 countries.”

Unfortunately, Interpublic had losses of several million dollars and was having problems paying loans. Harper attempted to resolve the problems, but the banks were not satisfied. The board voted to remove Harper from his position in November 1967. Harper left Interpublic several months later.

Other founders of advertising agencies followed Harper’s lead. They included Charles and Maurice Saatchi, who founded Saatchi & Saatchi in London in 1970. The brothers began acquiring other businesses in 1972, including agencies in the United States. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Saatchi & Saatchi Company PLC, the holding company, purchased some of the largest agencies in the world. Profits increased every year. However, the company’s stock, like other companies’ stock, dropped in value in 1987. Personnel differed as to which direction the company should move. Some senior executives believed that the company should emphasize consulting, while others maintained that the company should focus on advertising. Several large clients switched agencies. As a result, the company lost more than \$1 billion in billings. Spending on advertising slowed in the late 1980s, as fewer clients increased their advertising budgets.

In 1989, the company’s profits plummeted. To make matters worse, Kemper Financial Services, Chicago, sold 500,000 shares of Saatchi stock, causing the value

of the stock to decrease within weeks, according to Kevin Goldman (1997, p. 116). Other investment firms followed Kemper’s lead several weeks later. Saatchi & Saatchi Company PLC gave employees pink slips the same year. Robert Louis-Dreyfus and Charles Scott were hired to help save the company. They sold the company’s consulting firms to reduce expenses.

In 1990, Charles and Maurice Saatchi cut their salaries. Several board members resigned, while several senior executives were let go. Louis-Dreyfus and Scott proposed a restructuring of the company, which was finally approved by representatives of shareholders in 1991.

Louis-Dreyfus left the company in 1993, when he became the president of Adidas. A. G. Scott became his successor. However, Saatchi & Saatchi lost the Chrysler Corporation account and had to resign the Helene Curtis account because it conflicted with Procter & Gamble, another account.

Charles and Maurice Saatchi vowed to either purchase Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising or have Scott removed. David Herro, who had invested in Saatchi & Saatchi Company PLC for the State of Wisconsin Investment Board, then for Harris Associates L.P., learned about the brothers’ interest in buying Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising. He wrote to members of the board, stating that any member who was interested in purchasing the agency should relinquish his position on the board.

Differences of opinion among senior executives and board members reached the press. Herro met with Maurice Saatchi and expressed his displeasure about the campaign in the press; then he met with Charles Scott.

Maurice Saatchi was removed as chairman of the holding company in late 1994. He was offered the chairmanship of Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide, but he resigned 2 weeks later, in early 1995. Charles Saatchi resigned soon after.

Advertising Agencies Today

Advertising agencies in the 1990s seemed to emphasize creativity in advertising. However, measuring this creativity’s effectiveness was a problem, no matter which medium was used. Return on investment (ROI) was expressed by clients. Yet agencies found it difficult to answer questions such as “Did the target market see the ad? Did the target market understand the ad? Did the target market respond favorably to the ad?”

Advertising agencies became leaner in the 1990s. The reason was not necessarily because agencies had hired more experienced personnel and had gotten rid of middle management. Rather, presidents of agencies had felt the need to cut costs.

Advertising agencies offered more services to their clients in the 1990s. Some of these agencies desired to offer more services as a result of becoming integrated marketing communications firms, but many had to offer more services in order to compete and remain profitable.

Today, advertising agencies are struggling to identify target markets, which are becoming smaller, and to provide their clients with better service. Specialty firms that focus on one or two specific services are growing in popularity. ROI is ever present, and alternative media are considered. Unfortunately, how to measure these new media is the question that many media personnel are asking.

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RESEARCH IN ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN DESIGN

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According to the trade publication *Advertising Age*, \$149 billion was spent on measured media advertising in the United States in 2007. That's approximately \$500 for every woman, man, and child in the country. Ultimately, that cost must be passed along to the consumer. The price you pay for every advertised product you buy includes money for advertising. Obviously, someone feels that this paid persuasion is important. This begs the questions "Why is advertising necessary?" "Why do advertisers pay so much to persuade us?"

One advertising executive estimates that you will come in contact with 1,500 brands on an average day and almost 35,000 if you visit the grocery store (Roberts, 2005). Every one of those brands clamors for your attention and money, and you do not have enough of either to go around. Instead, you must be persuaded to use a particular brand. Yet here again is a logjam. Every one of those brands wants to persuade you, and if you are like most people, you have grown up in an advertising-saturated society and have learned to tune out those 1,500 to 35,000 voices. Only effective advertising can break through the clamor, and effective advertising begins with effective research.

The Spectrum of Advertising Research

Advertising research is performed by various agencies and research specialists in numerous ways. Some agencies may tend to use quantitative research methods, while others may specialize in qualitative research. Certain agencies make research the foundation for brand development and advertising campaign decision making, whereas others undertake research only when absolutely necessary, relying instead on instinct alone. Research is useful for understanding the target audience, the competitive marketplace, and the actual advertisement more thoroughly so that the client has the best chances of success. If advertising is shooting an arrow at a target, then research shines a light on the target, providing the best chances of hitting the bull's-eye.

Consumer Voice

Advertising research is often focused on involving consumers in the process of developing advertising. Giving the consumer a voice in the process of creating advertising results in more accurate brand strategies and

positioning; copy and imagery with which consumers can identify; and an overall better understanding of the lifestyles, hobbies, motivations, and attitudes of target audiences. Unfortunately, an account planner, brand strategist, or research specialist cannot simply ask “What advertisement would you like to see so that you will buy the product?” This is an exaggeration, but in many instances consumers *are* put in the position of being marketers, which they are not. The saying that “there are no stupid questions” does not necessarily hold true in advertising research. To get the best answers, the right questions must be asked of the appropriate people in the correct ways.

In Search of Advertising Effectiveness

Perhaps the most oft-repeated cliché in advertising is the former merchant and postmaster general John Wanamaker’s statement, “I know I’m wasting half my ad dollars. I just don’t know which half.” Almost 100 years later, much of advertising research is dedicated to determining “which half.”

Definitions of advertising vary, but advertising is generally agreed to be the art and science of paid persuasion to a large audience. For both the practitioner and the academician, the science side of advertising reveals itself more easily. It is straightforward, for example, to determine the percentage of consumers who can freely recall your brand name when asked to name a brand in your product category. Likewise, extensive research has developed models of persuasion that specify the conditions wherein a message is likely to be most effective (e.g., McGuire, 1972; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). However, testing a particular combination of layout and font proves to be more difficult. Similarly, it is difficult to ascertain when a particular popular-culture reference will be embraced by the consumer. The 1984 Super Bowl advertisement launching the Apple Macintosh computer is one of the most successful in history; however, it relied almost exclusively on a play on the title of George Orwell’s book *1984*. Had the audience failed to grasp that link, the ad likely would have failed.

Brand Identity

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of advertising is that so few consumers believe that it works. Ask almost any consumer, and that consumer will tell you that he or she drinks Diet Coke because it tastes better and washes clothing with Tide because it cleans better. Blind comparisons, however, often show the folly of this illusion. A trip to the nearest supermarket is revealing as consumers readily pass over inexpensive store brands for the pricier brand names—even in product categories where performance cannot be distinguished when the labels are stripped away. Just as readers should not judge a book by its cover, so too, should consumers not judge a product by its label. Yet

judge they do. And often they judge labels favorably and willingly hand over hard-earned dollars for the privilege of taking that label home.

An entire branch of academic research, known as the third-person effect, has developed to account for this tendency to believe that media messages (in this case, advertising) affect others but not “me” (Davison, 1983). How does one go about researching a phenomenon whose effects are so persistently denied by those affected? If half of Wanamaker’s advertising dollars were wasted, likely far more than half of advertising research dollars were wasted. Indeed, when asked by the advertising student or inquiring practitioner, we must admit that we have made precious little progress in six decades of trying to provide a systematic answer to Harold Lasswell’s (1948) question, “Who says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effects?” (p. 37).

Advertising and Culture

At some level, advertising is an (applied) art form. As much as our paintings and poems can tell us about an era, so too, can advertising. For example, ads that once moved millions to buy now come across as sexist, racist, and crass. Advertising can capture an entire era: Just as people readily buy “Route 66” signs today, that bygone age also is captured by the Burma Shave signs that once lined American roadways with a series of rhyming catchy sayings: “Hardly a driver,” “Is now alive,” “Who passed,” “On hills,” “At 75,” “Burma-Shave.”

The link between advertising and culture should not be underestimated. Many large advertisers and consumer products corporations keep close tabs on the culture. DDB Worldwide, of Chicago, maintains an annual survey of American consumers known as the “Life Style” survey. Rather than asking what kind of pasta a consumer prefers, this data set includes questions about how often Americans attend club meetings, how much they value freedom of speech, and even how often respondents “gave ‘the finger’ to someone while driving my car.”

At first, these kinds of questions may seem to have nothing to do with advertising. But surveys such as this one allow advertisers to understand popular culture and the themes that permeate consumers’ lives. Not surprisingly, culturally oriented DDB launched the SignBank program in 2005 (Creamer, 2005). This program comprises small “signs” in popular culture, and everyone at the agency was expected to contribute, from receptionists to executives. The signs range from comments about Weblogs to customized sneakers, and together form a database that DDB account teams can use to understand consumers. One observation about the attire of a passerby likely will tell you nothing, but in the aggregate, hundreds of similar observations can shed light on the public mind-set.

This is not merely an esoteric exercise. In the current information age, genuine differences between competing

products are short-lived as technology allows competitors to copy or improve on any differences that give competitive advantages. In this landscape, the brand is king. And brands are fundamentally psychological enterprises—that is, they live in consumers' minds. What Snickers, for example, represents is less about peanuts, caramel, and nougat and more about the perceptions of 300,000,000 people and their thoughts about the brand. Is there any *evidence* that Snickers may stave off hunger better than a PayDay or any other candy bar? Likely, the answer is no. However, the “Snickers Satisfies” concept is so well ingrained among consumers that it is their default choice, which easily makes it the sales leader. A Snickers is not just a candy bar. It is part of the fabric of our culture. And that's not a status that consumers readily confer. Instead, a brand must be carefully constructed through a series of long-term advertising (and increasingly, public relations) campaigns. The message must be right, and it must be consistent. To find the right messages takes great research and a little luck—but rarely just luck.

Brand Personality

A brand does not actually belong to the business that created it. A brand exists in the minds of the people who are aware of the brand. Essentially, it does not matter if an executive says that his or her company's brand is caring, compassionate, and lighthearted. If the consumers find the brand to be arrogant and indifferent to their needs, then *that* is the brand. Executives at PepsiCo could not simply will Mountain Dew to be “edgier” than traditional soft drinks. Instead, decades of well-designed advertisements have carefully crafted that image. Advertising agencies and public relations firms can make intensive efforts to manipulate how the brand is perceived by the target audiences, but it is up to the consumers to internalize that image and identify with the brand.

That being said, a fundamental goal of advertising research is to learn what the client's brand represents. This is the *brand personality*. Rohit Bhargava (2008) defines personality as follows: “Personality is the unique, authentic, and talkable soul of your brand that people can get passionate about” (p. 6). One way to think about the importance of brand personality is to think of any brand as having both *attributes* and *personality traits*. The attributes are tangible brand offerings, whereas the personality aspects are more emotion based (e.g., hilarious, mature, and relaxed). The attributes generally define the category the brand exists in, whereas the personality components differentiate the brand from its competitors within the category. For example, both McDonald's and Burger King have attributes such as burgers, fries, and fast service. Although there might be small variations in their attributes (e.g., Burger King's flame-broiled patties), the real brand differentiation occurs in their personalities. Conducting research to understand a brand's personality

gives advertising agencies a mentality with which to plan campaigns and a voice with which to write advertising copy. It also helps advertising agencies steer clear of injecting messages into the market that are inconsistent with the brand's personality.

Conducting research with the client's own employees can be beneficial to developing a brand personality. For instance, much of the Starbucks atmosphere centers on interactions with the barista (the coffee server). If the baristas do not embody the personality of Starbucks, then the advertising is likely doomed.

Loyalty Beyond Reason

Kevin Roberts, CEO Worldwide of the advertising giant Saatchi and Saatchi, has extended brand identity into what he calls *lovemarks* (Roberts, 2005). Rather than trademarks or service marks, Roberts argues that lovemarks elicit loyalty beyond reason from their consumers. Although it may seem even more ludicrous than the idea of brand identification, most of us do have brands we love. We'll go thirsty if there's no Diet Pepsi, or we'll drive 5 miles out of the way to go to Target. Many Ohio State University sports fans will not even say the word *Michigan*. That's love! But Roberts argues that there is another key dimension: respect. “The Lovemarks of this new century will be the brands and businesses that create genuine emotional connections with the communities and networks they live in. This means getting up close and personal” (p. 60). Respect is a two-way street. It begins with understanding. And understanding begins with research.

Recent research, including work by the authors of this chapter, has helped explain the intimate relationship that consumers have with advertised brands. Not only do consumers assign personalities to brands, they also identify with these brand personalities. The most vivid example of this has been Apple's recent campaign with the “I'm a Mac” and “I'm a PC” advertisements. Through careful advertising over the years, Apple cultivated the image of a trendy user, which they featured in the advertising; the fact that no one had trouble understanding the metaphor attests to the degree with which people identify with the ads. In a recent study (Bradley, Maxian, Laubacher, & Baker, 2007), we asked participants about some of the most popular brands in the world. Their responses were telling: The more a brand was “loved” or “good,” the more it was “like me.” The relationship was almost perfect: In no case was a loved brand not like the consumer.

Although this seems to make sense on the surface, take a moment to ponder the absolute absurdity of the comparison. In exactly which way, dear consumer, are you “like” a Snickers bar or a Pepsi? Are you small and brown? Are you full of bubbles and caramel coloring? Of course not. Candy bars, soft drinks, beer, and laundry detergents are products to which advertisers have assigned personalities. And this assignment is neither inexpensive nor easy; it is

not simple to make people fall in love with a brand. To create the kind of relationship that Snickers has with consumers around the world, you need to understand your product, you need to understand your consumer, you need to understand your competition, and you need to understand the culture. This understanding does not come from intuition alone; it comes from careful, comprehensive research.

Targeting

Perhaps the greatest advertising limitation is its expense. There are more than 6.6 billion people in the world, and it costs money to get a message in front of them. Then add the obstacle that sales messages are everywhere, and most consumers will fail to even notice your message the first time. It costs a lot *more* money to get your message in front of the world several times. Since advertisers cannot afford this, it becomes crucial to pay to get your message only in front of the *appropriate* audience—namely, those most likely to buy your product. If your product is expensive, you want to advertise only to those who can afford it. If your product is bought by women, you will not advertise in men's magazines. If you're selling diapers, you want to advertise only to parents with young babies. These key consumers are your *target market*, so named because you target your advertising to them. One of the earliest stages of advertising research comes with identifying the proper target market.

Segmentation

The foundation for successful advertising is having a detailed understanding of the target audience or audiences. Whom, among the billions of people on the planet or the hundreds of millions of people in the United States, will you target? The process of dividing the population into meaningful chunks is known as *segmentation*, through which you literally segment the population based on a host of variables. Although the most talked-about audience descriptors are demographic data (e.g., gender, age, household income, and education level), fathoming a market segment goes much deeper. Research can be aimed at learning the target consumers' habits, hobbies, information sources, entertainment preferences, product and service preferences, and purchase behaviors. The reason gaining a detailed audience description is a common research goal is that with this information, an advertiser has better knowledge of how a brand fits in consumers' lives and where, when, and how the consumers are most susceptible to persuasion.

To segment the audience in a meaningful way, you must understand who uses the product or service and why. In some instances, demographic data will suffice. Fixodent denture adhesive likely relies on age segmentation, and Just for Men hair coloring obviously uses gender but

includes age segmentation, too. Toro snow blowers likely segment the population geographically. These cases are clear. But who buys Hallmark cards or Apple Macintosh computers? Those consumers likely have more in common behaviorally and psychologically than demographically.

When one is looking to advertise to current consumers, segmentation is usually relatively easy. Companies often keep data on their customers and can share these data with the advertising agency. Then it is simply a matter of looking for commonalities among the current customers. If you want to expand the current market, however, it is much more difficult. Of all the people who currently do not buy your product or service, which ones are the most likely to be converted? In this case, it is advantageous to connect with current noncustomers to learn why they do not buy your product. Focus groups, surveys, and in-depth interviews can provide valuable insight. Even then, however, meaningful segments and targets may not be clear. In these cases—especially when the budget allows—it is helpful to turn to proprietary segments constructed by marketing research firms. For example, Claritas offers the PRIZM market segmentation system, which divides people into dozens of categories, such as *the Cosmopolitans*, *Gray Power*, and *Shotguns & Pickups* (Belch & Belch, 2007, p. 51). For any given zip code, Claritas can tell you which groups are most common. SRI Consulting Business Intelligence also offers a segmentation tool, called VALS (www.sric-bi.com/VALS/help.shtml#1), that primarily categorizes consumers in terms of their degree of innovation and their financial resources. The value of these tools is the ability to identify what the company's customers have in common and then find more people like them.

Getting the Message Across

Once the audience is segmented and certain segments have been selected as the target, there is still much research to do. Although the target markets have been identified, advertisers must decide how to reach this audience. The process of researching where to deliver a message is known as *media planning* and is covered in Chapter 89 of this volume. Because of the in-depth nature of that chapter, we will not discuss media planning here except to say that current trends in media fragmentation and narrowcasting (i.e., targeting your message to a small and selective group) make media planning more challenging, more interesting, and more creative than ever.

When a message reaches those outside its target market, this is known as waste coverage. Proper segmentation and targeting, combined with accurate and creative media planning, can minimize waste and maximize the value of advertising. It should be noted that in many small and mid-sized advertising agencies, media planning is synonymous with advertising research. That is, many of the things discussed in this chapter are not among the repertoire of too many small firms. In these agencies, segmenting and targeting occur

during the selection of media. Once the media are selected, the research is complete, and the advertisements are written.

Crafting the Message

Now it's time to write the actual advertisements. To many people, message creation is the stage where science steps aside and art takes over. Obviously, this must be the case to some extent; however, effective research is as important at this stage as any other, particularly in determining the kind of image the ad should aim to construct.

In addition to portraying the correct image, a copywriter must understand the goal of the campaign before putting pen to paper: What should the ad accomplish? This might, at first, seem obvious. Advertising is supposed to sell, right? After all, one of the aphorisms of advertising is "It's not creative unless it sells." However, one cannot always move consumers directly to the cash register. In the case of new products, consumers have never even heard the name before. It is naïve to think that a single 30-second advertising message will be sufficient to drive the consumer off the couch and to the point of purchase just to try your never-before-heard-of product. Instead, initial advertisements may aim only to make the public aware of the brand.

For example, although it is difficult to diagnose a campaign from afar, the recent series of Super Bowl ads by the Web site registry GoDaddy.com appears to have been designed to create awareness. These sex-laden ads likely garnered attention when they first appeared. Only in subsequent years did the ads attempt to actively draw consumers to the Web site. The 2008 Super Bowl ad featured the race-car driver Danica Patrick partially undressing and encouraged participants to visit the Web site to see more "exposure." The Web-based ad was a sophomoric joke, and Patrick did not undress. According to *USA TODAY's* AdMeter results, the ad was not especially well liked (www.usatoday.com/money/advertising/admeter/2008-02-04-results-chart_N.htm). However, the media widely reported that the ad drew millions of viewers to the company's Web site. It is likely that this traffic was increased due to the *brand awareness* created a year earlier. Had the initial ad targeted Web traffic, viewers unaware of the brand may have been more reticent about visiting the site.

If the primary goal of a campaign is to generate sales (rather than awareness), then learning about the thought processes that lead to the purchase of a business's products or services is essential. For example, when advertising for a fast-casual Mexican restaurant, it may be important to know whether its customers think initially about the category of food they are hungry for (e.g., Mexican, Italian, or deli sandwiches) before narrowing their dining options down to a sit-down, fast-casual, or quick-service restaurant. Do the customers decide what they want to eat early in the morning at work and look forward to the meal until lunch or dinner, or do they make the decision while driving and discussing restaurants with a friend? If your target

market first decides food type and then picks a level of formality, then you need to sell fast-casual more than just Mexican. Conversely, if the consumer decides on the price first, then your pitch needs to concentrate on Mexican food. Understanding the purchase decision-making process is a logical and attainable goal for advertising research.

Advertising Effects

The last part of Lasswell's question is ultimately the most important: "With what effects?" If advertising does not ultimately sell, then the company will go out of business. You may need to generate awareness first, but sales are ultimately essential. With direct-response advertising, almost no research is needed to assess advertising effectiveness. When a Life Alert commercial comes on television, there is a toll-free number displayed at the bottom of the advertisement for almost the entire duration of the ad. If you want to buy, you pick up the phone and call. Within a few minutes of the ad's appearance, the advertiser will know whether it was a success as the majority of calls will come immediately after the ad. For most other products and services, however, the effects of advertising are not so readily determined.

What makes you stop at Taco Bell on the way home or buy a package of Oreo cookies? You have to be hungry, and the product has to be available. In the case of Oreos, the package has to be in the right place on the shelf for you to even see it. When you have the motivation and the opportunity to purchase a product, then some feeling deep inside you has to make you select Oreos from among the dozens and dozens of other cookie brands. Any given advertisement may make you hungry for Oreos *now*, but it also might contribute, ever so slightly, to the probability that you become a loyal Oreos customer for the next 30 years. This latter possibility is not easy to measure.

This difficulty in determining an ad's effects does not give advertising agencies a free pass. They must be held accountable for their degree of success. However, chasing immediate short-term success almost guarantees that you will never achieve long-term success. Instead, effective advertising research must take into account quantitative sales data plus more complex variables such as public opinion. A commonly measured advertising variable in this type of advertising research is *unaided brand recall*. This information is helpful in measuring the effectiveness of an advertising campaign designed to increase awareness. Following the campaign—sometimes as soon as a day after an ad runs, a telephone survey asks consumers to name a brand of cookie, for example. The proportion of people who mention Oreos can be ascertained both before and after the campaign. Although sales might not immediately increase, an increase in top-of-mind awareness suggests that the campaign was effective in achieving its goals. Awareness does not necessarily translate directly to

sales, so this type of campaign would, it is hoped, be part of a larger strategy.

Quantifying Brand Awareness

Because advertising is often attempting to get a brand noticed, a useful research goal is gauging brand awareness. Selected markets' increases or decreases in awareness of a brand can be used as a measurement of return on advertising investment. Investigating brand awareness should also involve the measurement of competitors' brand awareness. This allows for a relative understanding of how well-known a brand is in chosen marketplaces compared with its competition. Knowledge of brand awareness helps with planning for more targeted campaigns by indicating awareness gaps geographically and also indicating successes and failures in previous marketing efforts.

The Source of the Message

Those involved in advertising research seldom have much input as to the original source of the message; decisions such as brand name and even company name are usually marketing functions and are already decided before it is time to advertise. However, for an individual advertisement or campaign, advertising research can help determine the appropriate spokesperson or spokescharacter. The former founder of Wendy's, Dave Thomas, and Kentucky Fried Chicken founder, Colonel Sanders, often appeared in advertisements, and a cartoon likeness of the Southern gentleman pitched buckets of chicken even after his death.

Different message sources can be used to elicit feelings of humor, trust, expertise, and other desired outcomes. The inclusion of testimonials also allows advertisers to vary the source of their persuasive message. Advertising research can play a role in determining, retaining, or switching a spokesperson or a testimonial source.

Client Acquisition

Research can even help an advertising agency gain clients. When you show up at their door with original research examining their consumers and their current advertising, "there are few manufacturers whose curiosity is not piqued when you offer to show them the results of such a survey" (Ogilvy, 1963, p. 60). Research can be a successful new business tool for a number of reasons. The agency's unprompted and unpaid investigation into a prospective client's current situation shows a genuine passion to help them grow the brand. This also positions the agency as an expert rather than just another agency bargaining in without knowing the company's consumers, competitive landscape, or current struggles and successes. Often, company decision makers grow impatient awaiting the results of research, so initiating the agency-client relationship with some form of research already completed

gives the company the confidence that the agency is ready to hit the ground running.

Advertising Research Methods

Research should not be conducted simply because it seems like a smart idea to create a survey or host a focus group. All research should take place to fulfill specific goals. The results of the research should not be predetermined or assumed, but the aims of the research need to be clearly understood. The research goals will affect the types of participants involved and the methods used. Once the reasons for conducting advertising research are established, the following are some of the forms of research that can be employed.

Timing

Broadly speaking, advertising research is either *pretest* or *posttest* research. Research centered on campaign generation and development is considered pretest research. Research designed to measure advertising effectiveness is considered posttest research. As with so many dualities, this dichotomy is overly simple. For large brands, research is continuous, and data gathered after one campaign can be considered posttest for that campaign and pretest for the subsequent campaign. Posttest data often is diagnostic in nature; however, these data can also be used to help refine and improve market segmentation.

Survey

Advertising agencies survey current customers, potential customers, and company employees to measure brand perceptions, brand awareness, target audience attributes, and attitudes toward advertisements. A popular tool is the *semantic differential* that asks participants to choose a point between two adjective pairs. For example, the adjectives *cool* and *uncool* can be placed at either end of a scale separated by 9 points. The participants select the point that most closely relates to their opinion about the brand. The semantic differential can be used to measure the current state of a brand and its personality as well as testing the extent to which an advertisement fits the brand.

Consumers' agreement is often measured using Likert-type scales. With this measure, participants are asked the degree to which they agree with a statement such as "This advertisement fits with my concept of the brand." Participants are given several possible choices, such as *strongly agree*, *agree*, *somewhat agree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, and so on. This form of question allows the researcher to suggest more complex scenarios to the participant.

To assess brand awareness, open-ended questions can help determine what brands research participants have

heard of and purchased from prompted industries. For example, measuring brand awareness for an audiovisual products retailer might include surveying a sample of participants in a specific geographic region, and asking them to name all the stores they can think of that sell televisions or high-end audio equipment.

Measures of aided and unaided recall are typically gathered via telephone survey. These are open-ended questions usually intended to gauge brand or advertising awareness. *Unaided recall* (also called free recall) is the most sensitive measure; participants are asked questions such as “Can you recall seeing any advertisements on television last night?” *Aided recall* (sometimes called cued recall) is less sensitive and uses a prompt or cue. Thus, participants might be asked whether they saw a soft drink advertisement the night before. The least sensitive of such measures is *recognition*, for which participants might be asked whether they recognize hearing a particular slogan. In recognition tests, participants are often tested with genuine and fake slogans to ensure that they are not saying “Yes” simply to please the researcher.

The traditional use of paper surveys is still prevalent, but a promising recent development in survey research is online surveying. Once a survey is programmed, the URL can be sent to hundreds or thousands of participants in different markets across the country, and data can be available within days.

Focus Groups and In-Depth Interviews

For all the useful statistical significance of survey research data, they lack some of the ability to capture the emotion tied to a brand that focus groups and interviews can provide. Because so many purchase decisions are based on emotional responses and not simply logical decisions, talking directly to consumers is a popular form of advertising research. However, focus groups are widely understood by the general public, and this presents difficulties for focus-group moderators. They must keep the participants thinking and responding as themselves and not like advertisers. Although one-on-one in-depth interviews with consumers take more time, the quality of results can be outstanding.

Participation

To develop creative ideas for advertising a brand, the agency should strive to fully understand the brand experience. Unfortunately, unless agency employees were already customers of the company before the agency began advertising for them, it is difficult for employees to have an unbiased view. This is where *mystery* (or secret) *shopping* can be beneficial. Professional mystery shoppers participate in the brand experience by shopping and usually ultimately buying a product or service from the client company. The secret shoppers then report back to the

advertising agency with information about the atmosphere, customer service, and other impressions of the experience.

Observation

One challenge for all researchers is to study a phenomenon without personally having an influence on the results. The questions posed through survey or focus group research certainly will affect the way the participants share information. A way around this risk of a distorting influence is to simply observe the consumers in their natural environments. This might entail watching and taking notes or even videotaping consumers as they move throughout a store making a series of routine and spontaneous purchase decisions. For more information on this method, Paco Underhill’s (2000) *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping* details the finer points of documenting and analyzing consumer shopping experiences.

Another place to monitor consumers is online. With the current popularity of online forums, blogs, and social networks, consumers are making a great amount of information publicly available. Agencies are wise to pay attention to how a brand is discussed, positively and negatively, online.

Experimental Design

True experiments are relatively less common in industry-based advertising research, although they are quite common among academicians. One industry practice is to pit two versions of an ad against one another. Doing so is easier for print (or online) advertisements, where each consumer can be assumed to see only one issue. Often called an A-B split, ad version A goes in half of the newspapers or magazines, and version B goes in the other half. This is especially effective in direct-response advertising, for which sales can be quite closely tracked. The analytic power of Web advertisements makes this methodology especially simple. Click-throughs are easily measured, and the relative effectiveness of multiple versions of a banner ad, for example, can easily and quickly be compared. Weaker versions of an ad can quickly be pulled from rotation.

Quasi-Experimental Advertisement Pretests

More common to industry research are designs that can best be described as quasi experiments because they do not involve true random assignment of people to experimental conditions. Such studies are quite prevalent and can help save a lot of money. As much as it costs to produce an advertisement, the majority of the expenses typically come from media placement: It can cost more than \$300,000 for one prime-time national advertisement. Advertisers, therefore, want some assurance of success before they actually run the advertisement. They employ many methods for pretest advertising assessment. Several print advertisements

can be assembled into a portfolio to be shown to members of the target market, known as a portfolio test. When more realistic conditions are desirable, the advertisement can be inserted into a dummy advertising vehicle, such as a magazine. With such tests, participants may not even know which ad is of interest when they look through the fake but realistic magazine. This way, consumers are not prompted to pay special attention to any one ad.

For broadcast ads, production costs add up quickly. Pretesting can help avoid unnecessary expenses here, too. In the early stages, a television commercial exists only as a storyboard—that is, a series of still drawings with the dialogue and special effects indicated beneath each drawing. Storyboards are inexpensive but difficult to visualize. The storyboard stills can be set to background dialogue and sound effects in an anamatic rough, or storyboard anamatic. Adding a layer of complexity, the still animations can be upgraded to photographs in the photomatic rough, or photomatic storyboard. All these tools can be useful in gauging audience reactions before the expense of production. However, anyone who has ever seen these roughs can attest that a good imagination is still necessary to visualize the ad.

Sales Data

Lest we forget, the bottom-line purpose of advertising is to sell. Sales data are the ultimate test. The benchmark test of sales usually is same-store sales. Because any given store chain is adding or closing locations, total sales may be misleading. Instead, it is usual to examine sales only in stores that were operational at the same time during the previous year. The focus on short-term sales, however, can obscure benefits to the long-term image of a brand. Constantly changing advertising messages in pursuit of quick sales is almost always disastrous in the long-term. This is problematic in a market-driven economy where managers and stockholders want instant results.

Technological improvements make sales data more up-to-date and, relevant: If after reading this, you go to Wal-Mart to purchase a box of Sharpie permanent markers, that sale will transfer almost immediately from the cash register to corporate headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas. Given that Wal-Mart is the largest retailer in the world, their databases are powerful advertising effectiveness. Although the retailer works closely with the manufacturers to improve sales, these proprietary data are unavailable to the general public or to academic researchers. However, these large-scale databases are the closest those consumer products can come to the instant report card of direct-response advertisements.

Multiple-Method Research

When these methods are combined, the resulting research can be extremely powerful. The political consultant

Frank Luntz (2007) has become exceptionally successful and has changed the landscape of American politics with his *Words That Work*. As PBS's *Frontline* detailed in the documentary *The Persuaders* (www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/persuaders/), Luntz starts with popular culture. "I've got a rule, which is cab drivers and antique dealers know more about America than anybody else. And when the cab drivers feel a certain way, I know I need to listen," Luntz told *Frontline*. He begins with something similar to a focus group. He talks to members of the target market. He runs terms by them. He finds the terms that they like and dislike. For instance, Luntz and his contemporaries helped the Republican party relabel *estate tax* as *death tax* and rebrand *global warming* as *global climate change*. "It's the same tax," Luntz told *Frontline*, "but nobody really knows what an estate is, but they certainly know what it means to be taxed when you die."

After identifying key concepts, Luntz is ready to run more complex ideas by consumers. While a group of consumers watch someone talk about a political issue—which could as well be a product, the consumers hold a small dial. They turn it one way to indicate that they like the message and another way to indicate their dislike. This quasi-experimental technique allows Luntz to see in real time what parts of the message are accepted. Furthermore, he can look at the results separated by a political party. The parts of the message that achieve bipartisan approval should be the most effective with the general public. Although it is less common, this multi-stage research strategy should be equally effective at selling consumer products as political ideals. Rather than separate results based on political ideology, the data can be separated based on a market segment or a key demographic or psychographic variable. Every methodology has strengths and weaknesses. Multiple-method research allows researchers to get a better picture of the overall consumer landscape.

Theory Building

Perhaps the greatest difference between academic and applied research is in the realm of theory building. Practitioners need research to tell them what advertising is likely to work. Effectiveness is key. Conversely, the majority of academic researchers want to understand the process. While a practitioner may care about the customers' attitude toward a particular ad, an academic may care about how consumers *form* attitudes toward advertisements: How does persuasion function in general, and what are the relevant variables? In an ideal world, these two research avenues would intertwine and inform one another. However, industry research is often hidden behind a veil of proprietary secrecy, lest the competition benefit from the knowledge generated, and academic research remains bound within the ivory tower.

Conclusions

Research is a word that kindles passion in few souls, yet its importance in the advertising industry cannot be overstated. Few campaigns succeed that were not built on a solid body of research. Advertising is, as one textbook (Miller & Muir, 2004) puts it, “the business of brands.” And brands are not real. They are intangible objects that exist in the minds of consumers. Advertising can build on or obfuscate those mental images. To inculcate the desired image, the advertiser must understand the consumer, and that is no easy undertaking. If you pay a consumer to help with research, then that consumer usually will go out of his or her way to be helpful. And this is no help at all. To be of any use, consumers’ mental images must be queried as subtly as possible. Every question you ask suggests an answer, and research that finds only the answer the researcher desires is as bad as no research at all.

Instead, the best advertising research is carefully and cleverly crafted. In an ideal setting, the participant remains altogether unaware of the client or product. We may, for example, spend an hour talking about lunch choices when I care only about store-bought tuna versus a national chain of sandwich shops.

In the modern media age, the consumer is more of a partner than ever. If you carefully tailor an advertisement that resonates, they will reward you for it handsomely. They will write about your advertisements on their blogs, and they will post it to YouTube and social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace. If you miss the mark, however, they will abuse you just as publicly online.

Perhaps most important, effective advertising research is about effective listening. You must ask the right questions in the right ways and *listen*. The typical consumers have spent a lifetime paying more than they otherwise would to purchase advertised brands. This gives them a stake in those brands and the right to have a voice in the public identity of those brands. If you find the appropriate consumers and the appropriate ways to communicate with them, the results can be powerful. In almost every case, this will begin with effective research.

Given the mysterious and intriguing nature of the modern consumer, advertising research should seem more like a Harry Potter novel than a root canal.

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CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND COPYWRITING IN ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

DAVID KLOWDEN

The Lambesis Agency

You know the myth that creativity is a divine spark that strikes a select few: Either you're born with it or you're not. The persistence of this myth of the exclusivity of innate creative ability steers some away from careers in creative fields. Certainly, it does no harm to the ego of a successful "creative" (the adjective has become a noun in advertising) to argue that creativity cannot really be taught. But it is the elusiveness of the divine spark of creativity, not exclusiveness, that really sustains its aura.

That is not to say that there's no such thing as creative genius. In an advertising agency, clever, persuasive, and powerful creative concepts arise, but only after a lot of both individual and collaborative work goes into preparing the contexts in which they can. In the words of one of my advertising mentors, Nick Lambesis (personal interview, May 2008), "Creativity is always difficult." It might seem from the outside that difficulty would more likely attend creative fields with fewer parameters, such as painting and literature, where art is sometimes created "for art's sake," but in advertising, where creativity is always directed to a persuasive intent in the service of advancing a client's needs, it's not enough to create clever, funny, beautiful, or apt communication alone; the challenge is compounded by the mission to sell, build, and ideally sustain a brand. As Nick says, "The big picture is king in the world of brand development," even as the dominant force behind successful ad creative is "the passion to do good work."

This passion came to life during the trailblazing era of great creative advertising in the mid-20th century, when the aphorisms of pioneers such as the copywriter extraordinaire Bill Bernbach began to circulate as the lore of creatives: For example, "Rules are what the artist breaks; the memorable never emerged from a formula" (as cited in Klein & Donaton, 2005). Bernbach's quotations were even eventually compiled in a handbook for the employees of Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB), the company he cofounded. In more recent decades, the decentralization of advertising from Madison Avenue to shops across the nation and globe, along with the expansion of new media, has given rise to a range of books, "how to" guides, journals, and blogs aimed at explaining the theory and practice of creativity to a much wider audience. In this chapter, I draw on the history, lore, and theory of creative development to examine a successful creative campaign and hope to provide some insight into the role of creative communication and copywriting in advertising at the dawn of the 21st century.

Unlike academic disciplines where theory often contributes to a metaliterature of writing primarily about the *meaning* of the work, theories of creativity in advertising are almost without exception developed by former or current advertising creatives on the ground. Take Luke Sullivan's (2003) *Hey Whipple, Squeeze This*, a highly regarded practical manual on creative copywriting. The nuggets of wisdom he'd learned from his heroes and mentors or developed through his own experience, jotted down

on scraps of paper over the course of his years as a professional copywriter, had begun to literally spill out of his file folder. Taking inspiration from Sullivan's overflowing file folder, I've attempted to gather together what I take to be some of the more useful and practical ideas about creative development in advertising circulating in the field and see how they apply to an actual case study. Through an overview of the history of creativity in advertising and a pragmatic, nuts-and-bolts case study of a real-world context, the following pages are intended to contribute to the demystification of the "divine spark of creativity" in advertising and give those interested in a career as a creative ad man or woman a bit more insight into what those of us who do it think about it; what counts as good work and how to produce it; and what skills, passions, talents, and preparation might help an individual succeed in this unique, challenging, rewarding, exciting, and sometimes crazy career.

The History of Writing Advertising

Creativity, you may be surprised to learn, is a relatively new approach to persuading people to use a particular good or service. The historian Daniel Pope (2003) describes advertising in colonial America as "dry" lists or announcements of products and services, generally relegated to the back pages of newspapers. Pope points out one exception: "Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* reached out to readers with new devices like headlines, illustrations, and advertising placed next to editorial material." Franklin was responding in part to the colonists' desire to replace British-made imports with new American-made goods and brought his enthusiasm for promoting new American enterprise to the task of elevating the appeal of newspaper announcements.

But even as Ben Franklin pioneered new approaches to raising interest in American products and services, the "market revolution" of the following century didn't lead advertisers toward much in the way of further innovations in strategy. Pope's (2003) examination of 19th-century ads revealed that

newspapers almost never printed ads wider than a single column and generally eschewed illustrations and even special typefaces. Magazine ad styles were also restrained, with most publications segregating advertisements on the back pages. Equally significant, until late in the nineteenth century, there were few companies mass producing branded consumer products. (p. 2)

Thus, with few brands to promote or distinguish from other brands, most advertising still had the look and feel of the classifieds section of a newspaper. The main exception Pope finds are the ads for cures and remedies of early patent medicines that competed against modern medicine, still in its infancy: "In an era when conventional medicine

seldom provided cures, manufacturers of potions and pills vied for consumer attention with large, often outrageous, promises and colorful, dramatic advertisements" (p. 2).

The bottle of Peychaud's Bitters in my bar, for example—the base ingredient of the very first "healing" tonics that became what we now know as cocktails—is covered with a facsimile of a 19th-century label, with headlines boasting that it has "no equal" and is the proud recipient of a "diploma of honor." The mystery of illness and recovery gave 19th-century witchdoctors the license to sponsor publications to promote dubious claims about the benefits of their potions. (It's notable that we've come somewhat full circle thanks to pharmaceutical company lobbying: Since 1991, prescription medicine advertising has become legal, and the contemporary media landscape is dominated by controversial promises to cure ailments such as lack of sleep and "restless leg syndrome.")

In the late 19th century, new industries began mass manufacturing of new products in factories filled with new immigrant labor. Standardized production led to innovations in finding and influencing buyers. Department stores lured urban populations to the burgeoning commercial city centers, and catalog advertising targeted the majority rural population. With the increase of available products and competition, advertisers had to follow Ben Franklin's lead to stand out from the crowd and began to feature more illustrations and bolder, even sometimes risqué (for the era) headlines, such as the famous 1911 campaign for Woodbury's soap, which featured the slogan "A skin you love to touch," invented by the pioneer female copywriter Helen Landsdowne. Her success foreshadowed by half a century the creative revolution that opened Madison Avenue's doors to women and minorities, which I'll discuss shortly. You've probably encountered the types of ads created by early-20th-century creatives such as Landsdowne in Sears Roebuck Catalogue pages laminated onto the tabletops of old-time themed restaurants. As a result of this expanding commerce, total advertising volume in the United States grew from about \$200 million in 1880 to nearly \$3 billion in 1920 (Pope, 2003).

Pope (2003) suggests that the standardization of enterprise reflected a larger cultural trend in the first half of the 20th century: It was an entire era of standardization, where "advertising and mass consumption would erase social differences." The influx of new immigrants would be made American in part through their buying into the standard consumption patterns of citizens. Pope quotes the ad agency executive Albert Lasker, who in the 1920s said, "We are making a homogeneous people out of a nation of immigrants" (p. 4).

Thus, even as increased magazine circulation and the spread of radio created more opportunities for advertisers, and the industry continued to grow exponentially and globally in the early 20th century, the delivery of ads, in the service of creating a homogeneous public, remained fairly uniform—that is, until the immigrant populations

themselves entered the field and began to prove that Americans were more heterogeneous buyers than advertisers had ever thoroughly considered.

This sweeping change began to stir up the industry in the early 1960s, when the Jewish American writer Bill Bernbach got into the game and threw caution to the wind, bringing risk to the page and leading the creative revolution that would inspire the entire direction of late-20th-century advertising. Pope characterizes this change as a reflection of the cultural shift from mass audience targeting to segmented marketing, but Bob Garfield (2005), in *Ad Age Magazine*, calls it the storming of the confining Bastille of advertising orthodoxy.

The ad revolution's emphasis on creativity is championed by contemporary creatives, such as the veteran copywriter Luke Sullivan (2003), as an elevation of advertising that has given it the power to become a more valued enterprise than bald hucksterism, offering the world clever, witty, aesthetically appealing communication. Sullivan's argument is not merely an analysis of why creative approaches work but is also a reaction against "successful" advertising that he finds nevertheless crass and uninspiring. *Hey Whipple: Squeeze This*, his book's title, is a reference to the well-known "Mr. Whipple" ads of the 1970s to 1980s for Charmin tissue, wherein a store manager tries to prevent his female customers from squeezing the packaged toilet paper, though he himself cannot resist its irresistible softness. Sullivan recognizes that the campaign was a huge moneymaker but finds the ads themselves unbearable and blames these and other dry or insipid ads and their ilk for giving advertising a bad name.

Clearly, the timing of the creative revolution in advertising was no accident: Where was there not a revolution in the 1960s? The cultural revolution, characterized by the free speech, civil rights, antiwar, and women's movements, along with bold experimentation in music, spirituality, art, and nearly all aspects of life, affected everyone, regardless of where one stood along the generation gap divide. The atmosphere of new possibilities and the questioning of the ethical dimension of the way lives were lived gave the "man [and woman] in the gray flannel suit" motivation to self-reflect, to justify, to defend the value of their work, and, significantly, to make it worth defending. In Pope's view, the creative shift marked a shift from homogenization and assimilation to recognition and acceptance of difference, albeit in the service of establishing market niches.

Prior to the revolution, advertising in the 1950s had begun to seek ways to explain what it was that it was doing. Sullivan (2003) cites Rosser Reeves's notion of the "unique selling proposition," the simple theory that if you "buy this product . . . you will get this specific benefit" (p. 5). Sullivan argues that the uncluttered environment of relatively few brands and the newness of television made distinguishing the uniqueness of a product sufficient for the prerevolutionary advertising landscape. The famed copywriters David Ogilvy, a former researcher, and Rosser

Reeves mastered this form of advertisement, which used clearly defined images and several columns of copy to tout the product benefit, based primarily in research of the product and its selling environment. "You must make the product interesting, not just make the ad different," Reeves argued in the early 1960s, criticizing the "subjective" work of the newer disciples of Bernbach, who sought to free themselves from strict adherence to research and dull forms of expression (cited in Higgins, 2003, p. 125).

But the unique selling proposition wasn't enough to overcome the uniform sameness that advertising had become. In the 1950s, the review boards of the large agencies oversaw every ad and did their best to stomp out anything that veered too far from what people said they found pleasing to look at. In her autobiography, *A Big Life in Advertising*, Mary Wells Lawrence (2003) writes that these boards listened mostly to research, and research told them that "America hungered for happiness and peace, so they produced advertising that was happy and peaceful" (p. 3).

Sullivan argues that part of what made the leap into the creative possible was the ever increasing "clutter" of brands on the market and the expansion of media to deliver them. The clutter was inevitably met with what Sullivan calls "the Wall."

The proliferation of more brands with more claims of uniqueness, promoted in happy ads full of smiling and waving Americans, available in more magazines and on more television sets became less and less distinct or convincing. The Wall refers to the "perceptual filter" that consumers erected to block themselves from this information overload.

The Wall was what Bill Bernbach faced, recognized, and learned to conquer when he ushered in the creative revolution that gave birth to modern advertising, accepting some of the principles of the likes of Ogilvy and Rosser but also challenging them to create new, modern forms of communication. Bernbach established groundwork philosophies for breaking through the wall of skepticism erected by brand-savvy, and brand-wary, consumers. It's important for any aspiring copywriter to consider Bernbach's insights and successes because they form the foundational wisdom of the field that undergirds the approaches and innovations that contemporary creatives continue to employ in the digital age, even as new media and event-oriented viral campaigns steer advertising in fresh directions.

Prior to the creative revolution, the creation of ads was literally considered the writing of ads, so dominant was text over image. Denis Higgins (2003), the editor of *Advertising Age* at the dawn of the Bernbach era, argued that "the essence of this business is putting effective words and phrases down on paper" (p. 9), without even mentioning images. In that era, copywriters were the ad men who became the creative directors of agencies. The division of labor in agencies separated the art department from the center of the action; writers created the ads and artists were brought in to illustrate them.

One of Bernbach's lasting contributions to the modernization of advertising was to establish as a common industry practice the pairing of a copywriter with an art director as a team to collaborate on the creation of the ad. At the core of this shift is the idea that the visual was no longer subservient to the verbal: Both worked together to produce effective communication. If anything, much of advertising has shifted in the opposite direction, with the visual dominating the verbal as the speed of information transmission has increased. Communication must be simple, direct, and quick: A picture is now truly worth a thousand words in advertising—but that doesn't mean an artist is now worth thousands more than a copywriter.

The death of the written word in the postmodern era is greatly exaggerated, and even a fragrance ad that is purely visual has a written script or storyboard. Copywriting is to this day a vital position in a creative department, and a great tagline or headline can be central to the creation of an iconic brand. What copywriters and art directors do together is no longer called the "writing" of an ad but rather "concepting" and "creation": And more often than creating a concept for a specific ad or series of ads, the call today is to create a big concept, a campaign concept, so even as ads may sometimes feature fewer words, the copywriter is also and perhaps foremost a "conceptor." One prominent Los Angeles agency currently asks its teams to present their concepts in the form of a press release: If it's not news, it's not a big enough concept. The creative revolution, then, can also be figured as the shift from ad writing to concept generation.

The Bernbach revolution also represents a more literal storming of the Bastille, as I mentioned before: Agencies became more creatively daring, in part because they became more diverse. With more women and minorities in creative positions, advertising began to reflect the diversity of its audiences and became more willing to accept and play to those differences rather than eliding them in the creation of an idealized consumer. Bernbach's famous campaign for Volkswagen targeted a new generation of drivers before the idea occurred to Detroit. In one well-known print ad, a photograph of a Beetle on a white seamless background is accompanied by the simple headline "Lemon." The body copy extols stringent Volkswagen quality control, which weeds out any car less than perfect, but it's the toying with the expectations of the reader that compels.

In her autobiography, DDB copywriter Mary Wells Lawrence explains that the campaign helped the Beetle become "the beloved icon for the intelligent man's car. Being small was seen as an advantage, modern, young, when that was the age to be" (p. 8). Recently, this Volkswagen advertisement was examined by the creative team at Sterling Cooper, the fictitious, conservative 1960s Madison Avenue agency, in an early episode of the TV series *Mad Men*; their mixed reaction of curiosity and disdain reveals the radicalism of the departure Bernbach took from established practices. The characters' anti-Semitism

suggests that the rejection of untested creative strategies was linked to resistance to new voices, attitudes, methods, and modes of expression. The opening of advertising to these new voices, the willingness to break rules in order to create fresh and effective communication, and even an unwillingness to compromise (Bernbach famously had no interest in advertising cigarettes), these are the legacies of the revolution that led modern advertising to aspire to the level of art, to clever storytelling, to communicate the benefits of products while respecting audiences.

Bernbach avoided explaining his methods—he argued that each one of the hundreds of creatives that cycled through DDB had their own methods and strengths; thus, I want to honor his approach by avoiding too much emphasis on methodology (Higgins, 2003). One of the best ways to prepare for creative work in advertising is to study in greater detail the history that I've only surveyed here, and most important, to examine how great agencies have created breakthrough communication through an admixture of problem solving and inspiration. In the next section, we'll take an in-depth look at one such campaign.

Creative in Action: The Revolution Continues

In this section, I present an investigation of how creative campaigns work, using as an extended example the Airwalk athletic shoes campaign led by Chad Farmer, Creative Director of The Lambesis Agency in the mid- to late 1990s. This is a useful model for four reasons: first, because it was highly successful, taking Airwalk from a \$16 million/year company to \$250 million/year in only 3 years; second, because it employed a highly intuitive and original creative campaign strategy that at first glance might seem outside the purview of what a copywriter does; third, because the campaign is a well-known case study, forming a chapter of Malcolm Gladwell's (2000) landmark bestseller on idea "epidemics," *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*; and fourth, because my role as Senior Copywriter at Lambesis has given me the opportunity to work closely with Farmer and the Lambesis team, to experience directly the approaches and processes at play in the trenches of this creative-driven shop. These four reasons make the Airwalk campaign a useful case study for our purposes of understanding how creativity in advertising arises and works and considering the major changes on the horizon for copywriters in advertising.

Bernbach said that attracting attention to an ad by standing a man on his head is not a good idea unless you're selling a product that keeps things from falling out of that man's pockets (Jewler & Drewniansy, 2001). In other words, creating memorable or surprising campaigns is not enough if they don't communicate the benefit of the product. That is the common thread that links Ben Franklin to

Ogilvy to Bernbach to the current and future advertising pioneers: The creator of the product or service is paying for a successful campaign, so agencies must deliver.

Creative work always begins with an objective, usually spelled out in a written document known as a creative brief. The objectives are arrived at through meetings with agency heads, an account team, and clients. These objectives are then presented to the creative department in meetings with the agency's accounts and planning teams. Creatives will be presented with the product's current positioning in the marketplace and the goals they hope to achieve. Creatives will often be presented with research about the potential target market for the product and the approaches and advertising budgets of competitors. Research, recommendations of the agency's media department, client needs, and budget considerations will help determine the media. Most campaigns today involve an ever-widening scope of media types, including radio, TV, print, outdoor, Web, viral, and guerrilla marketing, and a media plan will be based on the habits of the target market.

After the briefing, creatives will work in a team to create a goal. Even if the goal is not explicitly formulated or stated as such, it is an underlying reality of any advertising campaign, and as the author and creative director Mario Pricken (2002) points out, the goal can be articulated in a single question that guides the process toward creative solutions.

In Airwalk's case, two entrepreneurs in Southern California had created athletic shoes designed specifically for the local skateboarding subculture. The shoes had achieved cult status and popularity among the target market because the shoe was designed to be a better-quality, more stylish alternative to the leading skateboarding shoe at the time, Vans, which had become a mass mainstream brand. When Airwalk decided to expand and target the entire alternative sports community—snowboarders, surfers, mountain bikers, and so on, the company came to Lambesis to help them develop a strategy; using Pricken's formula, the goal might be formulated as this question: How can we create a series of print and television ads that make young people everywhere want to wear what are essentially specialized sports shoes?

Lambesis developed a strategy based on research—but not typical market research—that would likely focus on surveying young people to find out what they want in a shoe. They conducted field research to find out what Generation X believed in and cared about. Other shoe brands were emphasizing sports heroes and wearing athletic shoes as a way to emulate figures such as Michael Jordan. What Lambesis noticed was that the leaders or innovators in the Gen-X culture loved countercultural music and its antiestablishment, renegade character.

According to Lambesis Creative Director Chad Farmer, who cites Bernbach as an influence, “[Gen-X] was pretty much focused on anti-authority and anti-heroes. We capitalized on that for Airwalk, and made the communications more style-based, celebrating individual style, rather than

being like somebody else. It was OK to be yourself” (cited in Roux, 2008). The campaign would introduce cutting-edge antiheroes and quirky individualists to a wider audience and associate the shoes with these fresh, youth-based trends.

Every book listed in this chapter argues that you must know your product, client, and target. While Bernbach argued that research shouldn't overdetermine the creative, he also stressed that you can't be overprepared. Successful advertising “must stem from knowledge” and “you must relate the knowledge to the consumer's needs” (cited in Higgins, 2003, p. 17). Likewise, Sullivan suggests that creatives take seriously and read carefully everything they get from the planning department: “But don't just read it. Feel it. Take a deep breath and sink slowly into the world of the person you're writing to” (p. 31). The Lambesis preparation for the Airwalk campaign relied on agency representatives spending time among the consumer group they were targeting, learning not just how Gen-X felt about shoes, but more important, how they felt about themselves.

The process of executing a campaign moves from research, knowledge gathering, and a close examination of the product and target to establishing a direction. These are the big-picture, press-release-worthy ideas. The innovation of the Airwalk campaign direction was derived from a better understanding of the target market and how it took its cues from innovators who identified with antiheroes. In the Lambesis campaign direction, the advertising would mediate between the innovators on one side and the majority of Gen-X kids on the other. The shoe itself would be portrayed as the antihero of the communications, and thus the representative of innovator culture, now made accessible and less risky for the mainstream to co-opt.

But what would the ads look like, and what stories would they tell? Concepting is perhaps seen as a glamorous aspect of a creative's work, but for most, it does feel like work. Sullivan writes about blank moments spent staring at his art director's shoes. Most of the “how to” books mentioned in this chapter offer strategies for conquering the blank page, from brainstorming to doodling to listing. In an interview, one of the pioneers of advertising, David Ogilvy, recommended having a couple brandies before writing (Higgins, 2003)! That was, of course, the old days, and if you've seen *Mad Men*, you get a sense of the prominent role of drinking in the boy's club ad shops of Madison Avenue in the 1950s. Sobriety on the job is favored today, but my point is that there is no universal magic method, no secret formula for getting started. In Mario Pricken's (2002) *Creative Advertising*, he emphasizes the use of questions as launching points for concepting and lists hundreds of these questions, which I find particularly useful—for example, “What vision of the future or futuristic image can help to make a product feature visible at a glance?” (p. 41).

One approach that almost any creative, and certainly every copywriter, will tell you is necessary is this: You need to create a haystack to find a needle. Copywriters

write dozens, and sometimes hundreds, of lines to find the right one. A good line rarely comes right away; more often, you need to try playing with words, experimenting with points of view, getting it all down. In creating the Airwalk spots, Farmer and his creative team generated literally hundreds of concepts for print ads and TV spot treatments. The Airwalk ads were purely visual stories, with no copy other than the logo. TV spots with minimal to no dialogue were also produced. By brainstorming and posting as many concepts as possible featuring countercultural characters (a young suited spy, a gambling urban cowboy, a rockabilly piano stomper, a futuristic unicyclist, etc.), with their Airwalk shoes as the center of attention (as weapon, robot wear, oven mitt, object of affection, tool belt accessory, etc.), consensus among the creatives could form around the most startling and effective concepts.

One of the Airwalk TV spots featured a young Gen-X space traveler aboard a claustrophobic, futuristic spaceship doing battle with a cockroach. Using all the devices and modern weaponry available to him to no avail, the young spaceman eventually stomps the bug with his Airwalks. In the Airwalk TV spot, humor and cinematic flair invite the viewer to reach the conclusion that Airwalks are not only ahead of the game but also timeless and durable. The concept could have arisen directly in response to Pricken's creativity-generating question above, but rarely is the thought process laid so bare. The point is to use the established direction as a launching pad for exploration. A copywriter must be ready to think visually and imagine a story told with no dialogue; he or she must be a student, in other words, of cinema.

One Airwalk print ad featured a Buddhist monk in school, glancing down at the test answers on his Airwalks. At the time, Eastern spirituality had just begun to gain an iconic cache among trendsetters in the target population, and the Gen-X icons The Beastie Boys had begun to champion Tibetan Buddhism. By humorously (and controversially, since the ad rubbed some Buddhist organizations the wrong way) depicting the monk in a scene familiar to youth as a moment where they might break the rules, Airwalk was able to capitalize on an association with mild subversion and an insider awareness of a hip cultural icon.

As simple and graphic as the early Bernbach ads, the Airwalk ads depicted their iconic antihero characters and shoes in heavily saturated colors and clear images against a seamless background to give them the quality of fine-art posters, in order to make them collectable art rather than throwaway ads. The strategy worked. Kids were stealing the ads from bus kiosks as soon as they could be put up: the ultimate signal that the ad campaign had achieved the countercultural status with wide appeal that it aspired to—that and the 400% sales increase (Roux, 2008).

This strategy of creating art-quality imagery—along with a cutting-edge direction—foreshadowed the approach to advertising that creatives must adopt today: With more competing media types and options, more people getting their information from the Web, and the ability to skip

commercials on TV, creatives need a way to break through the wall of information and communicate directly with people on a powerful, emotional level. The Airwalk campaign shows how clever and exciting concepts can be leveraged to create real success. The key is having a product you can believe in, knowing the target market, developing a direction that will have a direct impact on the target, forming creative teams willing to do the hard work of multiple rounds of creative conceiving around the direction, and executing the campaign in a fresh and provocative way.

To become one of these hardworking creatives, you need a range of knowledge even more rich and eclectic than did the copywriters of previous generations. Creatives must immerse themselves in culture. Like the best creatives of the past, they should read trade-focused publications such as *Communication Arts* and *Advertising Age* and expand their knowledge of culture, politics, entertainment, philosophy, psychology, and technology. The more you know, the more you bring to the table when you're brainstorming a new concept or promotion.

But new creatives should also read *WIRED* and explore the Web. They should be familiar with widgets, blogs, banners, bluecasting, text messaging, user-generated content sites, search engine optimization, and the latest ways people are communicating this year, month, even week. There has been no campaign that I've worked on in recent years that doesn't include a strong Web presence, and in some cases, the Web has replaced television media buying. Beyond the Web, there are new forms of outdoor interactive billboards, inventive wildposting strategies, and a whole range of new paid media. A copywriter today is much more than a writer; she or he is part of a creative team that must be able to see advertising opportunities and storytelling possibilities in nearly everything she or he encounters. Luke Sullivan (2003) points out that you can now "print your client's good name on the stripes in between car spaces in parking lots" (p. 176). One of the main challenges of advertising at the dawn of the 21st century is to create buzz-worthy events, promotional ideas, stunts, collectible pieces, and surprising ads that don't seem like ads, since the wall that Bernbach faced is constantly being rebuilt in the cluttered minds of consumers.

But who wants to read an ad on the lines in a parking lot? Creatives must balance their mission to sell with their desire to create appealing communication. Creatives need to develop strategies that break through but also that, as Chad Farmer (2007) likes to put it, "elevate the general aesthetic." As in Bill Bernbach's day, there is no reason why the most successful brand campaigns can't be the most intelligent and appealing. The divine spark of creativity—which in fact can be nurtured in anyone with a passion to create, a willingness to view problems from multiple angles, to write, to play, to falter, to try again, to aim for something meaningful and engaging without being too crass, offensive, or wasteful—has at its heart an ethical/aesthetic component. If it doesn't,

creativity has the potential to add to the clutter, regardless of whether the strategy sells. And in the 21st century, we need less clutter and more creative solutions to the challenges that face everyone affected by choices made in the global marketplace.

References and Further Readings

Antin, T. (2003). *Great print advertising: Creative approaches, strategies and tactics*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Antin emphasizes communication and warns against creativity for creativity's sake. His methodical approach to advertising overemphasizes flow charts and rote formulas, and the ads he offers as examples feel outdated, but his argument that even the most creative work must be in the service of communication is stubbornly true, even as his formulism feels stifling. It is worth reading in part for having a rather dry text on advertising to react against.

Belch, G. E., & Belch, M. A. (2007). *Advertising and promotion: An integrated marketing communications perspective*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Currently, the best-selling book on advertising for a good reason: This book gives a clear and comprehensive introduction to the shift to new media that has overtaken advertising.

Bloom, J. (2006). Why the right brain rules. *Advertising Age*, 77(37, Special Section), 4-4.

Broderick, P. (2007, July 2). Internet puts another spin on marketing to generations: Advertisers tap into telecommunications to reach Gen X and Y. *San Diego Business Journal*. Retrieved August 3, 2008, from http://sdbj.com/archive_article.asp?aID=3129559.3954837.1495013.9035569.6492956.970&aID2=114992

Fallon, P., & Senn, F. (2006). *Juicing the orange: How to turn creativity into a powerful business advantage*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

When Fallon and Senn started their own agency in 1981, they argued that the status quo was characterized by the concept of "media leverage," or literally outspending competitors and saturating the market with ads. Fallon and Senn, admitted Bernbach disciples, felt that it was time to make a new push for creativity. They coined the term *creative leverage*, which refers to their approach of making creativity work for clients by outsmarting rather than outspending them. The argument in *Juicing the Orange* is very similar to the claims that I make in this chapter. What makes this book such an essential read is that it takes readers from the very inception of the Fallon Worldwide agency, through the early campaigns, and into the present. For readers interested in examining further case studies, such as the Airwalk campaign I discuss here, Fallon and Senn's detailed description of how they discovered creative solutions to a variety of branding problems is indispensable.

Farmer, C. (2007). *Lambesis 2007 agency book*. San Diego, CA: Lambesis.

This book is not available to the public, but an overview of the work discussed in this chapter and much of the work in the book may be seen at lambesis.com

Feinstein, J. S. (2006). *The nature of creative development*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

A fascinating study from the academic field of creativity studies, Feinstein's book includes accounts of the creative development of over 70 individuals, from the artist Jonathan Calder to Albert Einstein. Feinstein's emphasis on the formation of creative interests and pursuits rather than the breakthroughs at the end of the development process is useful in helping one reflect on how one's own creative development is a process. Creative inspiration, in his view, is the culmination of a process of immersion in a topic or field that usually starts well before projects are taken on.

Frankel, A. (2004). *Word craft: The art of turning little words into big business*. New York: Crown.

For aspiring copywriters, Frankel's book will either confirm their interest or drive them away. His careful analysis of how products are named and the very specific industry that has developed around it reveals an aspect of the copywriter's task that can be perceived as either tedious and mundane or fun and fascinating. Most important, Frankel reveals how much is at stake in the big business of coming up with the names of products while discovering that there is no single method or approach shared by professional namers but rather a collection of odd and creative people working with wildly different theories about how to come up with just the right name.

Garfield, B. (2005). Top 100 advertising campaigns of the 20th century. *The Advertising Century*. Retrieved August 3, 2008, from <http://adage.com/century/campaigns.html>

Gettins, D. (2006). *How to write great copy: Learn the unwritten rules of copywriting*. Philadelphia: Kogan Page.

Gettins's book is a useful example of a new wave of books on copywriting that argue that conceiving is really a better description of a modern copywriter's job. He breaks his approach to copywriting into eight fairly commonsense rules (from "know your target" to "do your research" to "be ambitious"), but since they are broad enough to encompass a wide variety of individual practices, his approach could be useful to aspiring creatives looking for a structure or system to apply to solving advertising challenges creatively.

Gladwell, M. (2000). *The tipping point*. New York: Little Brown.

Gladwell's famous text that changed the way people think about and understand the transmission of information, the rise and fall of trends, and the people who shape culture. He argues that "tipping points" are moments when key individuals trigger "epidemics" where information gains widespread momentum. Though the theory itself is questionably metaphysical, the examples he offers are useful for seeing how knowing one's target may sometimes mean reaching out to "connected" segments of the target first. The rapid viral spread of information that reaches key channels such as popular blogs in new media bears out the importance of this aspect of Gladwell's argument.

Higgins, D. (2003). *The art of writing advertising*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

A set of compelling interviews with advertising's great early pioneers, such as Bill Bernbach and David Ogilvy. When the interviews took place in the 1960s, the struggle between the new creative approach and the conservative

traditional copy-plus-illustration formulaic style was under way, and it makes for lively reading and gives one a good sense of the competing approaches, even if all the stakes can only be recognized in hindsight.

Jewler, J., & Drewniansy, B. (2001). *Creative strategy in advertising*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

A textbook on advertising that emphasizes being creative and offers a variety of useful examples, test cases, problems, exercises, and guidelines. A good overview of what are considered the most breakthrough campaigns of all time and thorough analyses of why they work, along with practical advice for young writers and designers.

Klein, D., & Donaton, S. (2005). *The advertising century*. Retrieved August 3, 2008, from <http://adage.com/century/campaigns.html>

Landa, R. (1998). *Thinking creatively: New ways to unlock your visual imagination*. Cincinnati, OH: How Design Books.

It may be counterintuitive to apply exercises in visual thinking to the task of freeing up the creative writing mind, but Landa's practical exercises for designers can be useful for helping writers working on integrated concepts to see the connection between the impact of the word as signifier and the impact of the word as sign.

Lawrence, M. W. (2003). *A big life in advertising*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

An engaging autobiography of a female advertising pioneer. Well-balanced between her personal observations of the friendships and personalities central to her life in the early days of the creative revolution and her observations on the successes and challenges of the campaigns she worked on.

Morgan, A. (1999). *Eating the big fish: How challenger brands can compete against brand leaders*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Morgan argues that challenger brands succeed when they define themselves as such rather than imitating the strategies of larger brands. His emphasis on the need for challenger brands to establish an emotional rather than rational connection with consumers makes sense in light of the success of the Airwalk campaign discussed here. What is most useful in Morgan's book is that through his analysis of some of the largest challenger campaigns of all time, such as Apple's innovative marketing strategy and self-definition as a maker of renegade rebel-geek products, we can see how creativity is especially useful in brand building by leveraging a lower-tier position as an asset.

Ogilvy, D. (1963). *Confessions of an advertising man*. New York: Atheneum.

Ogilvy represents a bridge between the traditional and creative approaches to advertising. His major contribution was in bringing sophistication and wit to advertising, which set the stage for the more revolutionary aesthetic breakthroughs of William Bernbach. His 1963 *Confessions* reveals him to be an entertaining and colorful character whose approach to successful advertising tends to emphasize the bottomline over overtly creative style. In that sense, *Confessions* can be read in part as a reaction to the more artistic approaches on the horizon when the book was written.

Pope, D. (2003). Making sense of advertisements. In *History matters: The U.S. survey course on the Web*. Retrieved August 3, 2008, from <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/Ads>

Pricken, M. (2002). *Creative advertising: Ideas and techniques from the world's best campaigns*. London: Thames & Hudson.

A very aesthetically impressive illustrated "coffee table" book of the most cutting-edge European advertising with a very useful text that centers on formulating the right questions to ask when searching for creative solutions to everyday problems in campaign development. This is the best book available for stimulating the creative mind merely from examining interesting existing advertising.

Roux, J. P. (1998). Lambesis. *Communication Arts*, 40(5), 74–85.

Sullivan, L. (2003). *Hey, Whipple, squeeze this: A guide to creating great ads*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Witty and practical, Sullivan looks at just about every aspect of conceiving, from the history of the creative approach, to the day-to-day life of a copywriter, to tools and approaches for filling a blank sheet of paper, to breaking into the business. The readability and scope of the book make it the most useful starting place for anyone pursuing a career in advertising or for junior copywriters interested in honing their craft.

Vonk, N., & Kestin, J. (2005). *Pick me: Breaking into advertising and staying there*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

A great read for those getting started, *Pick Me* is a very practical nuts-and-bolts manual for breaking into the business, with good advice on putting together a portfolio, choosing a school or agency, and forging a career plan. Since Vonk and Kestin are successful creative directors, they explain how preparing for a career is connected to the type of work you see yourself doing.

MEDIA PLANNING FOR ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

DONALD W. JUGENHEIMER

In-Telligence Inc.

Media selection is critical to advertising success. The best advertising message ever created is completely wasted if it is not presented to the right audience through the correct media.

There are several other reasons why the media are an essential part of advertising campaigns. For one thing, media compose most of the advertising budget, far more than the research, message, or production facets (Wilson, 2007). At the same time, the media are often the least understood part of the campaign; most business executives understand marketing, and all media consumers understand the messages, but the media portion is more esoteric and thus less comprehended by most people. Also, the advertisers see their advertising campaign in the media that are selected, so an easy way to make sure that the advertiser client sees and hears the advertising is through proper media selection. That same proper media planning uses the advertising budget most fully and can free up money for additional advertising or for new promotions. So the media portion of advertising is critical to campaign success (Kelley & Jugenheimer, 2004).

Keep in mind that the media themselves are general types of channels, such as television, newspapers, or the Internet. Then come the media vehicles, which are the individual outlets of the media, such as ESPN, *The New York Times*, or Google. Finally, come the media units, the

specifications of the advertisements, such as a full-page four-color advertisement in a magazine.

Advertising Media Process

To understand how advertising media work, it is first necessary to understand the process of analyzing and selecting the media for an advertising campaign. First, one analyzes the product, service, or idea to be promoted, along with a competitive analysis and a survey of the marketing situation. Next come the objectives and goals, what is to be achieved with the campaign: marketing objectives, more specific advertising objectives, and even more specific media objectives. Then come the strategies, which are plans to achieve the objectives. The strategies include the campaign targets, including geographic targets (target markets), customer targets (target groups), and media targets (target audiences).

From all these analyses, it is possible to evaluate the characteristics of all the available mass media in terms of the campaign objectives and to begin to select the best media types for the campaign. Media tactics are the implementation of the plans and involve the specific media vehicles and units to be used, along with the schedules. The advertising media plan must also consider any media promotions, continuity or “fall-back” plans, the media calendar, the budget and the integration of the marketing, advertising, and media strategies and tactics.

The Role of Media in the Advertising Media Process

Four basic factors are most important in selecting mass media for use in advertising: reach, frequency, impact, and continuity.

Reach involves the audience with which communication is being made. Numerical reach is the number of persons, households, female heads of households, or other target groups, whatever categories of individuals are being sought. Percentage of reach is the portion of the target group with which communication may be made.

Frequency is the number of times an advertisement is used in a campaign. Frequency of insertion is how often the advertisement is run in the media, but because no audience member will see or hear every advertisement every time it appears, more important is the frequency of exposure (often called effective frequency), the average number of times an audience member sees or hears an advertisement. Effective reach refers to an advertisement being seen or heard a minimum number of times, such as audience members who read an advertisement at least three or more times.

Impact has many meanings in advertising. In the media, impact refers to the characteristics and specifications of the particular advertisement, such as size, length, use of color, use of bleed, and the like. A larger print advertisement has more impact than a smaller advertisement; a longer television commercial has more impact than a shorter commercial.

Reach, frequency, and impact all cost money, but *continuity* does not. Continuity involves the pattern of advertising, so that, say, a television viewer sees another advertisement for the same item before forgetting a previous commercial.

Consumers Avoid Advertisements

No matter how often an advertisement is run or where it appears, many consumers still try to avoid them. While watching television, viewers often switch channels when commercials appear (called “zapping”), and those who record television programs often fast-forward through the commercials (called “zipping”).

Advertising and Marketing

Advertising is usually considered a promotional facet of the marketing mix. The marketing mix includes what have become known as The Four Ps:

Product (an item or service or idea to be sold)

Price

Place (distribution to the buyer)

Promotion (including advertising)

The mix of marketing becomes more complex, not because of more elements but because of a faster time limit on advertising campaigns, on consumer attention spans, and on media transfer capacities. Many mass media are now carried in digital electronic formats, which speed up the processes while offering more choices to consumers, and with more selection search assistance available to customers.

Changes and Trends

The advertising media business has always been one of rapid change, but today’s progress and change are coming at ever-faster rates. Some of these changes have been under way for a few years, while others are new on the scene.

Ongoing Changes and Trends

The changes that have been under way are important, may be more important than those changes that have begun to occur most recently. The ongoing changes involve changes in the use of media in advertising, in the media themselves, in the media environment, and in the way the media are delivered.

Changes in Advertising Use of Media

For decades, advertisers have shifted their advertising dollars from one medium to another. Years ago, advertising investment was heavy in radio time, but when television appeared on the scene, much of it was shifted to television. Some former newspaper advertising monies were shifted to a selection of broadcast media. Advertising schedules in general-audience magazines have largely gone to television. Interestingly enough, as new media came onto the scene, the older media did not disappear: Radio did not disappear when television took on the primary advertising role, and magazines did not die when monies were shifted to television, although general-audience magazines have just about disappeared.

More recently, shifts from one advertising medium to another have been more pronounced. Money that once went to newspapers has been shifting to the Internet (Saba, 2007), and especially in the case of classified advertising, monies have shifted from help-wanted classified newspaper advertisements into Internet sites such as Monster.com. Network and other broadcast television advertising has shifted, at least in part, to wired systems such as cable and satellite television. Some radio advertising has gone to music Internet sites as well as to music television programming, such as MTV and VH1, and to wireless systems, such as iPhone and iPod downloads.

Another change involves broadcast ratings. The ratings project the portion of households or of individuals who are tuned to a particular broadcast station, program, or network

as a percentage of all the households (or people) that have television sets, whether those sets are on or not. Until recently, broadcast ratings were available only by 15-minute segments, but now ratings are available for minute-by-minute segments of programs, allowing advertisers to know more precisely what percentage of the potential audience was tuned to their actual broadcast commercials. This minute-by-minute ratings service gives advertisers much more detailed information about the success of their commercials media buys.

The concept of ratings is a valuable one because, in essence, the ratings percentage is the percent reach. Because of this usefulness, other types of media, including print media, have adopted the ratings approach for measuring audiences. This widespread use of ratings data allows for easier comparison of audience levels from one medium to another.

Shifts in Advertising Media Environments

As computer usage has grown and electronic transfer of information has become more prevalent, more mass media content has become digitalized rather than analog content. Digital storage of advertising content permits the rapid and easy transfer of the information from one format to another, say, from a broadcast script to a newspaper story or to an Internet posting. As the media become more similar through digitalization, it has become possible for media consumers, the audience, to select through which format they wish to receive their information and entertainment, including advertising. At the same time, digital storage allows advertisers to trace through what channel the audience members are gaining access to their advertising messages.

Convergence

Convergence is affecting all aspects and uses of the mass media. Convergence is the term used to define and explain how media message content, message effect, and simultaneous message delivery change, interact, and alter one another through multiple media. As digitalization and other shifts occur, making the mass media more similar to one another, convergence results, so the media delivery systems are more like one another and audience selection of media message delivery systems becomes more prevalent.

In advertising, convergence makes a broadcast television commercial more versatile because it can also be used in cable and satellite television, radio, cinema, and Internet formats. This permits broader choice for audiences but at the same time may make reaching those audiences through advertising media selections either more facile or more difficult, depending on whether audiences

select from a wide variety of media sources or stay with only a single or a few choices.

Interactivity

Advertising has benefited greatly from media interactivity, which permits audience members to interact with the media. Such interactivity most commonly occurs with e-mail and Internet advertising, which permit easy responses and exchanges of messages. Some interactivity can also occur with television or radio advertising, although the response may be through another medium such as telephone or the Internet rather than directly back through the same medium by which the advertisement was received.

Actually, media interactivity has been a part of the advertising business for a long time. Magazine subscriptions renewal notices sent through the mail sometimes included a small pencil so that respondents could write their responses easily and quickly, resulting in higher response rates. Many direct-mail offerings also used tear-off coupons or stick-on stamps to increase interactivity. Any coupon that is cut out and redeemed is a form of interactivity. Direct mail, other forms of direct marketing, and telemarketing have all provided interactive opportunities for decades.

Interactivity is important to advertisers because such audience involvement increases response and purchase rates and may result in higher recall rates for advertising messages and brand names. Thus, advertising media have had increasing interest in interactivity, and many media planners are instructed to consider interactive media more favorably than media that only deliver a message but do not provide for an immediate, interactive response.

New Media

New mass media developments, as noted earlier, do not necessarily obviate the older, existing media (Kokernak, 2007). Sometimes, the older media can add the newer elements to their offerings and can replicate some of the new-media benefits in some way. Some studies indicate that television is still a more powerful presenter of an advertising message than is the Internet (Berkowitz, 2007). More often, audiences do not shift to using the new media immediately and certainly not all at once, so both old and new media can provide news, information, entertainment, and advertising. Online media are widely used, but consumers are still influenced by the traditional media (Kee, 2007; O'Malley, 2007). It is only logical, however, that as more media types are developed, the existing advertising budgets are spread across more types of media, old and new, so the advertising revenues for the older media may decline somewhat as advertising

investments are shifted, at least in part, to new media types and outlets.

The rapid rise of the Internet as an advertising medium is one example of this kind of shift. Some uses of new media will grow even faster; mobile marketing, video games, advanced television, and digital out-of-home networks are predicted to grow at double the rate of online media in general (Mandese, 2007a), and these fast-growing formats offer new advertising opportunities (Kee, 2007). The new advertising opportunities on the Internet have been at the cost of some of the older media, such as newspapers, which once had a very large share of advertising dollars (Sass, 2007). The development of cable and satellite television has also resulted in advertising investments, partly at the expense of the older broadcast television medium. Yet advertising in the traditional media often encourages increases in the use of new media, such as television advertising resulting in more searches on the Internet (Berkowitz, 2007).

One irony is that older media types that were once wired, such as telephone, have become mobile through the use of broadcasting, and older media types that were once broadcast, such as television, are now available as wired media.

New Advertising Formats

Newspaper advertising no longer needs to be placed in rectangular forms; free-form advertisements allow shaping the advertisements like the product or some symbol, with regular newspaper information and editorial material around the advertisement. For years, magazines have included tear-out inserts and free-standing (not bound in) inserts; now, magazines can offer CDs, DVDs, product samples, and other original advertising formats. Television advertising commercial announcements once were a standard 60-seconds long, but now the standard is 30 seconds, and stand-alone (i.e., not combined with other commercials to make the slot longer) commercials are available in 15- and even 10-second lengths. Commercials are also available as full programs of 30 to 60 minutes, known as infomercials.

Some advertisers are posting their television commercials online, alone without other materials, and audiences are going to some of these Web sites and viewing the commercials in large numbers, sometimes in the hundreds of thousands. These Internet postings of commercials are not usually part of the original advertising media plan but offer an inexpensive and impactful way for advertisers to get their messages to interested customers.

All these options add to the complexity and information needs of the advertising media buyers, who now must weigh many new options against one another, each with its own costs, benefits, and drawbacks. Some format changes bring greater audience attention, helping the older media compete with the new (Elliott, 2007).

New Changes and Trends

In addition to ongoing changes and trends, there are newer changes in the mass media and in advertising's use of media that are coming into play. These may eventually turn out to be ongoing or long-term changes, or they could be experiments that do not last very long.

Combinations of Media Types

More media offer their content in a variety of formats. Newspapers place their stories and advertising online on the Internet, so advertisers can gain from advertising exposure in both media; there is a big overlap between the use of newspapers and of online information sources (Sass, 2007). Some newspapers, such as *USA TODAY* and *The Wall Street Journal*, are providing magazine formats of their news and advertising content, hoping that because magazines are kept in the home longer than are daily newspapers, such magazines will also remain longer and perhaps have more advertising impact (Ives, 2007). Radio stations make their programming available online in "blogs" (Web logs) or regular Web sites, and the advertising is carried both ways: broadcast and online. Television networks and stations are doing the same with Internet program repeats and even offering follow-up programs and outtakes via cell phones; some television commercials are widely viewed on Internet sites (Garner, 2007). Many magazines provide additional details about printed stories at their online Web sites.

It is not known what impact these kinds of new changes will have for advertising's uses of the mass media. These new developments are making the task of buying advertising media more complex and at the same time less predictable. Advertising media buyers are faced with the question of whether these additional avenues of message distribution are equal to or perhaps better than the more traditional channels. The media buyers must also quickly judge whether these additional outlets make the advertising buys worth more money.

Product Placement

Soon after motion pictures were invented, advertisers worked at ways to get exposure for their products in these movies. Sometimes, the movies were about companies and products and thus provided free publicity without inducements being sought or paid for by the advertisers.

Some advertisers simply made their products or services available for free, in return for the publicity. Other companies provided free products as prizes on television quiz shows, provided services in return for a listing in the program or movie credits, or offered facilities for filming or taping in return for a bit of background exposure.

More often now, advertisers pay for the placement of their products in programs, whether it be Coca-Cola on the

judges' tables for *American Idol* or a brand of beer on the counter for a television episode. Product placement has become an important part of advertising media usage, with weekly surveys of the most visible and effective placements of brand names and items.

For the media planner and buyer, this form of promotion presents additional problems. There is no standard price or fee for such placements, and there is no standard source that one can consult to find the value of such placements. Then, too, the effect or impact on the audience is not well researched, and thus the value of such placements is not well established.

Consumer Control

At one time, control of the media was in the hands of the programmers, advertisers, and media owners. Now, control is shifting to consumers. Digitalization of the media is one reason for this switch; consumers can now select through which outlets they wish to receive their news and entertainment. Consumers can also record broadcast programs to view when they wish, deleting advertisements. Esoteric information that was once hard to find can now be searched and located on the Internet from millions of sources throughout the world.

Consumers can also provide content for the media, something that was always in the control of the programmers, advertisers, and owners of the media. As a result, media content can come from anyone and anywhere.

When advertisers had more control of the media, the advertising uses of the media were more predictable and somewhat standardized. Now, with consumers gaining more control and input, advertising can appear in all sorts of places never deemed possible before, and with wide-reaching effects. Advertising media can use these new channels but with some trepidation because the outcomes are not clearly predictable and the economic return is, for the most part, only a guessing game. With consumer control gaining in importance, advertisers have less control over the environments in which their messages appear, and possible negative side effects are not only possible but an everyday occurrence.

Measurement

With all these new developments and changes, measuring the impact of the media becomes more difficult. Advertisers have less of an idea about what effects their advertising messages will have, on whom these messages will fall, and what the eventual outcomes might be.

Certainly, the long-standing media measurement techniques and institutions still exist and still contribute. Television ratings are still measured and used by programmers and by advertisers. The ratings services now have added newer types of media to their research parameters, so Internet and other new electronic advertisements can be

measured. Because of the interactive capability of these new media, sometimes the research data can be even more accurate than in the past, narrowing down audience information to individual media users. Yet with so many changes, so much fragmentation of the media, so many avenues for placing content in the media, what to measure and how to measure it have become much more complex questions.

Faster feedback may be one important change in media measurement (Friedman, 2007). New broadcast commercial ratings services can track audience attention in minute-by-minute, and in some instances second-by-second, attention spans (Campanelli, 2007). Some major consumer product companies are trying to relate to consumers' real lives, using immersion techniques during which marketers spend hours at a time visiting and shopping and talking with customers (Sewell, 2007).

Whether an advertisement is effective has always been a question that is difficult to answer, but now, with all these changes and developments that have come in recent years and are evolving at an ever-increasing rate, the measurement of advertising effectiveness is of even greater interest, while conducting the necessary research has become more circuitous and more convoluted.

Involving Advertisers in Media Plans

As consumers have gained more control over the media, advertisers also want more control, too, and not just of media content. Advertisers want more control of when, where, and how their advertising messages will appear.

Previously, the media plan was left in the hands of the advertising agency's media department and its media planners, estimators, and buyers. The media portion of the advertising campaign was understood only by a few of the corporate executives, and most of the advertising emphasis was on the message content, format, and presentation rather than on the media plan.

Modern advertisers want to know more definitively what the environment will be for their advertising messages, exactly who will be exposed to that message, how many times, in what kinds of progressive campaigns, and to what eventual ends.

Involving Audiences With Advertisement Usage

Almost a million customers downloaded a Budweiser commercial from the Internet. Imagine the impact on consumers who are so interested in a product that they go out of their way to view a commercial message. The same kinds of results occur for Frito-Lay's Doritos, GEICO's cavemen, and Apple's iPhone. Even the Conan O'Brien parody of the iPhone advertising drew millions of online

viewers, more than for the original commercials themselves (Garner, 2007).

This kind of opportunity provides new avenues for advertising media, and at the same time, new complications. Does the advertising message become so important that customers will find it on their own, or does the media placement expose the message to the correct audiences so accurately that they are drawn into the message and then follow through without further incentive or assistance?

Problems for Advertising Media

Not all developments offer a new opportunity. Sometimes, they offer new problems and mixed results. All businesses have problems, and the advertising media business is no different.

Clutter

A long-standing problem in advertising media is clutter, and it is getting worse. Clutter involves the number of advertisements and the amount of media time and space devoted to advertising. The problem is more pronounced in broadcast media, radio, and television, because it is more difficult for audiences of those media to avoid the commercials; print readers can simply turn the page, and Internet viewers can click on another site, but broadcast listeners and viewers must sit through the commercials or take actions to avoid them. Then, too, broadcast has a bigger concern with clutter because of the so-called irritation factor, when audiences actually become angry because of the number of commercials or irritated at an advertiser whose commercials run too often.

Ironically, the solution to clutter has been increased clutter. As more and more commercials appear on radio and television, the portion of a single advertiser's messages as a part of all commercial minutes, known as share of voice, has declined (Bloxham, 2007). To overcome this dilemma, advertisers have resorted to buying more commercials of shorter lengths so that the advertisers' messages appear more often. Where once there was only one commercial per minute, and then two, today, there may be four or more. Clutter has increased as advertisers try to fight the clutter from their competition. Yet longer messages still work better than do short ones (Loechner, 2007).

Another possible solution to clutter may involve the use of behavioral targeting, which aims advertisements at certain desirable audience segments rather than using demographic targeting. More specific targeting based on consumers' behavior would reduce the number of advertisements that go to audience members who are not really interested in that particular product or service (Leggiere, 2007).

Inflation

Economic price inflation is a problem for all businesses. It is especially a problem for advertising media. In recent years, media costs have been rising faster than the consumer price index in the United States. Another complication is the fact that some media are losing market share. Network broadcast television, for example, has lost audience levels for some years now, with the audience rating figures getting smaller each year. The solution for advertisers has been to try to reach the same size of audience as they did in the past, which, because of the decreasing ratings, forces advertisers to buy more advertising. So the demand for network television advertising time has been increasing, even though the audience ratings have been slipping. This is certainly an ironic situation: getting more demand because market share is slipping. Television networks have even raised their advertising rates to take advantage of the increased demand for television time, at a rate somewhat higher than the general inflation rate.

To some extent, the same trend has occurred in other media. Magazines have charged higher prices for advertising space as the demand for magazine advertising has declined (Mandese, 2007b). In addition, some media vehicles have been able to fight the declines in advertising faced by their types of media. Some newspapers have maintained or even gained advertising even while the newspaper industry as a whole has suffered from a dramatic decline in advertising (Roberts, 2007). Industry analysts have charged that the shifts in audience levels, advertising demand, and media prices have been disguised to take the advertisers' attention away from what is actually being offered in advertising buys (DeWitt, 2007).

Audience Attention Levels

More types of media availabilities mean that audiences have more choices of where to spend their time. This means that the audiences spend less time with the traditional media as their media exposure is spread across more types of channel outlets.

As people's lives get busier, they also spend less time on any one activity, be it recreation, entertainment, or information. These two factors, more types of media and more segmented activities, mean that audiences are spending less time with the media and that they are more likely to multifunction: doing two or more things at once.

If audiences try to balance the checkbook and take care of the children while the television is on, they obviously are not paying full attention to the television program.

These split audience-attention levels have obvious implications for advertising media. Buying an advertisement today may not give the advertiser the same audience attention even though it may reach the same audience size. There is no easy way to calculate the loss of attention and its impact on advertising media efficiencies, but there

certainly is a loss of advertising impact when the audience is not paying close attention to the message.

“‘Creative’ Sells Campaigns”

There is an old saying in advertising that “creative sells campaigns.” In the heading for this section, the word *creative* is in quotation marks because, even though many practitioners in the advertising business call the message strategies the creative portion of the campaign, all advertising involves creativity: media and research and production as well as message strategies. So what the saying means is that the advertisements themselves, the messages, are what sell campaigns.

Here, the selling of the campaign is not just to the audience but also to the advertiser. An advertising agency prepares an advertising campaign for its client, the advertiser, and the client must give approval before the campaign can run and money can be spent. Advertising agencies usually stress the advertisements when presenting the proposed campaign to the advertisers, because the message should be inherently interesting and thus might make the campaign easier to accept. Yet, even though the message may be stressed, the message and media strategies are ideally formulated together, in concert with one another, and neither one is more important than the other.

Effects and Effectiveness

Advertising is not an altruistic business. Businesses invest in advertising because they expect a return on their investments. A problem arises because the stimulus, advertising, may not be traceable all through to the response, sales. Also, not all advertising has sales as the goal; there are many other possible objectives, such as product awareness, opinion change, product knowledge, and similar outcomes. Yet most of these results cannot be traced back directly to advertising.

For that reason, much advertising research focuses on surrogates for the intended result. It may not be possible to trace sales results or opinion changes, at least not directly all the way back to advertising, often because a series of intervening steps is involved. So the surrogates used are outcomes that can be traced and that may be meaningful; examples of surrogates include readership of a print advertisement or recall of a television commercial.

Measuring the Contributions of Media in the Overall Campaign

An even more difficult research problem arises when trying to separate the media effect from the rest of the advertising campaign effect. If one cannot determine whether sales

occur directly because of the advertising campaign, then determining the effect from the media portion of the advertising campaign is virtually impossible.

Separating the media effect from the overall campaign effect cannot be researched easily, quickly, and economically, so again, surrogates are used. With media, coupons are often used, with a key in the coupon indicating where the advertisement appeared, so the coupon response can tell which advertising placement location brought the greatest response and can also measure cost per response. Keep in mind, however, that if a coupon response is not the intended goal of the advertising, the research is again measuring something other than the intended objective of the campaign.

Future

To understand the role of advertising media strategies in the 21st century, it is critical to try to predict future trends and developments. Of course, it is impossible to tell the future accurately and completely, but there are a number of current trends in the mass media that can help us forecast what may be happening in the coming years—probably not the entire 21st century but at least the coming decade or two.

Media-Buying Specialists

Media-buying specialty firms have been around for many years. These companies specialize in the media-planning and -buying functions of advertising.

Such work is often conducted by the advertising agency that handles the overall advertising campaign. But for a number of reasons, an outside firm may be sought. Many times, media trainees at advertising agencies are eventually promoted to some other line of work, such as account service or management, rather than continuing their experience and expertise in media work. Then, too, advertising agencies often encounter certain periods of peak activity, when several campaigns are due for a variety of clients, so using outside vendors for some of the work may be desirable.

The larger a media-buying department or company is, the better volume discounts it may be able to negotiate for advertising costs. Thus, combining several accounts into one buying activity gains budget volume, which can result in lower advertising rates, as well as gaining the economic efficiencies of larger operations. Combining several advertising agencies' work at a media-buying service can gain even more budget volume to provide lower rates and greater economies of scale.

Trends

In the mass media, there are several trends that appear to affect the way advertising, and particularly advertising media strategies, work. In addition, there are some general business trends that affect how advertising operates and

some general advertising trends that affect how the media function may operate (Kelley & Jugenheimer, 2008).

Convergence

Earlier, there was a discussion of media convergence, the fact that the media are becoming more similar and overlapping in their technologies, functions, and applications. As this trend continues and the media continue to become more similar, advertising media planning will simultaneously grow more difficult and less difficult.

This seeming contradiction can be easily explained. If the media grow more similar, buying media will be easier because one may be able to purchase a newspaper advertisement and a similar announcement on the newspaper's Web site, all with one easy media buy. However, when all media have Web sites, and newspapers also publish magazines, and other new forms and outlets are developed, there will be even more media choices, making the media-planning task more difficult.

Then, too, is the problem of common digitalization of the media. Digital media are simple and quick to save for future use, perhaps on a personal computer. If an advertiser is running a campaign and the audience holds the message until some future date, is the value of the advertisement decreased or perhaps lost altogether if a special sale or political vote is over by the time the audience gets around to calling back up the media content that was saved?

Interactivity

Advertisers like media that involve the audience members. There is some evidence that interactivity with an advertisement brings increased recall of that advertisement and perhaps even a more favorable opinion about the advertised item.

Interactivity can go even further, however. In some media such as the Internet, the audience can not only interact with the advertisement but also actually place an order for purchasing the advertised merchandise. This expansion in activity also changes the scope of advertising; advertising was once considered to be most effective in pretransactional and posttransactional roles, but the actual purchase was made at a store or in some other way separated from the advertising. Now, the purchase transaction can become part of the advertising. This means that the advertising media selection is even more important, because it may shorten the marketing channel and transform advertising into a transactional as well as a promotional tool.

Engagement

Currently, there is much discussion of engagement in advertising media. It is not enough, so it is thought, for audiences simply to read, see, or hear the advertisement.

It is better to engage the audience members in activities that may make a more lasting impression on potential customers. Engagement activities are not necessarily interactivity, as discussed in the previous section. Instead, engagement could be just something to keep the audience members busy, to induce them to stay with the advertisement longer, to encourage them to think more deeply and to remember longer the advertising message (Rose, 2006).

Television commercials that entertain as well as sell are a means of engagement. Most advertisers would be pleased to know that audiences actually look forward to their television commercials and that people may tell others to "watch this ad." One research study found that an engaged television viewer is worth eight regular viewers (Neff, 2007) and that return on investment increases 15% to 20% with engagement (Wilson, 2007).

Commoditization

The media are not the only converging development. Products and services are becoming more similar to one another, too. Pain relief products claim that "no other product is stronger," meaning that they are just as strong but no better. Banks all tend to offer the same services, lobby hours, and online services. As these products and services become more similar, they are more like commodities. Commodities are like agricultural products, such as wheat, that meet certain standards and that are assumed to be uniform throughout no matter who produced them.

If product and service differentiations disappear, or at least decline, the role of advertising changes dramatically because it is no longer possible to find the "unique selling proposition," the one thing about a service or product that made it different from its competitors. Yet the role of advertising will not decrease just because natural differences are diminished; rather, advertising will become more important when it is needed to create or imply differences between the advertised items.

Cadence

The world is becoming an ever-busier place. People do more now in a day than they may have done in a week when our country was founded. Mechanization, computerization, industrialization, and electrification have all made it possible to accomplish more in less time.

The pace of life, the cadence with which we live, is especially important in advertising media. If we have minute-by-minute television commercial ratings, how long will it be before an advertising media buyer is expected to shift the campaign to some other medium or vehicle not in a couple of weeks or in a few days but in the next couple of hours?

Cadence is important to advertising and especially to advertising media, and we have not yet begun to see the

increase in the pace of business activity that all the new media and new media developments will bring.

Future of Advertising Media

While it is not possible to predict the future with total accuracy, at least not for the long term, some trends in the mass media and in advertising can lead to reasonable forecasts for advertising media. “Aggregate mass audiences are diminishing and being replaced by smaller groups of individual consumers” (Picard, 2007).

As the media continue to converge, it is likely that most media reception may be able to come through a single device, whether it be a portable instrument such as a cell phone or a personal computer. Most likely, portability will be a prime desire among audiences. Media content will be wherever consumers want it to be (Smith, 2007).

At the same time, this convergence along with digitalization means that consumers will be able to select through which means they will receive the media information. Read the newspaper on the computer screen, listen to it on a cell phone, or have it printed out: These are possibilities now, and they are likely to gain more widespread availability and use.

The proliferation of types of media and vehicles will require that consumers be able to select which ones they wish to access and what kinds of information, opinion, entertainment, and advertising they wish to receive. Already, many e-mail advertisers ask recipients for permission to send promotional information, and consumers seem to like having that choice.

For advertising media strategies, these changes will mean that there will be less wasteful distribution of messages; advertisements need only reach those who are interested and perhaps opt to receive the advertising. At the same time, such changes may make it more difficult to introduce new products, services, and ideas because audience members will not choose to receive advertising messages about things about which they know nothing.

Database information about consumers is becoming more prevalent and more detailed. These kinds of in-depth information sources about consumers—what they buy, what they want, and to what media they pay attention—will make media selection more scientific and less haphazard, again reducing waste and, perhaps, increasing efficiency.

Because of the large number of media choices, it will be more difficult for advertisers to reach a large general audience, so specific targeting will be in demand by advertisers. Engagement will continue to grow in importance, perhaps through interactivity or through new media that have not yet been developed.

The pace of life, in business and in personal dealings, will continue to have a faster cadence. In advertising, the need will be to predict exactly what consumers want and give them exactly that.

No matter what changes occur in the future, advertising will be there, likely to support the costs of new media as well as to use the media to reach potential customers. Advertising media strategies will become even more crucial in the advertising effort, to take advantage of the new developments; to cut costs and gain efficiencies; to make advertising a desired selection among audience members; and to serve its essential economic function of expanding the economy, announcing new developments, and facilitating marketing and commerce.

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INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

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Over the past decade, integrated marketing communication (IMC) has become of prime importance in both the academic and the practitioner communities. In both the business-to-business and business-to-consumer markets, numerous research studies have indicated that IMC is one of the top priorities in the new millennium. Interestingly, agencies have been ahead of their clients and, to a large degree, academics in the adoption of IMC.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the evolution of IMC, its meaning and the reasons for its adoption, the current state of the art, and the future of IMC.

The Evolution of IMC

For many years, the promotional function in most companies was dominated by mass media advertising. Companies relied primarily on their advertising agencies for guidance in nearly all areas of marketing communication, and many companies also used additional promotional and marketing communication tools. Sales promotion or direct-marketing agencies and promotional-products firms were generally viewed as auxiliary services and often used on a per-project basis. Public relations agencies were used to manage the organization's publicity, image, and affairs with the relevant publics on an ongoing basis but were not viewed as integral participants in the marketing communication process. Many companies had separate public relations agencies that were autonomous and distinct from the marketing communications groups. Marketers built strong barriers

around their various marketing and promotional functions and planned and managed them as separate practices, with different budgets, different views of the market, and different goals and objectives. Departmental silos based on specific communications functions were established. These companies failed to recognize that the wide range of marketing and promotional tools must be coordinated to communicate effectively and present a consistent image to their target markets.

During the 1980s, many companies began to recognize the need for improved strategic integration of their promotional tools. These firms began moving toward the process of *integrated marketing communication*, which involved coordinating the various promotional elements with the other marketing activities that communicate with a firm's customers. As marketers embraced the concept of IMC, they began asking their ad agencies to coordinate the use of a variety of promotional tools rather than relying primarily on media advertising. A number of companies also began to look beyond traditional advertising agencies, employing other types of promotional specialists to develop and implement various components of their promotional plans.

Many agencies responded to the call for synergy among the various promotional tools by acquiring public relations, sales promotion, and direct-marketing companies and then touting themselves as IMC agencies that offered one-stop shopping for all their clients' promotional needs. Some agencies became involved in these nonadvertising areas in an attempt to maintain control over their clients' promotional programs and budgets but struggled to offer any real value beyond their advertising expertise.

However, the advertising industry soon recognized that IMC was more than just a fad and adopted their own perspective on the concept. Terms such as *new advertising*, *orchestration*, and *seamless communication* were used in the industry to describe the concept of integration. A task force from the American Association of Advertising Agencies (the 4As) developed one of the first definitions of IMC:

A concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines—for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations—and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact. (Schultz, 1993, p. 17)

The 4As' definition focuses on the process of using all forms of promotion to achieve maximum communication impact. However, some advocates of the IMC concept (e.g., Schultz, 2004) argued for an even broader perspective that considers all *sources of brand or company contact* that a customer or prospect has with a product or service. Their perspective was that IMC calls for a “big-picture” approach to planning marketing and promotion programs in addition to coordinating the various communication functions. It requires that firms develop a total marketing communications strategy that recognizes how all of a firm's marketing activities, not just promotion, communicate with its customers.

Consumers' perceptions of a company and its various brands are a synthesis of the totality of the messages they receive and the contacts they have (e.g., media advertisements, direct-marketing efforts, publicity, sales promotions, and messages on the Internet and also price, package design, point-of-purchase displays, and even the type of store where a product or service is sold). In this perspective, IMC seeks to have *all* of a company's marketing and promotional activities in order to project a consistent, unified image to the marketplace. For example, a high price may symbolize quality to customers, as may the shape or design of a product, its packaging, the brand name, or the image of the stores in which it is sold. Luxury brands of perfume use a distinctive package and brand name as well as a high price to connote quality and an upscale image, and this is reinforced by the advertising. Typically, these brands employ a selective or exclusive distribution network to add to the overall image.

Many companies and agencies have adopted this broader perspective of IMC. They see it as a way to coordinate and manage their marketing communications programs in order to ensure that their customers receive a consistent message about the company and its brands. For these companies, the IMC approach represents an improvement over the traditional method of treating the various communication elements as essentially separate activities. However, as marketers become more sophisticated in their

understanding of IMC, they recognize that it offers more than just ideas for coordinating all the elements of the marketing and promotional programs. The IMC approach also helps companies manage their marketing and promotional efforts better by identifying the most appropriate and effective methods by which to contact customers, as well as other relevant stakeholders (e.g., employees, suppliers, investors, media, and the general public).

Reasons for the Growing Importance of IMC

The move toward IMC has been called one of the most significant marketing developments of the 1990s and continues to gain champions in the marketplace, for a number of reasons. One fundamental reason is that marketers recognize the value of strategically integrating the various communication functions rather than having them operate autonomously. By coordinating their marketing communication efforts, companies can avoid duplication, take advantage of synergy among various communication tools, and develop more efficient and effective marketing communications programs. Advocates of IMC argue that it is one of the easiest ways a company can maximize the return on its investment in marketing and promotion. Whether marketers adopt the broader perspective of IMC as presented here or concentrate these efforts in the communication area, the rate of adoption of IMC continues to grow.

The move to IMC also reflects an adaptation by marketers to a changing environment, particularly with respect to consumers, technology, and the media. Major changes have occurred among consumers with respect to demographics, lifestyles, media habits, and buying and shopping patterns. These changes have coincided with the development of new technologies and formats for reaching consumers. For example, over the past few decades, the expansion of cable television and, more recently, digital satellite systems has vastly increased the number of channels available to subscribers. Some of these channels offer 24-hour direct-shopping networks, while many others contain 30- or 60-minute direct-response appeals, known as *infomercials*, that look more like TV shows than advertisements. The 1990s also saw the arrival of the Internet—specifically, the World Wide Web. Online services now provide information and entertainment as well as the opportunity to shop for—and buy—a vast array of products and services through a medium that previously did not exist. Marketers responded by developing Web sites that provided them with the opportunity to advertise their products and services in an interactive fashion as well as transact sales. It became necessary, not optional, for these marketers to look beyond the traditional media options of the past.

In addition to the previously mentioned changes in the communication environment, a number of other factors have also contributed to the rapid growth of IMC.

A shift in marketplace power from manufacturers to retailers. Large retailers such as Wal-Mart are using their clout to demand larger promotional fees and allowances, which siphons off monies from advertising and increases the focus on short-term promotions.

The growth of database marketing. Marketers are increasing the development of databases. These databases are then used to target specific consumers through telemarketing, direct mail, and other forms of direct-response advertising. Companies develop customer relationship management (CRM) programs to reward their most loyal customers through sales promotions, discounts, and other tools, all of which increase costs. Airline loyalty programs are but one example of promotional programs that have become very expensive to operate.

Demand for greater accountability. An increased demand for accountability and a focus on return on investment (ROI) have led advertisers to consider a variety of tools that may enhance the cost-benefit relationship. It is no longer acceptable to say that one does not know how well the advertising program is working; too many other options for use of these dollars now exist. Companies have allocated more monies to sales promotions and direct-marketing programs and have increased their expenditures on the Internet in an attempt to determine how their communications are working.

The rapid growth of the Internet. While the Internet is just one of the numerous new media to become available to marketers, perhaps no other medium since television has had such a dramatic impact on the media landscape. The Internet continues to evolve, in some ways becoming more and more like television. Combine this with the advent of interactive TV, wireless Internet, podcasts, and other new media and marketers have had to rethink their traditional media strategies.

Technological advances. The ability to fast forward or skip TV commercials entirely when using digital video recorders and TiVo has led to a decline in viewing audiences watching commercials. Advertisers have reallocated some of these monies to advertising on the Internet as well as to product placements and integrations.

Changing media habits. Simply put, young people don't read newspapers or general-news magazines as much as their parents did. Newspapers have seen dramatic declines in readership and, as a result, advertising revenues. Many of those in younger audiences indicate that they now go to the Internet to keep current on news events. While general-news magazines (e.g., *Time Magazine* and *Newsweek*) have seen circulation declines, special-interest magazines have been experiencing the opposite trend.

In addition to these factors, there has been a dramatic shift in the media landscape. This shift has contributed even more to the necessity of an IMC approach to marketing communications.

The Changing Media Landscape

In the 1960s, Chevrolet spent almost its entire U.S. television media budget on one program—the *Dinah Shore Show*. At that time, prime-time viewers had only three network channels to choose from, and an advertiser could reach 80% of U.S. households on any given evening by running commercials on CBS, NBC, and ABC programs (Belch & Belch, 2009). Newspapers were a primary source of information, and cable TV and the Internet were decades away from development.

Currently, there are more than 400 cable TV channels in the United States, network TV audiences have declined at the rate of approximately 2% per year over the past decade, and cable TV now commands a larger audience than the networks. The Internet has experienced unprecedented growth, and advertising can now be seen on one's cell phone, in bathrooms, and in almost every conceivable (or inconceivable) location. Product placements and integrations have increased significantly. Erwin Ephron—a media consultant (www.ephronmedia.com)—estimates that in the 1980s, a media planner had nearly 1,250 scheduling options on television alone. In the 1990s, with 100 broadcast and cable channels to choose from, the number of options rose to 1.25 quadrillion. With more than 400 channels at present, the number of options is incalculable.

With the proliferation of new media—the Internet and interactive TV, wireless, podcasts, video on demand, blogs, and more—traditional media such as public relations, sponsorships, event marketing, and product placements have taken on a new perspective. Advertising is no longer king, as some of the largest TV advertisers (General Motors, Procter & Gamble, and American Express, among others) are shifting more and more dollars to the “new” media. As traditional media revenues decline, new media revenues are climbing at an unprecedented rate.

Evidence of this trend is abundant. In the 1990s, Procter & Gamble spent 90% of its advertising budget on television. Now, for some new products, less than 25% may be allocated to TV, with the balance going to sales promotions, new media, direct marketing, and related activities. McDonald's, which once spent nearly two-thirds of its communications budget on television, now spends less than one-third there. Ford, which spent less than 2% of its budget in nontraditional media in 2001, now spends more than 20% there (see www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/2006/narrative_online_economics.asp?cat=4&media=4). These are just a few of many examples of the shift.

Communication programs now require the use of a variety of media to reach the markets, as well as the integration of

these media to put forth a unified and consistent message. It is now obvious to marketers that it is no longer “business as usual” and that IMC addresses the issues involved in managing this changing media environment. At the same time, IMC provides a framework for establishing *communication objectives* to be used to guide the communication program and assess its effects.

As with the myriad changes in the overall marketing environment, there have also been numerous changes in the media landscape. Prior to discussing the factors leading to this transformation, it is necessary to establish a common ground. For the purposes of this chapter, we group media into three categories:

1. *Traditional media*: When one thinks about the media that have seemingly been around forever, what most likely comes to mind are television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and outdoor. While all these media forms have changed over the years (with, e.g., the advent of satellite radio, new forms of outdoor advertising, and online newspapers), for the most part, the basic structure has remained consistent. TV commercials may now be 20 seconds instead of 60 seconds, but there has not been a dramatic shift in the medium. The same holds true for the others as well.

2. *Traditional but different*: Media that have also been around for quite some time but have experienced significant changes over the past few decades include public relations, product placements, sponsorships, and direct marketing. For example, public relations, which (as previously noted) has traditionally been an independent component of organizations’ communication programs, has now become more integrated with marketing-oriented communication elements. The degree to which this integration has taken place varies from one end of the continuum—where the public relations function is still primarily independent but not completely detached—to the other end—where it has become essentially a marketing function. At this end, public relations has specific *marketing public relations objectives*. Likewise, product placements and sponsorships are nothing new but have changed in their scope and frequency: Remember when college football games were called the Orange Bowl, Sugar Bowl, and Rose Bowl? Direct mail and catalogs have evolved into direct-response TV commercials, infomercials, and home shopping channels as well as online retail shopping.

3. *New media*: While the list of new media seems to grow faster than one can keep up with, what we refer to here are the never-before-seen tools such as wireless, podcasting, blogs, search ads, product integrations, video on demand, and behavioral targeting.

While these media forms have all evolved in one way or another, the results are the same—marketers now have many more options from which to choose. When considering these

new options, the goal of creating the most effective and efficient media strategy takes on a whole new meaning. The marketer of today is assigned the task of using these tools to achieve media optimization and communication effectiveness. He or she must understand the characteristics of these media and how they affect the receiver—individually and in the gestalt. Planners must also understand that as the environment continues to change along with these media changes, the requirements necessary to achieve this understanding and manage the media process will increase dramatically.

Requirements for an Effective IMC Program

To establish an effective IMC program, it is necessary to understand the communication process, how changes in any of its components will affect this process, and the factors creating such changes. As discussed, the media landscape has changed, resulting in a much greater variety of options for message delivery. Determining how and when these media are most likely to be effective requires an understanding of how the receivers will use and respond to them. As the market changes, IMC strategies must evolve as well. The media landscape did not change in and of itself but rather as a result of changes in the technologies, market conditions, consumer behaviors, and so on.

While the consumers of the 1960s might have been characterized as a traditional family with one working adult, with few media options, and easy to reach through the TV, the consumers of today have different characteristics.

Money rich and time poor: For many consumers, the concern is not about having enough money but having enough time to spend it. Dual working spouses, longer work days, and changes in lifestyles leave consumers less leisure time and more time management requirements. In turn, these factors give rise to different demands on and different use of the media. CNN and CNN Headline News found success by providing consumers with the news when they wanted it—not when it was convenient for the network. *USA TODAY* provides national and international news in a much briefer format that allows for quicker reading. The increase in the use of digital video recorders and video on demand also reflects this time-management orientation. The result is that the marketer must now provide the commercial message when the consumer wants it—not at the marketer’s own convenience.

Multitasking. Hockey night in Canada has given way to individual family members watching TV on their own sets. Not only are they watching on their own sets, they are likely to be doing something else—multitasking—at the same time. Numerous studies have shown that most consumers multitask and that the likelihood of doing so is highest among the younger demographics. Watching TV while reading a maga-

zine or newspaper, talking on the phone, or using the Internet has become a much more likely scenario than sitting on the couch intently focused on the TV and the commercials. Reading a magazine or newspaper while listening to an MP3 player is also commonplace. Each medium used while multi-tasking constitutes a touchpoint for a marketing communication. This requires that the messages sent through each of these media be consistent and mutually reinforcing.

Media prolific. As noted previously, the increased number of media options has provided marketers with a number of new ways to deliver their messages. Likewise, the typical consumer has multiple media options of his or her own: Most households have more than one television set, household Internet penetration continues to grow (as does access at work), iPod and MP3 sales continue to increase. And is there anyone who doesn't have a cell phone? Three decades ago, of the items on this list, only the television existed. Daily exposure to ad messages has risen from 1,500 per day at that time to more than 4,000 per day now. Consumers love their gadgets, and each has become a medium for marketers to exploit.

Lifestyle diverse. It started with the characterization of the *baby boomers*, then *Generations X* and *Y*, and the *new millennium*s. There is the *gray* demographic, teenagers, and *tweens*. Boomers are more brand conscious. Gen-X is more conservative. Research has shown that tweens are more responsive to product placements and that Gen-Y consumers are more social, event oriented, and likely to purchase through the Internet or at a kiosk, and so forth. Even Facebook and MySpace have become demographically and lifestyle focused. It seems that each lifestyle has its own corresponding media preference.

Technologically savvy. E-mailing is out. Texting is in. The cell phone is a camera, an MP3 player, and a means for accessing the Internet. You can also use it as a GPS system, as a barcode receipt for an airline ticket, and for depositing money in your parking meter. While you can now use your TiVo to skip commercials, soon you will be able to use it to stop the commercial you are watching and order the merchandise being advertised. There are billboards that can talk to you. While each of these technologies creates more communication opportunities for the advertiser, what is perhaps more interesting is that so many people know how to use them. More important, they *do* use them, and they are becoming the means by which consumers acquire product information and make purchases. Ford and Lexus (among many others) understand the fact that more than 75% of potential car buyers who visit their showrooms have researched their automobiles on the Internet prior to coming in to make a purchase. At some restaurants, the customer may order and *pay* through a cell phone—the same way he or she located the restaurant and reviewed it.

Disenchanted with traditional media. As network television viewing decreases (cable now has a larger audience), other media fill the void. The YouTube phenomenon is not the result of better content alone. Rather, viewers have become disenchanted with television for a variety of reasons. Their trust of traditional news media is at an all-time low; many people now get their news from online sources such as the *Drudge Report* and blogs. The number of commercials on both television and radio has led to less positive attitudes toward these media, lower ratings, and less involved audiences. Lower ratings mean smaller audiences, hence advertisers' search for other options.

The combination of these factors requires that marketers change their approach to marketing communications. To adopt a successful IMC approach, marketers will need to address the following issues.

No longer carry on "business as usual." The traditional approach to communicating with consumers and potential consumers is dead. Marketers will no longer be able to focus on a one-medium strategy (see our earlier reference to Chevrolet). In the 1990s, when the World Wide Web started to take off, some marketers believed that the Internet would be the only medium necessary to market one's products. They predicted the death of shopping malls and advertising on television. As the Net has evolved, it has proven to be a powerful element in an IMC strategy, but it is not a stand-alone medium. Recent reports show that approximately 38% of Internet sales began with a television commercial, and the majority of Google searches focus on brands. Communication plans must now involve a number of media, each designed to contribute in its own way.

Capture consumers' involvement. As the media markets fragment, marketers will be required to focus more attention on capturing consumers' attention and involvement. Doing so will require more innovative programming and content, more specific targeting, and new ways to gain involvement. Commercials will be designed to reflect program content and be adaptable to a variety of media (e.g., the Internet as well as TV).

Rethink communication strategies. The adoption of an IMC perspective necessitates a new way of thinking. Traditional means of conducting business must give way to adapting to the new communication environment. One of the most critical requirements is to recognize that consumers' exposures to the media and messages are now under their control—not that of the sender. Technological changes leading to the development of new media is just one of the factors that have enabled receivers to obtain information when *they* want it, not when the marketer sends it.

In addition, marketers must recognize and accept the dramatic shift in media usage that has occurred—particularly

among the younger demographic segments. To successfully adopt an IMC orientation, companies will need to take several steps.

Recognize that consumer perceptions of a company and its brands are a synthesis of all the messages they receive or contacts they have with the company. The message being communicated, the media in which these messages appear, interactions with the sales force, the Web site, and public relations and publicity all help shape the perceptions of the company, its products, and its brand image.

Identify all the sources of contact that a customer or prospect has with the company. These contacts can include media advertisements, Web sites, articles and stories in newspapers and magazines or on television and radio stations, word of mouth, sponsorships or events, and product placements, among others. The IMC process starts with the customers or prospects and then works back to determine the best ways to reach them.

Consider the strengths and weakness of various communication channels and of the marketing communication tools that form an effective IMC program. For example, mass-media advertising—such as television—works well for building overall awareness but is less effective for communicating detailed information. Publicity lends credibility to a communication but is not always under the marketer's control. The Internet, while excellent for providing information, is less effective than other media for achieving reach. As noted earlier in this chapter, television commercials are often the initial contact and impetus for seeking additional information on the Internet.

Create a consistent unified message to present to current and potential customers. All forms of marketing communication should focus on the same key selling points, theme, and positioning platform and strive to speak with “one look and one voice.”

Focus attention on achieving communication objectives that will ultimately lead to the attainment of marketing goals. After years of discussion and research, marketers are only slightly further along in determining the ROI of various media in sales, market share, or other market objectives than they were decades ago. The reason for this is that the dependent variable—sales or market share—is affected by other environmental and market conditions beyond just the communication program. It is time to recognize the specific objectives that communications are designed to accomplish and to understand how achievement of these objectives will lead to the attainment of marketing goals.

Develop new ways to evaluate the effectiveness of IMC programs. New metrics must be developed and used. These metrics must be validated and consistent to allow for proper

measurement. The outcomes should include traditional measures such as recall and recognition but must also incorporate new criteria such as increasing Web site traffic, or other media-specific measures. A focus on the overall, combined impact of the various media used is essential.

Reorganize the department or agency responsible for communication. In most companies and agencies today, communication silos continue to exist. Those responsible for advertising and media buying often compete rather than cooperate with those in public relations, promotions, or new media. Rather than working toward a unified goal, these departments wage turf battles in a competition for budgetary dollars, fail to ensure adequate internal communication, and fail to comprehend the specific roles each should assume to contribute to the overall effort. The education and training of specialists in integrating marketing communications and the integration or elimination of these silos will be critical to the success of the program.

Barriers to the Successful Adoption of an IMC Program

While the adoption of an IMC perspective makes sense, the fact remains that this may be easier said than done. Instituting a successful IMC program will necessitate overcoming many of the following challenges.

Lack of IMC trained personnel. While the integrated approach has been adopted by more and more companies and agencies as well as in academia, the number of persons with the broad perspective and skills needed to make IMC work effectively is still very limited. As noted above, even in those organizations that undertake an integrated approach, silos continue to exist. While a growing number of the larger corporations are creating positions such as manager of IMC or vice president for IMC, at this point in time they are in the minority. Furthermore, many of these executives are not really trained in IMC but rather may have expertise in only one or a few of the communication areas. A search for university programs in IMC indicates that there are only a handful of such programs in existence. Thus, the pool of individuals that are academically trained or that have actually practiced integration is very limited.

Turf battles. As noted previously, communication silos are still prevalent in companies and agencies. The adoption of an IMC orientation will lead to changes beyond mere job requirements. As monies are moved from one communication area to another—for example, to new media at the expense of broadcast media, budget increases and decreases will create more opportunities for some and losses for others. The battle for turf can also be a battle for existence as roles and positions are created or eliminated. At the same time, it is a battle of egos in both agencies and

corporations as various roles increase and decrease in perceived importance.

Determination of leadership. A question arises: Who will assume leadership of the IMC program? Will the responsibilities lie with the agency or the firm? Will it be a top management position or the equivalent of a brand manager role? Some agencies and corporations currently employ committees for making such decisions, though this would not seem to be the optimal approach.

Agency compensation. In many existing situations, compensation for traditional and nontraditional media purchases is not equivalent. In the past, agency fees were often determined on a commission basis as a percentage of the media budget for print and broadcast media, with a different payment method employed for collateral services. If larger agencies do not have the capabilities for or expertise in, for example, new media or if additional agencies must be employed for this purpose, how will compensation take place? Will all be paid at the same rate—a break from tradition? Furthermore, reviewing the issues of leadership and turf wars, how will compensation systems differ if integration is not the responsibility of one agency only? Will the lead agency in charge of integration be compensated additionally for this responsibility?

Measurement. As noted throughout this chapter, metrics and communication effectiveness measurement have always been a controversial area. This issue became even more complicated when the Internet arrived: The online community employed different means and metrics for determining media costs as well as effectiveness. Now we are experiencing product placements and integration, wireless, and other media that have no established metrics or measures of effectiveness in place. Comparing media efficiencies as well as effectiveness now becomes even more a matter of apples and oranges—not to mention a few other fruits thrown in! A second issue in this regard is that of determining the effectiveness of the IMC program. As noted previously, while research is ongoing, the ability to measure the individual and combined contributions of media in an IMC program has not been established. Thus, some managers may be reluctant to invest in a strategy that (they believe) has no proven success (though the same can be—and has been—said about advertising in general).

The Future of IMC

Because it has become well established throughout business and industry, there is no longer a need to debate the merits of IMC. Prior arguments concerning whether IMC is a marketing fad or a viable management strategy have given way to its acceptance as a required means of developing effective communication programs. As consumers' needs and media habits

continue to change, media continue to proliferate and evolve, and clients continue to demand accountability, the need for an integrated approach will increase accordingly. The degree to which IMC advances, however, will depend on the degree of acceptance by those involved in communications. This acceptance will be predicated on changes in internal and external management thinking, the development of new metrics for assessing the effectiveness of communication, and continual adaptation to changing marketing conditions.

Indubitably, IMC is here to stay. There is also no doubt that those who adopt this approach will achieve a competitive advantage over those pursuing a more traditional approach. It is now time to prepare future employees for these tasks.

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SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

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Social marketing is a perspective that is frequently used by people within the communication discipline to guide them on how to influence behavior. Social marketing can be traced to the writings of the sociologist G. D. Weibe, who in the 1950s asked the question “Why can’t you sell brotherhood like you sell soap?” (Weibe, 1951–1952, p. 679). Weibe was trying to make the point that marketing professionals over the years had developed very successful techniques for how to market to large-scale audiences in order to sell soap, cars, and other tangible goods. Weibe wondered why similar techniques could not be used to sell people an idea or a cause. In the 1960s and 1970s, other scholars began to follow his lead and began to develop the principles of what became known as social marketing.

To better help you understand what social marketing is, this chapter will be divided into two parts. The first part will provide an overview of the basic concepts and principles, and the second part of the chapter will offer two case studies of actual social marketing campaigns that will illustrate the concepts. The first case study tells the story of the VERB campaign that was aimed at 9- to 13-year-olds to increase their physical activity; the second case, which focused on environmental concerns, provides a unique example of how social marketing sought to help restore a threatened ecosystem in the Chesapeake Bay through an innovative campaign called “Save the Crabs, Then Eat ‘Em.”

What Is Social Marketing?

Answering the question of “What exactly is social marketing?” has proved to be a challenge historically. It is not its own academic discipline; it is not a science; and it is not a

formal theory or model. Perhaps it is best described as a tool or framework for behavior change. In an attempt to distinguish social marketing from other types of initiatives, the noted social marketing expert Alan Andreasen (2002) offered six defining criteria:

1. Behavior change is the benchmark used to design and evaluate interventions.
2. Projects consistently grounded strategy in audience research.
3. There is careful segmentation of the target audiences to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness in the use of scarce resources.
4. The central element of any influence strategy is creating attractive motivational exchanges with target audiences.
5. The strategy attempts to use all four Ps of the traditional marketing mix—product, price, place, and promotion.
6. Careful attention is paid to the competition faced by the desired behavior.

In the paragraphs that follow, we offer a portrait of the basic principles of social marketing by using Andreasen’s six criteria as the organizing framework.

Behavior Change

As stated in the first of the six criteria, social marketing ultimately is about behavior change. That may sound like a simple idea, but it can be quite complicated. In many instances, people do not want to change their behavior because they see no reason to do anything that is different, and their current pattern feels comfortable. The other reason

is that it is difficult for social marketers to agree on the exact behavior they want people to change. Too often, campaign planners become sidetracked when they fail to make careful choices about their precise focus, and in the end, they confuse themselves and their target audiences. For example, suppose that you wanted to create an initiative in which your ultimate goal is to significantly reduce the rate of unplanned pregnancies among high school girls. To achieve your goal, the key behavior that you might ask the young women to engage in is to always insist that their boyfriends use a condom whenever they have sexual intercourse. Or the behavior that you might ask them to adopt is to make an appointment with their family physician to get a prescription for the oral contraceptive pill. Or yet a third behavior you might choose would be to have them abstain from sexual intercourse altogether. All three behaviors are directly tied to the goal, but each is a unique behavior in which an individual can engage without necessarily performing the others. When a behavior or set of behaviors becomes too complicated, there is a high risk that an audience will ignore the initiative completely and retreat to past behaviors that are comfortable, familiar, and simple to process.

Audience Research

A second important feature of social marketing is that those who design and implement an initiative must thoroughly understand the members of the target audience whose behavior they are attempting to change. All this might sound obvious on the surface, but there are many examples of failed campaigns where designers were well intentioned but chose a strategy that was expert driven rather than audience driven. Those who take an expert-driven approach assume that the message they wish to convey will be received and acted on by target audiences simply because the experts believe that it is in the best interest of the audience to listen, attend, and behave accordingly. The social marketing perspective emphasizes that without using audience research to gain a deeper understanding of the lives of audience members and how people view a particular issue, there is little chance of persuading people to change their behavior.

Good social marketers typically begin with what is known as formative research, which allows them to gain insight into the mindsets and actions of potential audience members. Two of the most common ways of gathering data about an audience are surveys and focus groups. Surveys allow social marketers to ask audience members very specific questions over the telephone, through paper-and-pencil instruments, or through an online questionnaire. In focus groups, social marketers can bring together members of the target audience in groups of about 8 to 10 people to have an in-depth conversation about how a particular problem affects their lives. In addition to surveys and focus groups, social marketers might also use other data-gathering techniques, such as immersion hikes (day trips with

members of the target audience that permit relaxed, open discussions), ethnography (observing target audiences in their everyday environments), and person-on-the-street-interviews (interviewing unscreened respondents in locations where the behavior takes place) (Smith, 2006).

Once social marketers have gained insights into their target audience through formative research, they then typically engage in a process of pretesting message concepts and final executions of the messages to make sure that they resonate with the audience. The planning team might come up with what to them seems like a good idea based on their original audience research only to find out once they test it with actual audience members that it is not a good fit. Once implementation is under way, they should also engage in what is known as process evaluation to make sure that the audience is exposed to the message as intended. Social marketers also heavily emphasize outcome evaluation, which allows them to determine whether or not the strategy worked. That is, did members of the target audience actually change their behavior? If there is no evidence for behavior change, then the initiative cannot be considered successful.

Segmentation of Audiences

According to the social marketing approach, one of the most common reasons why behavior change initiatives fail is that planners target broad populations and assume that they can implement a message strategy with a “one-size-fits-all” approach. That is, an assumption is made that everyone within a population will respond to the same message in the same way. Although it is possible for that to happen, it rarely does. Social marketers pay special attention to what is known as *audience segmentation*, which refers to the process of dividing a population into distinct segments based on characteristics that influence their responsiveness to interventions (Forthofer & Bryant, 2000). For example, suppose that you wanted to develop an intervention to persuade women in the 40-to-65 age range to get a regular mammogram for the prevention of breast cancer. Audience research might tell the social marketers that women in their 40s who are still raising children will respond to a message that is very different from one that will appeal to women who no longer have children at home and are close to retirement. If that is the case, then it is crucial to carefully segment the audience in such a way that the end goal remains the same for both groups of women but they receive a different type of message to motivate them.

Exchange

One of the most important principles that guides social marketers is the idea that people will only change their behavior when they feel that they are getting something fair and attractive in exchange. In other words, people only change when they clearly see that there is something in it

for them. The basis for this principle comes from exchange theory, which is derived from psychological and economic principles and “assumes that we are need-directed beings with a natural inclination to try and improve our lot” (Hastings & Saren, 2003, p. 309). Social marketers see exchange theory as a key principle that differentiates their approach from other strategies for behavior change, such as education, which assumes that knowledge in and of itself leads to change, and an approach based on regulation, which emphasizes law enforcement as the most effective way to change the behavior of people (Smith, 2006).

The challenge for social marketers is to be able to frame the behavior in the minds of the audience so that they clearly see a benefit for themselves. The challenge becomes even greater if the benefit is not perceived by the audience as immediate. If social marketers try to present a payoff to an audience that is perceived as too far in the future, then they are not likely to respond in a positive way. A great example of this challenge comes from initiatives to try to convince teenagers to quit smoking or to not even begin. An obvious benefit is that people who do not smoke greatly reduce their risk of dying of lung cancer. However, enjoying the benefit of an additional 10 years of life is not something that someone can easily relate to when one is only 16 years old. Instead, social marketers have to present to teenagers an exchange that presents a benefit in the here and now. For instance, a more attractive exchange for 16-year-olds might be to quit smoking so that they do not have the constant unpleasant smell of tobacco and, thus, are more desirable as dating partners for the opposite sex.

Marketing Mix

The identifying characteristic with which many people associate the social marketing approach is what is commonly known as The Four Ps. This component, which is borrowed from principles of commercial marketing, includes promotion, product, price, and place. According to social marketing purists, an initiative cannot truly be referred to as social marketing unless all four Ps are part of the overall approach to behavior change.

The P that receives the most attention in any social marketing initiative is *promotion*. People who study communication often are most attracted to this element of the marketing mix because it most directly relates to the creation of the message for a campaign. Promotion receives the most attention typically because the actual message becomes the face of an initiative, and it is the part people can most easily identify. Having a carefully crafted promotion certainly is essential to success, but rarely will promotion alone lead to behavior change. The communication options available to a social marketer are many and varied. One can, for instance, promote behavior change through advertising, public relations, education, counseling, community organizations, interpersonal networks, direct mail, signage, special events and displays, printed materials, and entertainment media (Grier & Bryant, 2005; Maibach, 2002; Smith, 2000).

More specific promotional tools include TV and radio public service announcements, small-group discussions with target audience members, prescription pads for use by health care professionals, refrigerator magnets, newspaper articles, coloring sheets for children, and satellite broadcasts. The most successful promotional strategies typically incorporate a variety of channels through which the message is communicated to the audience.

The second of the four Ps is *product*. Whereas commercial marketers typically are trying to sell tangible products such as paper towels or computers, the social marketer has the challenge of trying to “sell” an intangible product that takes the form of an idea, social cause, or, as we have discussed most frequently in this chapter, a change of behavior. In many ways, the job of the social marketer is a more difficult one, because members of the target audience cannot easily hold or touch a behavior in the same way that they can paper towels or computers. The challenge, then, is for the social marketer to make “these ‘intangibles’ tangible in a way that appeals to the target audience” (Lefebvre & Flora, 1988, p. 306). A tangible product also is more easily defined. If a commercial marketer asks a potential customer to buy Bounty paper towels instead of Brawny, consumers can easily find Bounty on the shelf in the supermarket once they know the name of the product and perhaps the brand logo. As we discussed in the section on behavioral focus, social marketers sometimes make the mistake of not carefully defining the behavior for the audience, and when that happens, target audience members often do not know what to do. For example, one of the greatest challenges in developing physical activity campaigns for adults is to carefully define the “product” so that there is no doubt in the mind of the target audience how to engage in the appropriate behavior. If, for instance, the message of the campaign tells people that they should engage in 20 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week, the initiative might not be successful because people are confused about whether physical activity refers to any physical movement or if they have to reach a minimum heart rate for the activity to count as part of the 20 minutes.

The third P is *price*. In commercial marketing, price usually refers to the monetary value placed on a product (Edgar, 2008). In social marketing, dollars also factor into the price someone pays to change behavior, but price refers primarily to the totality of barriers that an individual must overcome to engage in the proposed action (Smith, 2000). That is, to engage in the proposed behavior, people typically are going to have to give up something they do not want to relinquish. Nonmonetary barriers can be social, behavioral, psychological, temporal, structural, geographic, and physical (Lefebvre & Flora, 1988). As we discussed when we talked about the idea of an exchange with social marketing, people are not willing to give something up unless they believe that there is a comparable payoff that will make the price that they have to pay worth it. Many people are willing to go into a restaurant and pay \$50 a person for a meal because they are convinced that the pleasure associated

with a fine meal and the ambience of a nice dining establishment is part of a fair trade for that amount of money. The customers give the restaurant \$50 per person (plus tip, of course), and the restaurant provides them with a memorable evening. If social marketers ask members of a target audience to reduce their body weight, then people have to decide whether the advantages of not being overweight are worth the price they will have to pay to reach that goal, such as bypassing the enticing tastes of favorite foods, taking time throughout the week from one's busy schedule to engage in an exercise program, and/or feeling embarrassed in front of family and friends at social occasions when they have to forgo desserts. The burden is on the social marketer to present the choice in such a way that audience members will view the price as a reasonable one.

Place is the final P and refers to “the process by which the product is made available to members of the target market at the time and place when it will be of most value to them” (Maibach, 2002, p. 11). For social marketers to take advantage of the most ideal places, they have to identify what Grier and Bryant (2005) called “path points,” which are locations people regularly visit; times of the day, week, or year of their visits; and points in the life cycle where people are likely to act. The ultimate goal of the place strategy is convenience. That is, the social marketer wants to communicate to the target audience about the product at a time and place where it is easy for them to process the information, and the social marketer must find convenient ways for people to actually engage in the desired behavior. The importance of the place strategy illustrates why social marketers cannot concentrate on promotion alone. To be successful, social marketers might also have to take steps to make changes to the everyday environment of the target audience or, at the very least, get audience members to view their environment in a different way. For example, for an initiative aimed at getting adults to walk more, part of the overall social marketing strategy might be to increase the number of walking paths within a community so that the target audience members have more places where they can actually engage in the behavior. Or if the social marketing team is not able to create new walking paths, then part of their place strategy might be to redefine existing places that people had never before considered as potential sites for walking, such as a local shopping mall. A place strategy also includes consideration of the role of intermediaries, who are people and/or organizations that provide goods, services, and information and perform other functions that help facilitate behavior change (Grier & Bryant, 2005). For the shopping mall example, social marketers might enlist the cooperation of the owners of the mall to get them to agree to open the property earlier in the morning so that people can use the mall as a safe place for walking before any of the stores open. The mall owners might be persuaded that there is benefit in the arrangement for them because the morning walkers might be enticed to stay and shop once businesses open.

Competition

In the same way in which commercial marketers analyze their position within a competitive marketplace, social marketers must identify the behaviors that compete with the ones they want their target audience to adopt. For example, if a social marketer creates a campaign to help save the environment by asking consumers to drive their cars less and burn less gasoline, then they must carefully analyze how a reduction in car use competes with the need to get to work and complete everyday errands. Part of the overall strategy for a social marketer is to provide a way for the target audience either to eliminate the competition completely, which in many cases is not possible, or to get the audience to think about the competition in a different way so that the conflict is less glaring. In the gasoline reduction example, for instance, social marketers might try to get their audience to think about the commute to work and the completion of errands as merged rather than separate behaviors. In other words, they might encourage the audience to plan activities such as grocery shopping and picking up the dry cleaning on the way to and from work rather than doing the errands at different times of the day.

Case Studies

VERB

The number of obese children in the United States continues to rise, creating a population at risk for lifelong health problems. The percentage of overweight children has even doubled in the past 20 years, bringing a needed effort to offset this trend. Reports indicate that childhood obesity in America stems from unhealthy eating and the lack of physical activity in children's lives.

What Was the Behavior Social Marketers Wanted to Change?

To combat this epidemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was awarded \$125 million in 2001 to create a social marketing campaign targeted toward *tweens*, a term used to refer to children aged 9 to 13 years, to increase their participation in physical activity. VERB was launched in 2002 to do just that. The campaign focused solely on increasing the physical activity of tweens. Because campaign planners neither specified the exact type of physical activity in which tweens should engage nor the amount or frequency with which tweens should be physically active, some social marketing purists might have a problem with the way in which the planners of the campaign approached the definition of the behavior. However, as you will see when we talk more about the product within the marketing mix, the campaign planners were intentionally vague to more fully engage the tweens.

*What Was Learned
From Audience Research?*

The CDC knew that they wanted to target tweens, but to apply the principles of social marketing appropriately, they knew that they had to understand the tweens themselves as well as the important people in their lives. The campaign planners decided that because tweens are still dependent on their families, the campaign had to target their mothers as well (ages 29–46). It was also important to reach community members who influence adolescents, such as teachers and youth program leaders. To get this information about the audiences' needs and wants, the CDC conducted multiple focus groups with tweens and mothers. One of the most important lessons learned from the research was that most tweens wanted to be in control of choosing the activities in which they engaged rather than having the decision made by their parents.

How Was the Audience Segmented?

Because the campaign planners suspected that the issues surrounding physical activity might be different for various ethnic groups, separate focus groups were conducted for tweens of European white descent, African Americans, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, and Asian Americans. The research revealed that, in fact, there were unique beliefs surrounding physical activity and unique barriers for each group that prevented the tweens from engaging in physical activity. Based on those results, the campaign planners developed unique variations of the VERB message for each of the major ethnic groups.

What Was the Exchange?

The planning team realized from the start that the exchange that they were offering tweens and their parents would not be an easy one to sell. For tweens to engage in more physical activity, they had to reduce the time spent doing some of the activities they currently enjoyed, such as playing video games and watching TV. With regard to the parents, increased physical activity on the part of their children had the potential to mean dollars spent. To counterbalance the loss that tweens and their parents might experience, the campaign planners positioned physical activity as something that would allow them to have fun, spend time with friends and family, and gain the admiration of their peers and community.

How Was the Marketing Mix Developed?

The *product* in social marketing is typically a precise behavior that the audience should engage in, cease, or maintain. VERB's product was physical activity, but as we discussed earlier, the campaign planners did not precisely define the type of physical activity in which the tweens should engage or say how long they should do it. They did

this intentionally. They knew that just like with any product on the market, physical activity had to be perceived as the winning item over other activities in tweens' lives. The type of physical activity tweens wanted to do was up to them, giving them a sense of choice and exploration. That is, the tweens were actively involved in defining the specifics of the product.

The *price* of physical activity potentially is financial, psychological, environmental, and/or time related. The benefits of the behavior had to outweigh the costs and barriers for tweens, their parents, and the community. Research gave insight as how to market the benefits, so that tweens and parents would be more likely to prioritize physical activity within their own "budget." Marketing materials had to convince tweens and their parents that physical activity makes tweens happier, healthier, and even "cooler" than those who did not participate. In other words, VERB had to anticipate that tweens would make excuses for not "feeling good enough" when they play, by counteracting it with a message that it is much "cooler" to participate than to play video games or watch TV all day. Another barrier was the cost of buying equipment or enrolling in sports teams. If financial cost was a barrier, tweens and parents had the opportunity to go to the campaign's Web site to learn about fun and safe ideas that were free or very low in cost.

One has to have a *place* to engage in physical activity, such as a park, school, backyard, or recreation department. VERB planners had to make sure that places for engaging in activities existed and that choices would be available year round. To make this happen, the campaign planners could not act alone. An important part of the place strategy was to develop partnerships within communities so that the demand could be met. For example, in communities where there were limited outdoor venues for physical activity, the campaign partnered with community centers to make sure that kids had a safe environment in which to play. Part of the place strategy also meant strategically marketing the message of VERB in locations where tweens would be exposed to the messages in their everyday lives, such as school; the campaign planners also bought TV advertising time on their favorite shows.

The *promotion* strategy was a very complex one, because the campaign planners used a large variety of channels and types of message executions to reach the tweens and their parents. Many social marketing campaigns are at a disadvantage because they lack sufficient financial resources, but the VERB campaign was fortunate to have a multimillion dollar budget. The CDC carefully strategized to make the VERB brand a part of tweens' lifestyle by intertwining a positive image of VERB and the product. To make the idea of VERB "cool" and relatable, the campaign planners used fun and colorful visuals. The tagline at the forefront of the campaign was "VERB—It's what you do," which gave tweens the sense of making their own decision rather than having their parents in control.

Here are only a few examples of how VERB was communicated nationally and locally:

- *Paid television advertisements:* Rather than using free public service advertising, over which the CDC would have limited control on when or how often the ads would be aired, the campaign planners spent a large portion of their budget on a sophisticated paid advertising initiative by buying time on cable networks that tweens regularly watch, such as Nickelodeon.
- *Print ads:* Print ads were placed in magazines that tweens read as well as in those their parents read.
- *Other media opportunities:* Celebrities and characters from tweens' favorite television shows, such as *Gilmore Girls* and *Kim Possible*, starred in VERB commercials. CBS produced a VERB public service announcement directed toward parents that featured the sports legend Deion Sanders.
- *Web sites:* The campaign Web site (www.VERBnow.com) was a key element of the promotion strategy. A "game generator" gave tweens the opportunity to create their own physical activities. Tweens could even write on a blog and talk about their favorite activities.
- *Schools:* Book covers, planners, and lesson plans were given to schools to integrate into their classrooms to start the conversation about physical activity.
- *Community-based events:* VERB joined cultural events such as pow wows to engage Native American tweens. Street teams distributed T-shirts, Frisbees, and temporary tattoos for tweens while creating a buzz about VERB.

What Was the Competition?

All these elements combined created hype about VERB and physical activity for tweens. This hype, or energy, in the campaign had to transcend beyond the competition that challenges tweens to refrain from engaging in physical activity. The planners knew that tweens wanted to play video games, preferred to do nothing at all, or had family obligations. Video games or television shows could not be eliminated as an option, but the campaign had to reprioritize so that physical activity was on the list of things to do for tweens. Parents also had to see the benefit of spending money or taking the time to help their tween engage in activity.

Outcome

A random sample of 3,120 tweens from across the country along with their parents was surveyed over the phone. The results showed that 74% of American tweens were aware of the VERB campaign within 1 year of the launch of the campaign. This exceeded the CDC's goal of reaching 50% of tweens. In the first year, the surveyed tweens also reported 34% more physical activity than tweens who were unaware of VERB.

Further Readings

For more details on VERB, read two journal articles written about the campaign by Wong and colleagues (2004) and Huhman and colleagues (2005). You can also see

examples of the promotional campaign at CDC's Web site, www.cdc.gov/YouthCampaign.

“Save the Crabs, Then Eat 'Em”

The second case study tells the story of a campaign with a very different topic from VERB, which like the majority of social marketing initiatives focused on personal health issues. This campaign instead focused on the environment and attempted to make the environment, which typically seems impersonal to most people, personal. The problem involved the Chesapeake Bay near Washington, D.C.

What Was the Behavior Social Marketers Wanted to Change?

The Bay has suffered from an overload of nutrient pollution, which threatens the quality of life and water in the bay. We usually think of the word *nutrients* in a positive way, but in the world of environmental health, they mean agricultural waste, waste from sewage treatment plants, and lawn fertilizers. Many people who lived in the area already knew that the Bay was severely damaged as an ecosystem, but most people either were not motivated to do anything about it or did not know how to contribute. Because lawn fertilizers make up 11% of the nutrients that load into the Bay, a reduction in lawn fertilizer usage had the potential to make a significant difference. In 2005, the Academy for Educational Development, funded by the Chesapeake Bay Program, identified the people who live in the greater Washington, D.C., area as their primary audience and aimed to change their behavior by convincing residents to fertilize their lawns only in the fall and to forgo lawn fertilization altogether during spring.

What Was Learned From Audience Research?

Before the campaign began, a random-digit telephone survey of 602 homeowners in the Bay area was conducted to learn about what people think. Results indicated that most people cared about the environment but did not engage in behaviors to bring about meaningful change. The research also showed that an attractive lawn was important to most residents. In addition, the team found that of the homeowners in the area, 84% did their own lawn work, while 16% used lawn services. Of those who did their own lawn work, most preferred to fertilize their lawns in spring. The latter finding introduced a major challenge for the campaign, because the goal was to stop spring fertilization completely.

How Was the Audience Segmented?

Although the campaign planners chose not to segment residents into subaudiences, the research indicated that they would have to incorporate the lawn services as an

audience as well. Partnerships had to be created with the service providers to promote environmentally sound practices that could last beyond the campaign.

What Was the Exchange?

The campaign planners decided that if they were going to ask people to give up fertilizing in the spring, then they had to offer something as an attractive exchange other than a good feeling about improving the environment. The team cleverly decided to position the exchange in a humorous manner by framing it within the context of food. Thus, the delightful taste of the Chesapeake Bay's blue crab became the bargaining chip for the campaign, which became known as "Save the Crabs, Then Eat 'Em." The blue crab is a culinary favorite of area residents, and the survival of the species in the Bay, whose population hit an all-time low in 2003, due in part to nutrient pollution, also is vital to the restaurant and fishing industries of the area. The goal of the campaign was to get people to accept the primary exchange of not fertilizing their lawns in spring in return for the benefits of a bountiful blue crab harvest.

How Was the Marketing Mix Developed?

The *product* in this campaign was not to fertilize lawns in the spring and to only do it in the fall. Lawn services that became partners with the campaign were asked to engage in using appropriate fertilizers approved by the Chesapeake Bay Program. Lawn services were given the opportunity to create a Bay-friendly lawn treatment that could be done in the spring.

For the *price* strategy, social marketers had to convince homeowners in the greater D.C. area that the benefits of fertilizing only in spring outweighed the barriers to adopting the new behavior pattern. The primary barrier was the strongly held belief that spring fertilization was a necessity for having a great lawn. In addition to offering the benefit of more crabs, the intervention team also attempted to counterbalance the "spring fertilization is good" belief by introducing information to the community that fall fertilization provides an advantage because there is less rain in the fall. Less rain means less runoff of fertilizer, which in turn means better root growth, which creates a stronger lawn. Because those who own and operate lawn services also were engaged as an audience (and they were concerned about losing revenue), the campaign planners had to offer them a fair "price" as well. The lawn services that became partners in the campaign by using these special treatments, received free advertising and recognition for being environmentally friendly.

The campaign reached the target audience in many different *places*, including their homes through television advertisements and on their way to work through posters placed on public transportation. Drink coasters were also used at participating restaurants, and restaurant staff were trained on how to answer questions about the coasters.

Unlike VERB, "Save the Crabs, Then Eat 'Em" was local and had a limited budget of only \$550,000 for a 1-year campaign. More than half of that money was spent on advertising, putting pressure on the planning team to make the *promotion* strategy as efficient and cost-effective as possible. The approach was to incorporate a humorous take on eating crabs. For example, one ad placed in *The Washington Post* stated, "Protect the Crabcake Population" and at the bottom provided a statement about fertilizing one's lawn in the fall along with a Web site link.

Many different elements were brought into the execution for the promotion of the campaign, including the following:

- *Television advertisements:* The campaign aired paid ads that were pretested by focus groups that liked and understood the connection between the blue crab and lawn care.
- *Print ads:* Major newspapers ran ads with a list of the names of lawn services that were part of the campaign. Flyers and drink coasters also were distributed at subway stops.
- *Web site:* Information on the Web site included facts about the Bay, lawn treatments, and even seafood recipes. In addition, "Chesapeake Club" lawn services were provided.
- *Promotional items:* Participating lawn care services were given window stickers and lawn signs that said, "No appetizers were harmed in the making of this lawn." By displaying these items, homeowners could show they were participating in a good thing.

What Was the Competition?

One of the primary sources of competition that concerned the campaign planners was the fatigue the public might experience as a result of being bombarded with so many messages about saving the environment. They had to rise above the competition by offering an innovative way to get the attention of residents. The blue crab angle was the approach they offered to cut through the message clutter.

Outcome

A random-digit dial telephone survey was conducted after the campaign, which included 599 homeowners who reported that their lawn had been treated with fertilizer at some point in the past year. They found that 72% of those surveyed recalled something about the campaign and there was a decrease in intent among residents to fertilize in spring.

Further Readings

For more details on "Save the Crabs, Then Eat 'Em," read the journal article written about the campaign by Landers, Mitchell, Smith, Lehman, and Conner (2006). You also can see examples of the promotional campaign

and recent articles about the campaign on the Web at www.chesapeakeclub.org.

Challenges and Future Directions

Social marketing has served as a very important tool for decades for individuals who want to change behavior to better the lives of others. By presenting the case studies on VERB and the Chesapeake Bay initiative, we only scratched the surface on the types of problems that social marketing can address. Social marketers have used the framework throughout the world to change the behavior of populations around issues as diverse as condom use, smoking, emergency preparedness, diabetes, food allergies, offering new food choices to children, mosquito netting, and hand-washing behavior.

In the years to come, the potential for social marketing to bring about continued change is enormous. For that to happen, however, the field of social marketing must take care to “market” itself so that its core tenets stand in clear contrast to other approaches to behavior change. One challenge that social marketing faces is that the term becomes so ubiquitous that it takes on a generic meaning that equates to all forms of campaigns and initiatives that use communication as the primary tool for creating messages about health and social causes. All social marketing, in fact, relies on communication as a key component in the promotion of an idea or behavior, but not all communication campaigns follow the principles of social marketing as we have articulated in this chapter (e.g., a focus on all four Ps, careful assessment of the competition, the needs of the audience as the driving force). The future utility of social marketing will depend in great part on the ability of the field to draw clear distinctions between itself and other change strategies.

To maximize its potential, social marketing must also keep up with the times. Adherence to core principles is key, but social marketers must be able to apply those principles within the context of a changing world. Continued devotion to innovation is crucial as the tastes, needs, and sophistication of audiences evolve. For example, R. Craig Lefebvre, who is one of this country’s leading experts on social marketing, has argued that social marketers will fail in their efforts if they do not adapt their approach to the role that new technologies and new communication forms such as cell phones, game boxes, wireless digital assistants, blogs, podcasts, and MP3 files play in our lives. He has stated that “these new technologies have implications for how we think about the behaviors, products, and services we market; the incentives and costs we focus on; the opportunities we present; and places where we interact with our audience and allow them to try new things” (Lefebvre, 2007, p. 32). The challenge for social marketers will be for their innovations in technique and strategy to keep pace with technological advancements.

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INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING

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World trade in the 21st century is driven by global competition among global companies for global consumers. The 2007 *Fortune* magazine survey reports that the top 500 multinational companies alone generated almost \$21 trillion in revenues (*Fortune*, 2007, pp. 131–143). U.S. participation in world trade, measured as a portion of world market share, has declined dramatically. Today's global consumers drink Starbucks coffee and talk on Nokia cell phones, wear Adidas sneakers, watch Sony television sets, and drive their Toyotas to homes decorated with Ikea furnishings.

The growth and expansion of firms operating internationally have led to the growth of international advertising. At the end of World War II, the bulk of advertising activity was domestic, and 75% of recorded advertising expenditures worldwide were concentrated in the United States. Since then, the growth in advertising expenditure worldwide has been phenomenal. In 1950, estimated advertising expenditure totaled \$7.4 billion worldwide, including \$5.7 billion just in the United States. By the late 1970s, the advertising expenditure had swelled to nearly \$72 billion worldwide, including \$38 billion in the United States. In 2005, global ad expenditures hit a record \$570 billion (www.worldwatch.org/node/4346).

The United States continues to both produce and consume the bulk of the world's advertising. Multibillion-dollar, multiservice, transnational, mega-advertising organizations own the bulk of the advertising agencies around the world, and nearly half (12) of the top 25 such organizations have their headquarters in the United States, according to *Advertising Age* (<http://adage.com/datacenter/>

datapopup.php?article_id=116383). The largest of these is the American-based Omnicom Group, with 2006 worldwide revenues of more than \$11 billion. However, advertising's increasingly global presence is evidenced by the location of major advertising markets. In rank order, the top global advertising markets are the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, China, Italy, Spain, Canada, Australia, Russia, and South Korea (www.adbrands.net/index.htm). Countries spending the most on advertising are primarily the rich industrialized nations. However, economic development is not the sole predictor of advertising expenditure. Interestingly, with rapidly maturing media markets and with advertising playing a growing role in their domestic markets, the fastest growing ad markets are in the Middle East, and Central and Eastern Europe (http://www.zenithoptimedia.cz/zenith_cz/press_reports/central_eastern_europe_adspend_growth_much_faster).

Procter & Gamble Co. heads the list of the top 100 global marketers, according to *Advertising Age* (2006, p. 2), which ranks advertisers by total worldwide media spending in 84 countries. Procter & Gamble Co.'s \$8.19 billion in media spending was almost double that of the runner-up, London-based Unilever, at \$4.27 billion. Overall, the top 100 spent \$98 billion on media advertising in 2005—with almost half of it, or \$47.46 billion, spent in the United States. Europe was the next biggest region (with \$30.17 billion), followed by Asia (\$15.57 billion). Just under half of the top 100 global marketers are U.S. companies. Thirty-two are based in Europe, 19 are Asian, but none are from Latin America.

The International Marketing and Advertising Environment

Firms engaging in international marketing must carefully analyze the primary environmental factors of each market they intend to enter. The marketer's task is to assess the demographic, economic, political-legal, and cultural environments in order to determine the potential of each market and also how variables in each of these environments might influence the design and implementation of marketing and promotional efforts.

The Demographic Environment

Just how the world's 6 billion or so potential consumers are distributed around the globe is of intense interest to international marketers. A country's population provides one basic indicator of market size. There is enormous variation in the population of countries around the globe. Indeed, well over half the people in the world live in only 10 countries, and China, the world's largest nation, has a population approximately ten thousand times the population of some of the smallest countries. Generally, the larger the population of a market, the greater its potential—all other things being equal. However, population figures alone are usually not a sufficient guide to market size. Population size is typically combined with many other factors, such as population growth rates and distribution patterns. Three important population distribution characteristics are density, age and age structure, and household size.

Another demographic variable of interest to international marketers is education. As one might expect, education is highly correlated with literacy. From an international marketer's standpoint, consumers must be able to read advertising messages and product labels. If large percentages of consumers are illiterate in certain markets, advertising programs and product packaging may need to be modified. Level of education is also of interest because it reflects the degree of consumer sophistication. Complex messages and products that require instructions may need to be adapted depending on the educational trends in a particular country.

The Economic Environment

The attractiveness of a market goes beyond sheer numbers of people—a nation's current and future attractiveness is also based on the willingness and ability of those people to spend. A clear understanding of a host country's economic environment—including type of economy, per capita income, and level of urbanization—is also essential in developing an appropriate marketing and communications strategy.

Historically, industrial economies have represented the greatest marketing opportunities for corporations, because consumers in these countries typically have the capacity to purchase the goods offered by international marketers. In addition, the communications, transportation, financial, and distribution networks necessary to conduct business are in place. However, such markets also tend to have stable, or even shrinking population bases, and as a result, the markets for many goods and services may already be saturated. Thus, marketers are increasingly turning to less developed nations, which tend to have expanding populations and therefore potentially greater growth opportunities.

Household income is a telling indicator of a country's purchasing power. In many developing countries, where the extended family is the norm, several family members may be wage earners, directly affecting the buying power of the family unit. And while the nuclear family is the norm in the United States, today that unit typically includes two wage earners. As a result, international marketers often pair household income with household size in analyzing a market's willingness and ability to spend.

The Political-Legal Environment

Both a country's political system and its local laws and regulations may have a direct impact on various aspects of the marketing program. In some countries, regulation may be quite limited, and the laws that reinforce such regulation quite lax, particularly in developing markets. In others, advertising regulation may be rather extensive and stringently enforced. The following categories of regulation can affect international advertising efforts.

Types of products that may be advertised. Most countries restrict the advertising of some types of products. The advertising of cigarettes, in particular, is restricted in some form in nearly every country in the world. Both Malaysia and China have banned cigarette-related advertising altogether, and the Korean government has imposed heavy restrictions on cigarette advertising, prohibiting all electronic and print advertising, consumer promotions, sampling, branded sponsorships, and signs outside shops or on shop windows. Many nations have also imposed stringent guidelines on the promotion of alcoholic beverages and pharmaceutical products.

The audiences that advertisers may address. The audiences marketers may address can vary from country to country. To date, the United States is one of the most lenient countries in the developed world when it comes to marketing to children. In contrast, in Sweden, the law forbids all television ads aimed at children under 12 years of age. In Norway, Austria, and the Flemish part of Belgium, no advertising is allowed around children's programs. Germany and Holland prohibit the sponsorship of children's

shows. Toy ads are banned on Greek television, and Italy, Poland, Denmark, and Latvia are studying plans for tighter regulations. Currently, there are no continent-wide rules regarding marketing to children; however, Sweden is pushing for its ban on children's advertising to be extended across Europe.

The content or creative approach that may be employed. Many countries have restrictions on the types of claims advertisers can make, the manner in which products can be presented, and the appeals that may be employed in advertisements. For example, in the United States, the Federal Trade Commission encourages advertisers to employ comparative claims, as they are seen as providing consumers with relevant product information. In Europe, comparative advertising is currently allowed in some countries but is illegal in others. The European Commission is working toward developing a uniform policy. The use of health and nutrition claims as well as price comparisons also varies significantly from country to country.

The media that advertisers are permitted to employ. Media availability is severely limited in many markets. In Saudi Arabia, direct mail is considered an invasion of privacy and is thus not used. And while the country has opened its national television system to commercial advertising, Saudi Arabia still does not permit advertising on its state-run radio system. How the media are used for advertising purposes also differs from market to market. American television viewers are accustomed to having their programming interrupted at regular intervals with commercial messages. Russian law prohibits the interruption of children's, religious, or educational programs by advertisers altogether. All other programs must not be interrupted more frequently than every 15 minutes (BBC Monitoring, 2001).

The use of advertising materials prepared outside the country. Government restrictions can also influence the use of foreign produced ads and foreign talent. With few exceptions, the Malaysian Ministry of Information requires that all footage for, and music in, television commercials be produced locally and use local talent. The government requires a "Made in Malaysia" (MIM) form to be submitted with the final checkprint (the finished, edited footage) (Frith, 1987). Peru bans foreign-inspired models and materials in advertisements appearing in that country in an effort to protect and enhance its national identity. Beyond nationalistic and cultural objectives, restrictions on foreign-prepared materials often are motivated by economic considerations—such as the desire to provide jobs for the local print production and film industry (Boddewyn & Mohr, 1987). There is also the fear that multinational ad agencies will hamper the development of the local advertising businesses.

The Cultural Environment

Each country exhibits cultural differences that influence the consumers' needs and wants, their methods of satisfying them, and the messages they are most likely to respond to. If they are to be successful in their efforts, marketers must become culturally sensitive—that is, tuned into the nuances of culture. Among the important elements of culture that marketers must take into consideration are verbal communication and the various forms of nonverbal communication.

Verbal Communication

Linguists claim that up to 5,000 different languages are spoken around the globe. Chinese tops the list as the most spoken language, but while the written language is uniform, there are literally hundreds of local dialects in China. Multilingual societies constitute the majority of the world's nations. For example, in India, more than 200 hundred languages and dialects are spoken. While language helps define a cultural group, the same language can be spoken in a number of different countries. English is spoken in the United States, England, much of Canada, Australia, and Ireland. Nonetheless, marketers must use caution when employing the same language in two or more markets. There are significant differences between American English and British English. Often, the same word or phrase may mean different things. Marketers must be particularly cautious with regard to errors in the translation of brand names, packaging copy, and advertising messages as these have cost businesses millions of dollars, not to mention damaging their credibility and reputation. Consider the following:

- When Kentucky Fried Chicken entered the Chinese market, to their horror they discovered that their slogan "Finger lickin' good" came out as "Eat your fingers off."
- Ford introduced the Pinto in Brazil. After watching sales go nowhere, the company learned that "Pinto" is Brazilian slang for "tiny male genitals." Ford pried the nameplates off all the cars and substituted them with "Corcel," which means horse.

Nonverbal Communication

We communicate not only through spoken language but also via nonverbal language. A number of classification systems of nonverbal language exist, but most include facial expressions, eye contact and gaze, body movement (such as hand gestures and posture), touching, smell, space usage, time symbolism, appearance or dress, color symbolism, and even silence. It is important to note that nonverbal methods of communication are no more universal than verbal methods. Nonverbal communication can pose serious problems for international marketers and advertisers. A thorough discussion of all the nonverbal aspects of

advertising is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, because of their importance to the international marketer, two areas will be addressed briefly: gestures, and colors, signs, and symbols.

Gestures. Thousands of cross-cultural examples prove that the meaning of gestures shift from culture to culture. Gestures refer to any movement of the fingers, hands, or arms. Gestures used in greetings vary as well. In the United States, the hand wave is a common form of greeting. Hence, in McDonald's restaurants across the country, life-size Ronald McDonald statues have their hands raised in a friendly wave. However, operators of McDonald's restaurants in Thailand were required to modify the figure to display the unique Thai greeting gesture, the "Wai," which consists of the palms of both hands being placed together and raised in front of the head as a sign of humility and respect. Thai operators had to custom manufacture the molded fiberglass and resin statue (*Advertising Age*, 2002).

Colors, signs, and symbols. Laurence Jacobs and colleagues (1991, p. 21) note, "Like language, marketers in a particular nation often take colour for granted, having experienced certain colour associations all their lives, and do not even question whether other associations may exist in different societies." International marketers need to know what associations a culture has in terms of colors and how they might affect product design, packaging, logos, and advertisements. For example, a number of years ago, a leading U.S. golf ball manufacturer targeted Japan as an important new market for its product. However, sales of the company's golf balls were well below average. As it turned out, the firm had offered its product in white packaging—a color associated with mourning in Japan. To make matters worse, it had packaged the balls in groups of four—the number signifying death in this country (Glover, 1994). Clearly, numbers also mean different things to different peoples. While Americans associate misfortune with the number 13, it has no particular meaning in most other cultures. The number 7 is considered bad luck in Kenya but good luck in the former Czechoslovakia, and it has magical connotations in Benin.

Culture and Values

To maximize the chances of success, marketers must examine cultural values. Several classification systems have been devised for assessing the dominant values of a culture. One, the Rokeach (1968) value survey, identifies 18 terminal and 18 instrumental values. Terminal values concern desired end states of existence that are socially and personally worth striving for. Instrumental values relate to modes of conduct and represent beliefs that are socially and personally preferable in all situations with respect to all objects. Value systems are identified by having individuals

complete a survey asking them to arrange all 36 values in order of their importance as guiding principles in their lives. This framework is effective in discriminating between people of culturally diverse backgrounds (Munson & McIntyre, 1978). For example, the instrumental value of "ambitious" means hardworking and aspiring. The degree to which consumers perceive themselves as hardworking may differ from one culture to the next, and this may have implications for promotional efforts. Numerous empirical studies have found that advertisements reflecting local cultural values are, in fact, more persuasive than those that ignore them (Gregory & Munch, 1997; Han & Shavitt, 1994; Taylor & Dale, 1997).

Coordinating and Controlling International Advertising

One of the first decisions a company must make when it decides to communicate with consumers in various markets is how to organize international promotional functions. A critical question relates to the locus of decision making: Will it be highly centralized at company headquarters, or will a more decentralized, collaborative, and participatory approach to marketing communications be adopted? It should be noted that there is a close relationship between the decision on centralization and the extent of advertising standardization ultimately employed. Tai and Wong (1998) propose that marketers have the following four basic options.

1. Global Approach (Centralized Decision Process, Standardized Advertising Approach)

Complete centralization of decision making related to international advertising implies a high level of head office control. Advertising agency selection, campaign planning, creative strategy and message development, media strategy and selection, budgeting, and sales promotion efforts all are conducted in the country in which the firm's headquarters is situated. One of the major advantages associated with centralization is that it affords the marketer complete control over all promotional efforts.

A centralized approach is significantly more likely to be employed if the marketing environments of the message sender and receiver(s) are highly similar and if there is minimal variation in both the media available for advertising and the regulation of advertising. Depending on the foreign market, the international marketer may not feel that local managers possess the management skills necessary to conduct effective research and to develop coherent advertising strategies. Subsidiaries may lack the financial resources necessary to produce advertising executions with high production values. The centralized approach is highly correlated with the use of standardized

advertising—employing virtually the same campaign in both domestic and foreign markets (Kirpalani, Laroche, & Darmon, 1988). Certain weaknesses are associated with highly centralized control as well. A firm employing such an organizational approach may find that it lacks (a) the ability to sense changes in market needs occurring away from home; (b) the resources to analyze data and develop strategic responses to competitive challenges emerging in foreign markets; or (c) the managerial initiative, motivation, and capability in its overseas operations to respond imaginatively to diverse and fast-changing environments (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1986).

2. Local Approach (Decentralized Decision Process, Differentiated Advertising Approach)

Complete decentralization of international advertising means that all, or nearly all, advertising decisions are made by local managers in the foreign markets. The philosophy here is that international subsidiaries shouldn't just be "pipelines to move products. Their own special strengths can help build competitive advantage" (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1986, p. 87). A primary benefit of decentralization is that promotional programs are tailored to the specific needs of each market. Nationals may be perceived as knowing the local market best and thus are better equipped to make necessary modifications to advertising campaigns as a result of differences in the local media scene, political-legal environment, or culture. An international marketer may also opt for a decentralized approach if markets are small or the volume of international business and advertising is too limited to warrant close attention from headquarters. Local managers are likely to be more highly motivated when given responsibility for the promotional programs in their market.

3. Regcal Approach (Centralized Decision Process, Regional Approach)

Tai and Wong (1998) note that the "regcal" approach is made up of "reg" (regional) and "cal" (local); that is, it uses a combined approach of centralized decision making and regional—sometimes even local—adaptation. For example, an international or network agency may be designated as the lead agency, responsible for developing what is termed *pattern advertising*. Pattern advertising refers to centralization of the "what" of an ad campaign and regionalization or localization of the "how" (Roth, 1982). Thus, the basic advertising strategy, general creative, and even media approaches are provided to each subsidiary; however, local managers are then free to select their own media and modify copy, visuals, or other elements of the message to meet regional or local needs. This approach allows for local input and adaptation while still permitting a degree of uniformity in a firm's international promotions.

4. Glocal Approach (Decentralized Decision Process, Standardized Approach)

"Glocal" is a combination of the "glo" (global) and "cal" (local) approaches. Here, the headquarters develops a global campaign, which local offices may or may not choose to follow, but most decisions are determined by local subsidiaries or distributors.

Agency Selection

Firms marketing their goods and services abroad must decide who should plan, prepare, and execute their promotional campaigns. International marketers have a variety of options, including employing their domestic agency, using their domestic in-house advertising department or a foreign subsidiary's in-house department, calling on the services of an international agency or global network, or hiring a foreign advertising agency.

Domestic and in-house agencies. In some instances, firms may choose to simply export advertising campaigns originally created for the domestic market. Indeed, there are numerous examples of campaigns that have been exported quite successfully: The Marlboro man, conceived of for the U.S. market, has traveled well all around the world—literally for decades. Firms may also choose to rely on their domestic advertising agency to prepare advertising messages for their foreign markets. A firm's domestic agency may well be affiliated with foreign shops capable of providing necessary translation services and assistance with media planning and buying. However, a very real danger of employing a domestic agency is that it may not be familiar with the many pitfalls associated with international advertising. Some companies rely on their in-house advertising departments for foreign advertising assistance. On the plus side, the in-house agency is likely to be intimately familiar with the product or service to be promoted. On the downside, domestic in-house agencies may lack the necessary experience in dealing with foreign markets. When international advertisers turn to a foreign subsidiary's in-house agency while they gain familiarity with the local market, they lose a degree of control over promotional efforts. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that the quality of the work produced will live up to the firm's expectations.

International agencies and global networks. International firms leaning toward a centralized approach are three times more likely to employ an international agency or global network than they are to use a foreign agency (Kanso, 1991). Clearly, it's easier for international marketers to deal with a single international agency than with a separate agency in each market in which they operate. Global networks clearly offer opportunities for synergy. They can deliver to their clients the ease of one-stop shopping for all their marketing and promotional needs. Conglomerates can also offer additional benefits to clients, including a means to

consolidate and cut administrative expenses. Size is also of benefit when it comes to securing commodities. On the downside, although agency networks offer multicountry coverage, there is no guarantee that the offices in each country will be equally strong. Critics complain that the holding companies have become too large and too complex and contend that the expansion of agency companies has smothered originality under a blanket of conformity.

Local agencies. If the multinational firm adheres to decentralization, the advertiser is significantly more likely to select local agencies to coordinate promotional activities for each market in which it operates. The selection of a local agency may even be left to overseas managers. Academics and practitioners who encourage the use of local agencies argue that only such agencies can truly appreciate the local culture and, as a result, can develop messages best able to communicate with foreign consumers. Because local agencies are often independent and typically smaller in size, they may demonstrate an innovativeness that agency networks cannot—and this may be just what a marketer is looking for. On the downside, using a separate local agency for each foreign market makes coordinating worldwide campaigns quite challenging.

Creative Decisions: Strategy and Execution

One of the most important strategic considerations is whether to standardize advertising worldwide or to adapt it to the specific needs of each market. Scholars and practitioners alike are divided with regard to the benefits and disadvantages associated with each approach. This debate carries a variety of labels. Standardized campaigns have also been referred to as globalized and universal in the literature; specialized campaigns have been called localized, adapted, and even customized.

Standardization Strategy

Many advertising and marketing executives agree with Harvard's Theodore Levitt that the needs and desires of consumers around the world are growing ever more homogenized. These experts contend that the world is one large market and that regional, national, and even international differences are at best superficial. Therefore, the consumer may well be satisfied with similar products and services. Levitt (1983) went on to note that not only would consumers around the globe be satisfied with similar products, but advertisers could sell them with similar messages. Standardization of international campaigns generally takes one of two routes. One option is to adopt a campaign deemed successful in the national or domestic market for a firm's foreign markets. Another option is a preplanned effort to develop a campaign for use in multiple markets.

Advertisers and agencies alike perceive very real benefits associated with this approach. For one thing, coordination and control of marketing and promotional programs is greatly simplified, and as a result, foreign campaigns can be implemented much more quickly. In addition, fewer marketing and advertising personnel are required at the local level to administer advertising campaigns developed at headquarters than are required to customize promotional efforts, and such staff reductions lead to cost savings. And it's certainly much less expensive to produce a single campaign for a number of markets than it is to produce a separate campaign for each specific market. Furthermore, good ideas can be exploited. If a campaign has proven successful in one market, there may be no need to "reinvent the wheel" in others. Finally, a consistent international brand or company image can be achieved.

Progress has been made in understanding under what conditions standardized advertising works best and for which products global campaigns are particularly well suited. The following are seen as well suited for standardized messages: products that appeal to market segments that are essentially similar in tastes, interests, needs, and values; products that are promoted with image campaigns that appeal to universal needs, values, and emotions; high-tech products coming to the world market for the first time, not steeped in the cultural heritage of a particular country; and products with a nationalistic flavor if the country has a reputation in the field (Fannin, 1984).

Localization Strategy

While globalization has been hailed as the new wave in marketing and advertising by some, others contend that the "global market" still consists of hundreds of nations, each with its own customs, life styles, economies, and buying habits (Green, Cunningham, & Cunningham, 1975; Hornik, 1980). In the case of a fully adapted or "specialized" campaign, the advertiser localizes message content for several countries or even for each country in which the firm operates. The primary benefit of specialization is simply that it allows for differences in the demographic, economic, legal-political, and cultural environments to be taken into account. This approach also recognizes that the media that advertisers are permitted to employ can vary widely. If a specific product's brand name differs from one market to the next, the international marketer may have no choice but to employ a specialized approach to advertising. Finally, if a specific foreign market is in a different stage of market development than the U.S. market, a given product may find itself in a different stage of the life cycle in that country. In some markets, an international firm will compete against other international marketers; in others, the competition may be purely national. Sound advertising strategy in one market will not necessarily be appropriate in another market with a different competitive environment.

Examples of effective standardized campaigns clearly do exist, just as do examples of ineffective ones. Similarly, there are numerous examples of both more and less successful specialized campaigns. The pros and cons of both approaches will continue to be debated. Many companies have moved away from viewing standardization as an all-or-nothing phenomenon and instead have chosen to employ a modified approach—standardizing some elements of their promotional plan while specializing others. The question is, in fact, one of degree, with standardization and specialization at opposite ends of a continuum and with many “shades” of adaptation between the two extremes.

Execution Decisions

If strategy refers to “what is said” in a campaign, then execution refers to “how it is said.” The advertising strategy adopted for a specific international campaign thus guides the execution—the selection of advertising appeals as well as themes and concepts. It is important that these are consistent with the values and tastes of the target audience. Indeed, one study found that, on the whole, consumers seem to prefer domestically generated commercials (Giacomotti, 1993). This reinforces the view that advertising carries its culture with it. It is not surprising, then, that commercial messages created in various markets differ significantly. In terms of creative execution, it appears that there are themes and concepts that tend to have better success at crossing borders, while others are almost guaranteed to cause the marketer headaches. The following list of universal and culture-bound themes and concepts is adapted from DeMooij (1994).

Universal Themes and Concepts

New or improved products: A common characteristic of consumers around the globe is that they look for new products, new uses for old products, or improvements on old products.

Basic everyday themes: Themes based on appeals such as hunger, thirst, affection, motherhood, pride, and jealousy can generally be used universally.

The made-in concept: The tendency for consumers to evaluate goods manufactured in some countries more favorably may encourage a marketer to highlight the country of origin when promoting those goods.

Product demonstrations: Demonstrations focus on how a brand works and its specific features. Products can be demonstrated in use or in “before versus after” scenarios. This technique often helps consumers visualize what the product can do for them.

Heroes: Hollywood has spread the faces of the silver screen around the globe, and many actors have become international heroes. Film stars are increasingly appearing in international advertising campaigns.

Lifestyle concepts: Here, the advertiser presents the user rather than the product. Lifestyle groups often featured include young people, the wealthy, businesspeople, and sports fans.

Culture-Bound Themes and Concepts

Sex appeals: When it comes to employing sex appeals in advertising messages intended for foreign audiences, marketers are urged to exercise caution. What may be considered as perfectly tame in one market can be perceived as downright indecent in another.

Individuality: The majority of the world’s cultures tend toward collectivism rather than individualism. Thus, while ads appealing to individuality may prove quite persuasive in some markets, the messages may not resonate with consumers in group-oriented cultures.

Comparative advertising: Comparative advertising is generally used to claim superiority to competing brands regarding some aspect of the product. While this is encouraged in the United States, international marketers must understand that the technique is banned in other markets.

Role of women: How women are depicted in advertising messages is strongly influenced by culture. In the United States, advertisers have been criticized for portraying outdated traditional roles. In other markets, particularly in Islamic countries, women may only be portrayed in traditional roles—as mothers or as caregivers.

Humor: In general, humor tends not to travel well because it employs cultural conventions, which generally are only understood by members of a particular culture. However, one study revealed that a certain type of humor known as incongruity (defined by the researchers as based on the contrast between the expected and the unexpected) does appear to have potential across markets (Alden, Hoyer, & Lee, 1993).

Opinions and attitudes: Themes based on cultural opinions and attitudes generally do not fare well when crossing borders. Opinions regarding feminine attractiveness provide an excellent example. A major criticism leveled at Western advertising by non-Western nations is that messages suggest not only which products to purchase but how one should look. Western models, by definition, tend to be tall, blond, blue-eyed, and extremely thin—an ideal that most women around the world simply cannot live up to yet continue to aspire to.

As a strategy, advertising standardization may work well for some products, marketers, and audiences, and in some situations. In other instances, specialization or adaptation will prove to be more effective. And sometimes something in between will be most appropriate (Quelch & Hoff, 1986). International marketers must carefully evaluate where along the standardization-specialization continuum a campaign destined for a specific foreign market should fall. Advertisers also must employ appeals suited to

each culture and understand how cultural differences influence advertising content.

Media Decisions

There are a number of ways that the media planning and/or buying function can be handled in the international setting. The traditional model has all planning and buying conducted by the client's domestic or lead agency. Another option is to conduct media planning centrally but to handle media buying on a local basis in each country in which the international advertiser operates. A third option is to turn the function (either all or part) over to an international media agency; such specialists have been cropping up over the past few years. These firms are generally responsible for finding the local media best suited to the client's needs and the target audience to be reached, providing accurate media data, handling negotiations and obtaining the best rates, making the purchase, and monitoring placement. Media buying agencies are able to obtain significant media discounts by purchasing time and space on behalf of groups of clients instead of on the basis of single companies or brands (Russell & Lane, 2002).

Media planners zeroing in on foreign markets have the option of using local/national media or employing media that cross national borders—better known as international media. Using a combination of the two is clearly an alternative as well. The decision of whether to employ local/national or international media is influenced by a number of factors, including but not limited to (a) how much centralized control the firm has, (b) what target audience the advertiser is attempting to reach, (c) whether the firm has chosen to employ a localized or globalized campaign, and (d) whether the firm works with national or multinational advertising agencies.

National/Local Media

National or local media offer advertisers a greater variety of vehicles—television, radio, newspapers, magazines, outdoor, direct mail, and transit, as well as many rather unique forms. They also permit use of the local language, which is generally more effective in reaching the local market. However, there are drawbacks in using local media. The practice of media planning and buying at the local level is quite complex because media environments rarely resemble one another. These differences can take the following forms:

Media availability. Media that commonly are employed in domestic markets may quite simply be unavailable in foreign markets. In Saudi Arabia, traditional values do not permit the showing of films to public gatherings; thus, the cinema medium does not exist in this country. Nor do they permit commercial messages on radio stations. As a result

of such limitations, a firm marketing its products in a number of nations may well find it impossible to employ the same media mix in all markets.

Media viability. Peebles and Ryans (1984) suggest that the international advertiser also explore whether the medium is “available in the quality and quantity and at a cost that will permit the international advertiser to successfully employ it.” For example, while commercial television may be available in a particular market, governmental restrictions may require local production of commercials. The added cost of producing a commercial in that country may well preclude the use of the television medium.

Media coverage. The degree to which media are diffused varies substantially. For example, the numbers of television sets and radio receivers in countries around the world varies significantly. In the United States, there are 854 television sets for every 1,000 Americans, in sharp contrast to the 6 receivers per 1,000 Ethiopians (World Bank: World Development Indicators, 2002, http://publications.worldbank.org/e-commerce/catalog/product?item_id=990561). The pattern is similar for radio receivers. In developing countries, a large percentage of the population simply cannot afford individual ownership of television sets or even radios.

Media cost. Advertising rates in all markets tend to be cyclical. During periods of economic prosperity, the media tend to inflate their rates. During economic downturns, when many marketers slash their advertising budgets, media rates typically drop significantly. Savvy marketers take advantage of such media recessions.

Media quality. Even if a particular medium is available, the quality may vary from that in the home market. For example, newsprint quality is so poor in many countries—India, for one—that it is nearly impossible to obtain adequate halftone reproduction. Many markets still have very limited access to color television, which may play a central role in a visually oriented campaign.

Role of advertising in the mass media. International advertisers should be aware that in numerous markets, one or more of the media may be government owned or controlled. As a result, they may choose not to accept commercial messages or to severely restrict the time and space allotted to advertising.

International Media

The second option for reaching audiences in various markets is the use of international media that have multi-market coverage. Print remains the dominant international medium, and magazines are considered the first of the internationalists. A number of U.S.-based magazines have

international editions, including *Reader's Digest*, *National Geographic*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Cosmopolitan*, among others. It is not only U.S. magazines that make their way across foreign borders. *Marie Claire* and *Elle*, both French magazines, have global circulations. While many of these publications are translated into many different languages and are available in many different markets, their foreign readers are often quite different in terms of demographics from those who read these publications in their country of origin. In foreign markets, these publications appeal predominantly to international travelers and upscale, high-income consumers. Magazines that reach businesspeople on a worldwide basis include *Forbes*, *Business Week*, *Fortune*, and *Harvard Business Review*. A major plus associated with such publications is that they tend to lend the magazine's prestige to advertised products. One of the drawbacks of such publications, however, is that they generally offer only English, French, and Spanish editions.

A number of international newspapers exist that provide opportunities for global advertisers, including *The International Herald Tribune* and *The New York Times*. The *Times* of London and the *Guardian*, both British newspapers, are also considered global publications. A number of international newspapers are also directed toward the business community. For example, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, *The Asian Wall Street Journal*, and *The Wall Street Journal Americas*, targeting Latin America. The *Financial Times of London* is another prestigious global business newspaper, though its circulation is significantly smaller than that of *The Wall Street Journal*.

Satellites have greatly enhanced the ability to use television to reach consumers around the globe. Cable has served to bring satellite TV into the homes of consumers and will likely remain the major means of receiving satellite transmissions. Those satellites with stronger transmitters allow households to receive signals directly via their own small dish antenna; however, penetration of such satellite dishes in most markets is still rather limited. Developments in high-powered direct broadcast satellites (DBS) have made reception even easier. DBS is likely to have a significant impact for those regions lagging in cable infrastructure. For example, STAR (Satellite Televisions Asian Region) TV is now the world's largest satellite network, stretching from the Middle East and India to South Korea. Broadcasting in eight languages, it reaches some 300 million viewers throughout 53 Asian countries.

By no means have all forms of local and international media available to the international advertiser been addressed. A media planner may also turn to radio, the Internet, autowraps on cars, toilet stall messages, and even advertisements in outer space, among a multitude of other media that in many cases may be specific to a particular market. An advertiser planning on entering a specific market must undertake an in-depth analysis of the media situation particular to that country.

Conclusion

International marketers must carefully analyze the major environmental forces in each market where they compete. Demographic, economic, political-legal, and cultural factors should be taken into account when assessing the potential of a market, for they directly influence the design and implementation of marketing communication programs intended for that market. Important decisions facing the international marketer include the locus of decision making (highly centralized at company headquarters or a more decentralized, collaborative and participatory approach); whether to employ a domestic, international, or foreign agency; whether to standardize advertising worldwide or to adapt to the specific needs of each market; as well as selection of the most appropriate media (local vs. international) to reach consumers in each market. This chapter has touched on much of the research related to international advertising that has been conducted over the past few decades; however, significantly more is needed to guide international marketers if they are to successfully navigate the minefield of today's global marketplace.

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THE BUSINESS OF ADVERTISING

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When you think about advertising, chances are you recall a favorite commercial you've seen recently. Maybe it's a funny beer commercial you saw on television, a Hallmark commercial that brought a tear to your eye, or some obnoxious used-car dealer yelling at you until you turned off the television just to get him to be quiet. Advertising surrounds us everyday, all day. Some of it we like, some we like so much we actually seek it out on YouTube or elsewhere on the Internet. Much of it we may try (usually unsuccessfully) to avoid. But all advertising has one thing in common. The advertiser wants you to do something that will improve his or her business. That's because advertising is a business. Ultimately, the only reason anyone spends money on advertising is to sell you something.

In this chapter, we are going to take a look at the business of advertising. We'll start on a macro scale, looking at the size and shape of the advertising business globally, and work our way down to understanding the business in the United States. Finally, we'll look at the advertising agency business to see how that business operates as well.

How Large Is Our World?

How many people are there in the world right now? Let's try an easier one; how many people are there in the United States right now? How many families does that represent?

If you want to understand the potential of your product to sell around the world, basic demographic data like this will become very important. If you've decided just to sell in the United States, you should know (approximately)

what your potential is. The world population is approximately 6.6 billion split nearly perfectly between males and females. The United States is 310 million, or less than 5% of the world's population. There are 112 million households in the United States. The average size of a household today is 2.5 people. What we like to think of as the nuclear family with two parents and at least one child only makes up 20% of the total households in the United States.

Why does this matter? If you could make a \$0.03 profit by selling something to every household in the United States. You'd make \$3.4 million. That's a lot. If you could sell that to every person in the United States, you'd make \$9.3 million. If you could do that in the whole world, you'd make \$198 million. My point? Size matters, and there are trillions and trillions at stake every single day.

How Large Is the Advertising Business?

Advertising is approximately a half-trillion-dollar business annually around the world according to estimates made by GroupM, a division of the communications conglomerate WPP (\$479 billion estimated for 2008). What does that mean? It's not easy to get your mind around what a half trillion dollars means. Consider this. The advertising business is larger than the entire gross domestic product (GDP) of Norway, Poland, Belgium, Switzerland, and about 100 other countries. It's twice the GDP of countries such as Thailand and Argentina. Globally, it's equal to about 1/100th of the world's total GDP. That should give us a good idea that it's a pretty big business.

Globally, the advertising business is growing at a healthy 6.8% in 2008. There are a number of factors that influence the highly reactive advertising market globally. The first is the condition of the economy. While most industrialized countries with mature economies faced reasonably flat growth in 2008 due to stalled economies, developing countries such as China fueled the world's advertising growth.

The second factor that effects global advertising spending is the presence on national and international media events. In 2008, the Beijing Olympics pumped somewhere between \$1.3 billion and \$1.5 billion advertising dollars into the United States alone. The presidential election held in November of 2008 pumped an additional \$2 billion into the advertising economy.

The third factor that affects the amount of money being spent in advertising is the maturity of different media vehicles. In 1993, the Internet changed how we thought of advertising media forever. And while the growth has been bumpy, the near- and long-term impact of the Internet has fueled the growth of the advertising market all around the world. Growth in the medium has been approximately over 20% per year ever since. The Internet is already the largest advertising medium in Sweden, and GroupM estimates that the United Kingdom and Denmark will follow shortly.

The growing influence of the Internet has resulted in a shrinking influence of daily newspapers. Sites such as eBay and craigslist are credited with the dissolution of classified advertising, a major source of revenue for newspapers.

Sure, the Internet is growing in popularity and as an advertising vehicle, but is it really all that important? It all depends on how you measure it. The traditional way of measuring the Internet as an advertising vehicle looks at banner ads and "search advertising" and says that the Internet controls approximately 10% of the total. But isn't advertising on the Internet larger than that? Look at any auto manufacturer site. They tell you all about their car in great detail. They allow you to design and configure one exactly to your specifications. They tell you why their car is great and, more specifically, why it is better than their competitors, and in the end, they tell you where to go to get one. Isn't that 100% advertising? How about Amazon.com? What do they have? I asked a class one time, and they told me that Amazon.com primarily has books and a variety of other goods that make it a department store on the Internet. No, they don't. Amazon.com doesn't have a single book or anything else. Amazon.com has photos of books. They even review the books (like ad copy), tell you what other people think about the books (testimonials from users), and offer a variety of places and prices to purchase the book. But they don't have books; they have ads for books. Think about the Internet in these terms, and it's almost all advertising. Search and banner ads are the minor players in what the entire cost might be. So how much is being spent on advertising on the

Internet? If you look at it like I just did, it's already globally immeasurable.

Globally, spending is concentrated in mature economies. North America leads the world with 38% of all advertising spending, followed by Western Europe with 27%, Asia with 24%, Central and Eastern Europe with 5%, Latin America with 4%, and the remaining 2% in the Middle East. What does this tell us? For one, that there are mature advertising markets (e.g., North America and Europe) and growing markets (e.g., Asia, Eastern Europe, Middle East, etc.). The difference often has to do with the spread of democracy, capitalism, and a market-driven economy.

Largest Advertising Market in the World

The United States is the largest single advertising market in the world, with an estimated \$169 billion in advertising spending. Yes, the United States makes up 5% of the world's population and 35% of the world's advertising spending. Due to the sheer number of advertising vehicles, it's been estimated that the United States also receives nearly 60% of all advertising messages. Advertisers spend \$545 per year to reach every man, woman, and child in America, compared with about \$54 in the rest of the world.

It's no real wonder that Americans see more than 1,000 advertising messages each and every day; six times as many as the French, four times as many as the British, and twice the amount Canadians see.

Name all the ads you saw yesterday. Stop reading just long enough to write down every ad you saw. We'll wait.

Done? OK, if you are like most of the students in my class, in about a minute you could remember between three and five commercials. And chances are you didn't even see one or more of those yesterday but just remembered commercials you like.

What happened to the other 995 ads you saw yesterday? Advertising agencies tried their best to get your attention a thousand times yesterday, and only a few succeeded. Why? Because our brain has trained itself to forget more than 85% of everything we see and hear everyday within minutes. There is simply too much information bombarding us, so we filter out everything that is not relevant to us or that we don't enjoy or want to know, to constantly have room for things we do want to know.

Does this mean that 995 advertisers wasted their money on us yesterday? Not necessarily. I saw an ad for a Nissan Z. It was a truly beautiful ad and a beautiful car. It wasn't top-of-mind for me because I'm not looking for a car right now. However, I'm thinking of buying a car next summer, so I've conveniently placed it in a folder in my brain. Next summer, when it is relevant to me, I will likely recall the ad and the car and consider that car. I also saw a feminine hygiene ad (five of them actually). I couldn't tell you anything about any of them because they are not relevant to me and never will be.

The Top 10 Advertising Markets in the World

The United States is the largest advertising market, representing 35% of global spending. Japan is the second largest advertising country in the world (representing approximately 5% of global spending), followed by the United Kingdom (2% of global spending), Germany (2% of global spending), and France (1% of global spending). Note how quickly these markets fall off. Obviously, this is the result of size of both population (e.g., the U.S. population is 310 million, compared with France's 64 million) and the frequency with which we see advertisements in the United States.

Advertising, a Small but Important Part of Marketing

As large a business as advertising is, it's a relatively small part of the entire world of marketing. Marketing covers the creation, manufacturing, pricing, selling, and placement of goods and services. If we consider the total GDP of the entire world at something just over \$50 trillion per year, we can see that advertising is only about 1% of the world's GDP, whereas marketing covers much of the rest.

What is marketing? According to the American Marketing Association, "marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders." In the 1950s, Jerome McCarthy, a Michigan State University professor, wrote a defining textbook titled *"Four P's of Marketing: Product, Place, Price and Promotion."* This certainly wasn't the creation of marketing, but it was a formalization of how we would come to talk about marketing.

Advertising is only one part of the promotion "P." Along with advertising, the promotion "P" includes things such as sales promotion, public relations, event marketing, and personal selling.

So, to put it simply, if we want to market a product, we must design that product (i.e., how it will be made, its size, its smell, its packaging, maybe its taste, etc.), we must price it (generally at a price that will allow us to maximize sales and or profits), we must figure out where to sell it (the Place "P"), and we must figure out how to sell it (the Promotion "P").

Who Is Spending All This Money?

The largest advertiser in the world and in the United States is Procter & Gamble (P&G), maker of megabrands such as Tide, Oil of Olay, Pampers, Tampax, Gillette, Pantene, Oral B,

Crest, and about 400 more brands around the world. According to *Advertising Age (Ad Age)*, the leading advertising publication in the United States, P&G spent \$8.5 billion globally and \$4.9 billion in the United States during 2006. That's nearly 2% of all the advertising spending in the world. They were the number one spender in 16 of 90 countries measured by *Ad Age*. Keep in mind though, with so many different brands, the highest-spending P&G brand, Oil of Olay, is only the 34th largest spender, at nearly \$360 million.

The top megabrand spenders are phone companies, with AT&T/Cingular investing more than \$2.3 billion in the brand, followed by Verizon at \$1.9 billion and Sprint at more than \$1 billion.

Auto manufacturers make up the largest single category of advertisers, with 6 among the top 15 spenders (Ford is the largest auto advertiser, at more than \$1 billion).

How Do Marketers Determine How Much to Spend?

How much you spend on advertising depends on quite a few factors in your marketing plan. Are you advertising a new product, or is this an established brand? What are your competitors doing? Is the product category growing or declining? Are we trying to push the product into retailers by building consumer demand or pull it off the shelves?

And while there are many methods for budgeting advertising, there are several that are commonly used.

- *Advertising to sales ratio:* Most companies use some form of advertising to sales ratio. Sometimes called a "case rate" (i.e., \$X per case of product sold goes toward advertising), this method rewards growing brands with larger advertising budgets and keeps company focus on the most successful brands. On the downside, a product that has a bad year can be hurt for years to come by shrinking ad budgets.
- *Fixed allowance:* Some companies spend a certain amount on advertising every year and may adjust that by factors such as media inflation and new competition.
- *Zero-based budgeting:* Every year, the company starts from scratch, trying to figure out in the current competitive environment exactly how much should be spent.
- *Customer valuation:* Actual dollar amounts are put on customer groups that consist of your most likely purchasers and less on potential customers. For example, if you have a Porsche dealership, chances are your best customer is one who has already bought a Porsche from you at least once. Your second most valuable customer is one who is buying from your direct competitor (e.g., Mercedes SL). This customer has enough money and merely needs to be persuaded to go a bit sportier. And the third and least valuable consumer is a Porsche "wannabe." This person would love to have a Porsche but can't afford one right now. While he or she may be your least valuable customer in the short term, this is your most valuable customer in the long term, when you are trying to replace old customers.

Where Is the Money Being Spent?

We've looked at how much money is being invested around the world and in advertising's largest market, the United States. We've looked at what companies are investing that money, and now let's take a look at where the money is being invested.

Asked to guess the largest advertising medium in the United States, most students answer "Television." Television is large, but the number one advertising medium isn't television, it's direct mail. Why direct mail? Simple! You have to print an envelope full of full-color pieces and mail the entire ad to each house, whereas for television, I make one ad and then run it.

Every year, numerous agencies predict the future media spending habits of top advertisers. The industry standard has been Robert J. Coen of Universal McCann. Table 93.1 gives the most recent percentage by medium of total ad spending in 2006 from top to bottom.

The big news going into 2008 is that the Internet is expected to overtake radio this year in spending. I still contend that if the spending on the Internet were calculated correctly, it would already be in the top three and growing.

Where is this going in the future? Personalized media. Media vehicles that can personalize the news and content I want and eliminate the content I don't want will become my personal choice. I suspect that devices such as Apple's iPod will be in all our pockets, capable of downloading and storing news and content we want so that we can be connected anywhere at any time to the content we seek. Do you want to watch the evening news? Do so on your

Advertising Medium	Percentage of Total Spending	Growing Advertising Medium or Shrinking Advertising Medium
Direct mail	21	Growing
Newspaper	16.7	Shrinking
Broadcast television	16.5	Growing
Cable	6.7	Growing
Radio	6.9	Shrinking
Magazine	4.7	Growing
Internet	3.4	Growing
Outdoor	2.3	Growing
Business magazines	1.5	Shrinking

Table 93.1 2006 Spending by Advertising Medium
SOURCE: Robert J. Coen, Universal McCann.

schedule on your screen of choice. Missed *The Daily Show* last night? Watch it from the screen in your pocket or any other screen you happen to use. Newspapers, radio, TV, the Internet, whatever you want, wherever you want it, and at whatever time you want it. That's the future of media.

Who Pays for Advertising?

Actually in a market-driven economy, the answer is you do, and if everything goes right, *no one does*.

Advertising increases sales, which allow a manufacturer to make the product at a lower cost per item, with those savings getting passed along to you. Generally, that means that the cost of advertising disappears in the economies of scale that allow the manufacturer to make and sell dramatically more product at a greatly reduced cost per item.

Let's take a look at an example. A friend is starting a gourmet cookie business in the New York City area. He sells the cookies for \$5.00 per bag. How much of that \$5.00 per bag do you think he spends on advertising?

Here's a look at his balance sheet. Of the \$5.00 to the consumer, the retailer keeps \$1.00 per bag (20% retail margin), leaving him \$4.00 per bag wholesale. The product ingredients cost him \$1.75 per bag, and the services of the baker who makes the cookies cost him \$1.25 per bag. That leaves him with a net margin of \$1.00 per bag.

He can do anything he wants with that \$1.00 per bag he makes. He can keep it all, but he can't grow his brand if he does. He can reinvest most of it back into the brand and continue to grow. Since the product is new and relatively unknown, my friend reinvests \$0.40 of every bag sold back into sales promotions (in his case he uses it for sampling) and \$0.30 in advertising, and he keeps \$0.30 as his profit.

That's pretty typical in the food business. So, of every \$5.00 at the retail level, \$0.30 will return to advertising. Fortunately, he sells about 100,000 bags of his cookies per year, giving him a net margin of \$100,000, a sampling budget of \$40,000, and an advertising budget of \$30,000 (which isn't a lot nationally but adequate in his local area), and he keeps a salary of \$30,000 from the new venture (don't panic, he has other businesses).

As he considers regional expansion, he has estimated that he can increase sales to about 3,000,000 packages. If he does this, the cost per item will fall by \$0.50, which he plans to give back to the consumer in the form of reduced price (\$4.50/bag). Additionally, using the same formula, he will have a net margin of approximately \$3,000,000, a promotional budget for sampling of \$400,000, an advertising budget of \$300,000, and a salary of \$300,000. Not bad for making cookies!

But the product actually costs him \$3.50 per bag to bake and package. At this level, he makes only \$0.50 per bag, and since he only sells about 100 bags a week, the venture doesn't appear worth doing.

So money for advertising comes from sales of the product and then is invested back into advertising to increase sales, so there is yet more money for advertising.

Is Advertising the Only Way Marketers Compete?

Of course not. There are variations and combinations on four major ways that marketers compete. They are product superiority, distribution superiority, consumer insight, and marketing communications.

Product Superiority. Is your product simply a better product than any of your competitors? Certain companies such as Procter & Gamble, BMW, and Apple try to put clear product superiorities into everything they make. Tide detergent gets out stains no other detergent will get out. Crest toothpaste leaves your teeth whiter. Pampers leave your baby drier. BMWs accelerate faster, last longer, and so on. Product superiority is a great way to compete but becomes increasingly difficult in a world where almost all products perform pretty well.

Distribution Superiority. Is your product ubiquitous? I can give you \$2.00 and 10 minutes just about anywhere in the world, and you can come back with a Coca-Cola. The product is marketed “everywhere” and not difficult to find. In the early days of marketing Tampax in Spain, the General Manager of the company decided that his personal goal would be that consumers couldn’t walk 2 minutes in any direction in Madrid without encountering a Tampax logo (in a shop window, on a billboard, on the side of a city bus, etc.). In less than a year, this unknown brand became a normal household word simply because it was everywhere.

Consumer Insight. Do you understand your consumer’s wants and needs better than any of your competition? I love Amazon.com because the more I look at the site and the more I order from Amazon, the better they get to know me. When I log onto Amazon.com, they have loads of recommendations of products similar to what I purchased that they think I will like. Have you ever logged onto Pandora.com? Pandora, the music genome project as they call themselves, analyzes the style and structure of your favorite song and recommends songs and artists that you are likely to like. I hear new musicians all the time who I’ve never heard of, and I think they are fantastic. And as you can guess, they will take me right to a place where I can buy their CD. These marketers know me. They know what I look at, what I like, what I buy, what I reject, and in many cases, they even know why.

Marketing Communications. Do you simply out-advertise your competition? Remember the iPod launch? We all saw

that dancing silhouette on posters, on TV, on the Internet, in print ads. Everywhere we turned, we saw bold colors with a dancing person in silhouette. Now, do you recall Microsoft’s launch of their mp3 player Zune? Neither do I. Apple supported the launch with a huge advertising expenditure, brilliantly simple advertising from the TBWA/Chiat/Day advertising agency. Microsoft did something I can’t recall and don’t remember. Guess who sells more?

Please understand that marketers may “major” in one of these four techniques, but they use all four. The iPod, for example, was a clearly superior (at least in consumer perception) mp3 player compared with the competition, the product wasn’t difficult to find; the company understood their target audience’s total love for personal music anytime anywhere as well as its appreciation of the uniqueness (color) and contemporary design of their product. Finally, they simply advertised more than did any of their competitors.

What Are Marketers Really Selling?

Brands. Marketers manufacture products but sell brands. What’s the difference? The product is simply the tangible product. The brand is the product with all the added value elements that makes the product worth having. Let’s consider an example.

What is the iPod as a product? It’s a portable computer hard drive that can replay music and videos on a small screen with headphones. But as a brand, iPod is much, much more. The iPod is a high-tech device that not only allows you to carry 1,000 songs in your pocket. It’s about design, being in the “in-crowd” that “gets it,” and so much more. Probably the smartest marketing decision of the decade was making iPod’s earphones white. I don’t have to see your player to know you are a member of the club . . . or you aren’t. All the added value created by the design, the ease of use, the simple interfaces with Mac or PC, the advertising, the unique (and frequently changing) colors, the variety of shapes and sizes and memories, the unique look of the Apple Store, the Web site, iTunes, the packaging it comes in, the accessories you can add on, the experience of buying the product as well as the experience of both using and being seen using the brand, all add to an overall brand experience that makes the iPod worth more money than it’s competitors.

An iPod is a pretty sophisticated brand, so let’s take a look at something simpler. My local grocery store contains 54 facings of orange juice. There are differences in size, calcium content, level of pulp, and so forth, but it’s all basically orange juice. The prices range from \$2.99 to \$4.99 for the same 64-oz amount. What’s the difference? The cheap one is an unbranded generic, and the expensive one comes from Minute Maid. Is one really worth nearly 70% more than the other? I don’t know, but I

always buy the Minute Maid. What am I really buying? I'm paying for belief in the brand. I believe it will be fresher, of higher quality, better tasting, and I consider not buying it a risk. I'd rather pay the additional \$2.00 as "insurance" and for the assurance that I'm buying something I will probably like. That's the power of a brand over the existence of a product.

We've looked at the business of advertising. Now let's flip that statement around and look at the advertising business.

So Which Advertising Agencies Are the Most Successful?

It depends on how you define success. Is it the size of an agency that makes it successful? Is it the number of creative awards the agency wins? Is it the success of their clients? Is it the fastest-growing agency? As you can see, answering what is the most successful advertising agency is as complicated as asking what is the most successful ad on air today. There is no one definitive answer.

So let's look at this in a number of ways and see what names pop up over and over.

Advertising Agency Holding Companies

Earlier, we saw how advertising agencies are in "holding companies." The four largest are Omnicom, with \$12.7 billion in 2007 global revenue, followed by WPP Group (\$12.4 billion), Interpublic Group (\$6.6 billion), and Publicis Group (\$6.4 billion).

Worldwide Advertising Agency Size

The following is a list of the largest consolidated worldwide advertising agencies (all headquartered in New York except where noted):

1. DDB (with a 2007 global revenue of \$2.6 billion)
2. McCann Erickson (with a 2007 global revenue of \$2.5 billion)
3. Dentsu (headquartered in Tokyo, with a 2007 global revenue of \$2.5 billion)
4. BBDO Worldwide (with a 2007 global revenue of \$2.4 billion)
5. Young & Rubicam Brands (with a 2007 global revenue of \$2.2 billion)
6. Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide (with a 2007 global revenue of \$1.8 billion)
7. TBWA Worldwide (with a 2007 global revenue of \$1.8 billion)
8. JWT (with a 2007 global revenue of \$1.5 billion)

9. Euro-RSCG (with a 2007 global revenue of \$1.3 billion)
10. Draft/FCB (with a 2007 global revenue of \$1.2 billion)

What do these agencies have in common? They all have 50-plus-year histories as advertising agencies and manage many of the largest marketers in the world.

U.S. Advertising Agency Size

Looking at just the United States for a moment; the list is a bit different according to *Advertising Age*. The largest advertising agencies in the United States are as follows:

1. McCann Erickson (\$490 million in 2007 revenue)
2. BBDO (\$472 million in 2007 revenue)
3. JWT (\$316 million in 2007 revenue)
4. Young & Rubicam (\$307 million in 2007 revenue)
5. DDB (\$291 million in 2007 revenue)
6. Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide (\$255 million in 2007 revenue)
7. Grey (\$249 million in 2007 revenue)
8. Campbell-Ewald (\$239 million in 2007 revenue)
9. Draft/FCB (\$221 million in 2007 revenue)
10. TBWA (\$208 million in 2007 revenue)

Creative Awards

Creative awards in advertising are like the Academy Awards for film. It doesn't mean that the winner is the absolute best; it just means that the particular group of judges liked it best. Like the Academy Awards, most award-winning ads are quite good, and agencies that win a lot awards are producing work that is admired by their peers and usually (but not always) by consumers as well. When it gets right down to what an advertising agency actually does, it's the quality of their work as judged by consumers that makes the cash registers ring. But let's take a look at the top award-winning advertising agencies.

Every year, The Gunn Report tracks all the major advertising award shows around the world to rank the top 100 award-winning commercials (and print ads). In creating this database, they also analyze which agencies, agency networks, production companies, and even commercial directors are winning awards. The top award-winning agencies in the world for 2008 are as follows:

1. BBDO (New York)
2. Fallon (London)
3. DDB (London)
4. Saatchi & Saatchi (New York)

5. McCann Worldgroup/T.A.G. (San Francisco)
6. TBWA (Paris)
7. VegaOlmosPonce (Buenos Aires)
- 8., 9., 10. (tie) BBH (London, Jung von Matt (Hamburg and Berlin), Saatchi & Saatchi (Singapore))

Advertising Paid for by Media Commissions

For decades, the vast majority of advertising agencies were paid a commission by the medium they placed the ad in. For example, if Procter & Gamble wanted me to handle the Ivory Soap ad, I would create ads, and every time I placed one in a magazine, in a newspaper, or on TV, that medium would pay me 15% of the value of the purchase as a commission. This commission system spread around the world and was the primary way clients paid their agencies for nearly 100 years.

In the 1980s, when agencies were acquiring other agencies at an unprecedented rate, a few of the CEOs of advertising agencies became very wealthy, and publicly so. Bob Jacoby, CEO of Ted Bates Advertising, sold the agency to the Saatchi brothers in 1986 and personally pocketed well over \$100 million. While that is certainly still a lot of money, it was unheard of in 1986 and led many in the industry to think that they were overpaying their agencies. (It didn't, however, stop advertising agency CEOs from pocketing large sums of money. Ed Meyer, CEO and Chairman of Grey Global Group, sold that agency to WPP in 2006, personally pocketing stock worth approximately \$625 million.)

The 1990s were a decade of renegotiating contracts and renegotiating how advertising agencies should be paid. The end result is that agencies were generally paid less for the same amount of work, and the entire pay system became far more transparent. Marketers determined exactly what they wanted and estimated how much time and manpower it should take to provide the service. Agencies reorganized and cut back substantially on the service they were able to provide their clients. Agencies prided themselves on being "leaner and meaner," but generally it just meant that since they were making less, fewer people had to do as much of the same work load as they could.

Today, there are hundreds of compensation methods that marketers and their agencies use. While as far back as 1994, a full 61% were using a commission-based system, today that number is way less than 10%, and the commission they are paid is generally less than 10% as well. Most marketers and their agencies have gone to some sort of fee system (e.g., hourly fee, fixed fee by project, etc.); ideally, that links the agency's compensation to the success of the advertising in the market (e.g., percentage of sales, percentage of sales increase, etc.). Moreover, over half of all large advertisers pay bonuses for extraordinary results. The Miami-based advertising

agency Crispin Porter + Bogusky broke new ground several years back when they agreed to be paid for their efforts in stock ownership of their client Hagger. While this hasn't picked up as a major trend, the intention of rewarding the agency for success is built into most compensation systems.

There is still no perfect compensation system. Why? Because the overall success of a brand is far more complicated than just the advertising. Success depends on the product, the pricing, the salespeople selling the item, the competition, the stores that sell the product, and a thousand other things. If you run the world's best ad, and the product isn't on the shelf, is it fair that you should be penalized for something you have no control over? Certainly not. Marketers and consulting companies continue to work on fairer and better compensation systems all the time, but it's fair to say that none have found that magic bullet yet.

How Does an Advertising Agency Work?

With more than 25,000 advertising agencies in America today, needless to say there are many different ways to work. If you have an idea and a client, you can call yourself an advertising agency, and many do. However, the classic agencies that handle most of the business around the world all follow a pretty similar structure.

There are five departments in an advertising agency: the account management department, the research and planning department, the creative department, the media group, and finally the administrative department.

The Account Management Group. The account group (also called account executives, client service, and content managers) works directly with clients to determine the best ways to sell their products and manage the process from start to finish in order to ensure the best possible results.

Research and Planning Group. While the research department's job is self-evident, planning is a relatively new position in advertising agencies in the United States. The planning department was invented in the United Kingdom. The idea of an account planner is to have someone well versed in research techniques who could work alongside the creative department as the "voice of the consumer," helping to guide the work and inspire great work.

The Creative Department. The creative department is made up of copywriters (who write advertising copy), art directors (who determine what the ads will look like), and production personnel (who turn the ideas into finished ads). Copywriters and art directors work in teams, developing ideas and reporting to a creative director, who ultimately chooses the best ideas to present to clients.

The Media Group. The media group determines where and when an ad should appear. It must understand the target audience's habits and preferences to develop the best possible plan for reaching these people.

The Administrative Group. The administrative group houses all the support groups in an advertising agency, such as finance and accounting, legal, traffic (the people who physically get the right advertising to the right media outlets).

How Do We Go From “I Need an Ad” to a Commercial On-Air?

The account manager working with the client will determine that a new ad is needed. They will call a meeting to brief the team that will develop that ad and shepherd it from a mere idea to a finished ad running on whatever medium you choose. The briefing meeting will be attended by the account management person, the client, a planner, a creative director, and the media. The client will discuss the state of the business and the objectives going forward. At the conclusion of the meeting, the planner will write a creative brief, which defines what is to be accomplished and what we need to say to our potential consumers to get them to do and say what we hope they will. Once the client has agreed with the creative brief, teams of copywriters and art directors brainstorm hundreds and maybe thousands of ways to solve the problem in communications. The media person determines the best places to run the new ads and discusses this with the creative teams to make sure they develop the right type of media ads. Once the team believes that it has the best possible ad ready, it presents that idea to the client, who either agrees with it or sends the team back to do more work. Once everyone agrees to a certain ad, the production staff takes over in preparing the finished ad that will actually appear in the media.

Why is this important? Because in the advertising world, time is money, and this process, which can take 40 weeks for a reasonably complex commercial and involve more than 125 people, is an expensive one. Controlling costs in a business of low margins is critically important.

Economics of Running an Advertising Agency

Who needs to understand the economics of running an advertising agency? Everyone in the agency business needs to understand the basics. Advertising agencies are not all that complicated to run financially, but they are very fragile financially. One lost account can mean the difference between a good profitable year, where everyone gets a bonus, and mass layoffs.

Everyone in an advertising agency is held accountable to some extent for the profitability of their particular

account, and ultimately the overall profitability of the agency. Account management personnel will be held accountable for the profitability of their accounts and won't get promoted or receive any bonuses if they don't "make their numbers." Account planners and creatives often work on an hourly basis, so they not only must keep an accurate account of their work but frequently have assigned amounts of hours they are allowed for each project. If they go over their time allotment, the profitability of the assignment is immediately in danger.

How long does it take to develop a brilliant idea? You can easily see the conundrum in that question. Creativity doesn't work on timetables, but ultimately if an account isn't profitable, it can't be serviced. Media professionals work on budgets all day long and can't overspend a budget. The same is true of their time.

So what's so difficult about running an advertising agency profitably? Leo Burnett was credited with saying that 75% of his inventory went down the elevator every night. Think about it, what does an advertising agency make? They make ideas. They don't have factories or even machines that put out products. They have people who work hard and, if all is going particularly well, come up with brilliant ideas that grow brands. That's all they have. Most marketers invest about 5% to 10% of the revenue their company makes in personnel. The rest is invested in buildings, factories, and other capital expenditures. If they have a major downturn, they are more likely to get rid of a factory than try and save the money by laying off employees. On the other hand, about 70% to 80% of an advertising agency's revenue goes to paying employees. If they lose an account, they have no other option except to lay off employees.

There are just a few simple financial terms you'll need to understand. "Revenue" is the amount of money your client pays you for the work you do. Direct expenses are the salaries and bonuses of your personnel. Indirect expenses (also called agency overhead) include things such as building rental, computers, health insurance, and even the support departments, such as accounting and finance. Your direct expenses plus your indirect expenses are simply your total cost of doing business. The difference between your revenue and costs is your profit. When shown as a percentage, it's called an operating margin. It's really quite simple (see Table 93.2).

Advertising agencies target between 10% and 20% operating margin. Less than 10% (especially for a smaller company) is very dangerous and means that the company could be put out of business very easily, and more than 20% is generally seen as greedy by clients.

While a 15% operating margin may seem high to many marketers, the difference is the actual amount of money that represents. In our \$1,000,000 agency below, the final profitability is \$150,000. While that may seem like a lot of money, we could easily lose all that by one account walking out the door or by overspending on a new business pitch we

<i>Financial Item</i>	<i>Dollars (\$)</i>	
Revenue	1,000,000.00	100%
Direct expenses (salaries)	420,000.00	42% of revenue
Indirect expenses (agency overhead)	430,000.00	43% of revenue
Total costs (Direct + Indirect)	850,000.00	85% of revenue
Profit (Revenue – Total costs)	150,000.00	15% Operating margin

Table 93.2 Calculation of Operating Margin

don't win or by any number of other scenarios. This is what makes running an advertising agency so difficult.

Consider a few scenarios.

Scenario 1: A Good Client Cuts Advertising Late in the Year

- Your client has promised to spend \$10 million on advertising and agrees to pay you 10% of that amount (i.e., you have \$1 million) as revenue.
- You have 10 people working on the account across all departments, with a combined salary of \$420,000 (average salary \$42,000).
- Your overhead (e.g., health care, building rental, desks, computers, etc.) costs you an additional \$420,000.
- The total for salaries and overhead is \$840,000, leaving \$160,000 as profit. Your operating margin is therefore 16% (\$160,000/\$1,000,000).
- *Everyone is happy, and your business is growing!*
- Oops! Another product in the division isn't doing well, so in September your client asks you to cut all advertising from October to December.
- Your revenue just dropped from \$1,000,000 to \$750,000 for the year. But your costs are still \$840,000.
- What do you do?

Scenario 2: Account Losses

- You have 10 accounts all roughly equal in size. All are profitable, with a 10% operating margin.
- Two of your clients fire you (they don't like the work), and suddenly your revenue is off by 20%.
- What do you do?

You can easily see why everyone in the advertising business goes through periods of lay offs, as well as mass hiring when they win a new piece of business.

Conclusion

We've looked at the business of advertising and the advertising business in this chapter. The business of advertising is a large and growing business, with marketers spending nearly \$500 billion a year promoting their goods. The United States, only 5% of the world's population, is the number one advertising market in the world, with 35% of the total global spending. And as important as advertising is to the success of a brand, advertising is only one small part of marketing.

As for the advertising business, we saw how this business evolved right in step with the expansion of media outlets in the United States. After looking at how an advertising agency works from the inside out, we looked at the fragile economics of running an advertising agency to better understand how it is managed day to day.

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PART XIV

MEDIA MANAGEMENT

MEDIA ECONOMICS AND OWNERSHIP

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Media economics is a field of study used to analyze the firms, industries, and activities of media enterprises, drawing on theories and concepts from economics. The earliest scholarly literature involving media economics began in the 1950s with the newspaper industry; contemporary scholars now address all forms of media, including new media technologies and multimedia. Historically, media economics tended to focus on a particular media industry. However, globalization, regulatory reform, social changes, and technology continually modify approaches to the study of media economics. In the 21st century, media economics must be examined across a broader spectrum of inquiry, as it cuts across numerous areas and levels of activity.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section describes the field of media economics by examining key approaches and perspectives guiding research, the primary theoretical domains, and methodological approaches. The second section examines issues involved in media ownership, centering on the impact of regulation, consolidation, capital and financing, and new technologies.

The Field of Media Economics

Economics is studied in terms of *macroeconomics* and *microeconomics*, and the field of media economics follows suit. Macroeconomics examines the aggregate economic system and is usually studied at a national or global level. Macroeconomics includes topics such as economic indices (interest rates, the supply of money, and employment) and

national production and consumption (GDP or GNP). Most of the media economics studies in the macroeconomics tradition are policy and regulatory studies analyzing the impact of specific regulations and policies on media markets and industries. For example, studies investigate topics such as the impact of deregulation of media ownership on concentration of local television markets, the impact of international deregulation on transnational media corporations, and the impact of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 on consolidation of media industries.

Microeconomics examines specific aspects of the economic system, including individual markets, firms, or consumers. Many media economics studies apply a microeconomics approach to examine market structure and firm conduct and behavior. Such research has focused on the structure, conduct, and performance of the agricultural trade journal market; the structure of the cable television market; and an analysis of market competition in the television syndication industry.

A third approach to studying media economics is the critical perspective. This area of study is related to media economics but uses different theoretical domains and methodologies. Today, this field is known as political economy. Initially drawing on a Marxist orientation, contemporary critical scholars in the political economy of the media are concerned about topics such as media hegemony, technological determinism, political power over media enterprises, and the impact on social policy.

Media economics research is dominated by studies involving microeconomic perspectives. There is a much smaller group of literature that follows a macroeconomic perspective, although globalization has been a catalyst for

a growing body of macroeconomic research. Both macro and micro perspectives are used in conjunction with a theoretical foundation to examine research questions and hypotheses posed by researchers.

Primary Theoretical Domains in Media Economics

Much of the literature in the field of media economics has traditionally followed neoclassical approaches, which are led by the industrial organization model (the I/O model). The “old” I/O model, or the Bainsian I/O framework of analysis, is based on the assumption that there is a causal link from market structure to firm conduct to firm performance. The structure-conduct-performance paradigm (the SCP paradigm) first proposed by Bain (1968) is the most representative of the old I/O model and is a commonly used analytical framework in media economics studies. Analyzing media industries using the SCP paradigm often involves three factors: market structure, market conduct, and market performance. The majority of the studies of media firms and markets in the old I/O tradition focus on the analysis of market structure, which refers to the number and size distribution of firms in a market.

An important emphasis of the studies in the old I/O tradition had been empirical testing of the SCP hypothesis. These studies focus on the impact of industry structure on industry performance. As a consequence, initial I/O analyses did not pay too much attention to firm conduct. On the contrary, the “new” I/O model developed through the 1980s and the 1990s views the once assumed causal relationship between market structure and performance as a relationship influenced by strategic interaction among firms and thus pays more attention to firm decisions, conduct, and strategic interaction in markets. The new I/O model is especially useful for understanding firm behavior in conditions of oligopoly, where a market is dominated by a small number of sellers offering either homogeneous or heterogeneous products.

Scholars continue to extend the I/O model to media economics research. Some studies look into a single component of the I/O model, market structure, firm conduct, or firm performance. Using the I/O model, researchers examine the changes in the market structure of local broadcast television, radio, and newspaper markets; the structure of the electronic newspaper market; and structure of the multichannel video programming market. Additional studies focus on the structural relationships among market structure, firm conduct, and firm performance. For example, researchers examine the relationship between market structure, conduct, and performance in the newspaper industry and the effect of increased competition on the conduct and performance of local television news departments.

Other theoretical domains are also found in media economics research. Concentration studies look at the levels of concentration among media markets and industries. Concentration of media is problematic because media markets

are not only a marketplace for media products and services but also a marketplace for information and ideas. Concentration of market share refers to the proportion of a particular market controlled by the major players operating in that market. Commonly used measures of concentration of market share include concentration ratios and the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (the HHI). Researchers employ these measures to evaluate concentration of media markets. For example, concentration ratios and the HHI are used to investigate concentration of the advertising market for agricultural magazines; concentration ratios are used to examine concentration in the U.S. daily newspaper industry at the national and local levels; and the HHI is used to assess concentration in the U.S. book publishing industry from 1989 to 1994. The HHI has also been used to evaluate concentration in local television markets based on measures of audience shares.

Niche theory has been used to study competition among the media industries, especially between traditional media and new media. Niche theory is based on the assumption that a new medium competes with traditional media for audience and advertiser spending. For example, researchers examine the impact of the Internet as a new medium on traditional media in the daily news markets, the competition between cable as a new medium and broadcast media in the advertising market in the 1980s, how cable networks use branding strategies to attract cable system operators and national advertisers, and the survival rates of new magazines.

The principle of relative constancy (the PRC) is another theoretical domain that examines audience and advertiser spending on mass media over time. According to the PRC, a relatively constant proportion of the available wealth of audiences and advertisers is devoted to the mass media. The PRC asserts that introduction of new media cannot increase audience and advertiser spending on mass media. As a result, new media grow by competing with traditional media for audience and advertiser spending or from the growth in the general economy of a nation, which decides the amount of audience and advertiser spending available on the mass media. Researchers found support for the PRC by providing evidence on the constancy in audience spending on mass media over time using a longitudinal approach.

In media economics, one can find demand studies, based on audiences, advertisers, or those desiring to own media properties. Many media companies serve a dual market—offering content to audiences in the consumer market and selling access to audiences in the advertising markets. The majority of media demand studies focus on audience demand for content. Examples of audience-based studies include studies that examine factors determining demand for international films, the impact of audiences’ willingness to pay high subscription prices for business magazines on publishers’ differentiation strategies, the relationship between newspaper price and circulation demand, and factors determining household demand for basic or pay cable television services. In the literature, there are also studies examining advertiser demand and demand for media properties. For example, studies investigate advertiser spending

on mass media over the years, the dramatic increase in investment in media industries in the immediate years following the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and a method of pooling equity for purchasing a portfolio of media properties.

The theories and frameworks reviewed above are among the most commonly used in the field of media economics. In addition, in the media economics literature, one can also find studies that use policy analysis to gauge and analyze regulatory actions, especially the impact of regulation on the structure of media markets and on welfare, and studies that use game theory, information economics, behavioral economics, and transaction cost economics.

Methodological Approaches in Media Economics

There are many methodological approaches used in media economics research, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative applications. Some of the more common methodological approaches found in the literature are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Trend Studies

Researchers use trend studies to identify patterns among media firms and industries. Trend studies are used to track things such as advertising expenditures, ownership transactions, financial data, and demand. Trend studies tend to be descriptive in nature and visual in their presentation through the use of charts and graphs. Trend studies have been extensively used by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Trend studies conducted by the FCC include the Annual Report on Competition in Video Markets, Cable Industry Prices, Review of the Radio Industry, and others. Scholars use trend studies to investigate changes in media markets and industries over time. Some examples include a trend analysis of the revenues of the U.S. media industries between the 1980s and the 1990s, analysis of the change in consolidation of media industries before and after the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and a trend analysis of the adoption rate of the VCR among audiences in the early 1990s.

Survey Research

Survey research is a means of gathering information by asking a set of questions to a sample of respondents who represent a population with specific characteristics. Survey research is a relatively cost-effective way to collect a large amount of information. Implementations of survey research methods include mail surveys, telephone surveys, personal interviews, and Internet surveys. Surveys have been employed to investigate a variety of media economics topics, such as news managers' attitudes toward partnerships between newspapers and television stations; the

relationship between corporate newspaper structure, profits, and organizational goals; the influence of owners or advertisers on news correspondents' news reporting; factors affecting audiences' willingness to pay for content; factors leading to audiences' adoption of new media technologies; audiences' satisfaction with multichannel video programming services; and advertising decision makers' perception of media effectiveness and substitutability.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research method for a systematic analysis of content. Content analysis can take on two different forms. One is conceptual analysis, which identifies concepts for examination and then quantifies and tallies their presence, and the other is relational analysis, which identifies concepts present in some given content and further explores the relationships between the concepts identified—strength, sign, and direction of relationships. In media economics, content analyses have mostly been conducted on newspaper and television content. For example, researchers use content analysis to examine the effects of group ownership on daily newspaper content and to investigate the relationship between market size and local television news content.

Intensive Interviews

Intensive interviews are used by researchers to collect information from a small number of respondents who are hard to reach by other means, such as top executives of media firms. Intensive interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured, and which form to use is decided by factors such as the nature of the study, characteristics of the interviewees, and whether comparative analysis is involved. Semistructured interviews are more often used with media executives in organizational research, because this form gives interviewers more flexibility in deciding the choice of questions and the order of questions during the interview process and also allows comparability across different respondents in data analysis. The application of intensive interviews in media economics research includes interviews with cable system operators to investigate their perception of the competitiveness of the cable television markets, interviews with book wholesalers to study the transformation of the wholesale sector in the U.S. book-publishing industry, and interviews with media professionals to understand the economics of buying and selling audiences in the television advertising market.

Case Study Approach

The case study approach has been widely applied to examine the economics of media firms and industries. In case studies, multiple research methods are used to investigate a phenomenon embedded in its real-life context.

In media economics studies, cases or units of analysis can be media firms, industries, markets, advertisers, audiences or others entities, depending on the nature of inquiry. Case studies can be classified into two types by the number of cases included in one case study—single-case studies or multiple-case studies. Although multiple-case studies may be more time-consuming and costly to conduct, this research method has been employed in a number of media economics studies due to its advantages such as providing more compelling evidence and improving the robustness of the study. Examples of single-case studies include the book-publishing industry's transition to the BookScan system of measuring book sales, the merger of U.S. West and Continental Cablevision Inc., and Nielsen in the TV ratings history from 1984 to 1999. Examples of multiple-case studies include the impact of intra-industry and interindustry competition in the evolution of satellite broadcasting in the United States, Japan, England, and France and the competitive strategies employed by two all-news channels—CNN and BBC—in Asia.

Secondary Data Analysis

In media economics, secondary data refer to data previously collected by individuals or organizations for purposes other than those of a particular media economics research project. There are a variety of secondary data sources on media firms, industries, and markets available to researchers. A number of databases such as Thomson One Banker (Thomson Analytics), Hoover's Online, and Standard and Poor's provide comprehensive business and investment information, including industry surveys; corporation records; and key financials, ratios, and growth rates for companies worldwide. Industry-specific directories such as the *Cable & Television Factbook*, the *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook*, and the *Editor and Publisher International Year Book* provide comprehensive information on specific media industries.

Trade organizations such as the Radio Advertising Bureau (RAB), the Television Bureau of Advertising (TVB), the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA), the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association (SBCA) of America, the Newspaper Association of America (NAA), and the Magazine Publishers of America (MPA) provide continually updated industry statistics, including annual revenues (e.g., advertising revenues and subscription revenues), audience-size statistics (e.g., ratings, the number of service subscribers, circulations, or box-office sales), and industry trends such as the changes in annual revenue or audience size over the years.

It is usually less expensive to collect secondary data than primary data, and the time required for searching secondary data sources is much less than for collecting

primary data. Media economists have taken advantage of a variety of secondary data sources. Examples of secondary data sources used in media economics studies include programming schedules of broadcast television stations, syndication industry reports on programming, the database on corporate transactions compiled by the Securities Data Company, data on box-office sales provided by the online movie information service IMDb, the report of the Follow-Up National Survey of Cable Television Rates and Services compiled by the U.S. General Accounting Office, and data on mass media expenditures by categories collected by the Central Statistical Office of the United Kingdom.

Issues in Media Ownership

Media ownership is one of the most important areas of media economics, and it has been extensively researched. In this section, issues including media ownership regulation, concentration of media ownership, and capital and financing of media firms are discussed.

Media Ownership Regulation

The goals of media ownership regulation are to promote diversity of ownership, and thus diversity of voices, as well as to prevent concentration of economic power. Many jurisdictions have specific regulations for media ownership rather than leaving it to general competition law, from the concern that these goals may not be adequately addressed by market competition. The U.S. media ownership rules are designed to promote the FCC's policies of competition, diversity, and localism. The U.S. media ownership rules restrict concentration of media ownership at both local and national levels by setting up ownership caps, either on the total number of media outlets that can be owned in local markets or nationally by a media firm or on the maximum percentage of households that can be reached nationally by a media firm.

When an ownership regulation is relaxed or lifted, it has immediate influence on the status of concentration of media ownership, or media consolidation, which refers to the control of the majority of the media outlets by a small number of media conglomerates. According to an FCC media ownership study released in 2002, there was substantial consolidation across most forms of media, including television, radio, newspaper, cable, and satellite in the 1990s, especially following the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which relaxed or eliminated some local and national ownership limitations on television, radio, and cable as well as some cross-ownership limitations (Duwadi, Roberts, & Wise, 2007).

Some jurisdictions have a long history of regulating media ownership from an industry-specific approach. This approach is under pressure due to the development in

communication technologies and industry expansion across traditional industry boundaries. The media industries have been advocating deregulation of this industry-specific regulatory approach. The trend toward media ownership deregulation is detectable in some countries. For example, the FCC amended the ban on common ownership of a broadcast station and a daily newspaper in the same market in 2007. This amendment would allow a newspaper to own one television station or one radio station in the 20 largest markets in the United States (FCC, 2007, December 17).

Another emerging issue in media ownership regulation is whether and how the Internet should be subject to media ownership regulation. Media conglomerates can expand their success from traditional media to new media such as the Internet. The Internet as a new content distribution platform is dominated by the same group of media conglomerates that dominate traditional media. These media conglomerates have the majority of the traffic on the Internet. However, no regulation on Internet ownership exists yet.

Concentration of Media Ownership

The U.S. media markets are controlled by a number of top media conglomerates, such as Time Warner, Comcast Corp., Walt Disney Co., News Corp., NBC Universal, CBS Corp., Cox Enterprises, Echostar Communications Corp., and Viacom. These media conglomerates have concentrated ownership over the U.S. media—they control more than half of the total U.S. media revenue. As a result, these media conglomerates together have a great impact on what audiences listen to, watch, and read via different media platforms, including radio, television, newspapers, the Internet, and others.

Some media conglomerates are vertically integrated, having control over media outlets at various levels of media products (i.e., production, distribution, packaging, and exhibition). For example, Time Warner, the largest media conglomerate in the world, has operations in various forms of information and entertainment, from magazines, comic books, motion pictures, television, and home entertainment production, cinemas, to broadcasting, and others. There are also horizontally integrated media conglomerates; that is, they have control over more than one media outlet at one single level of media products. Comcast Corporation, for example, operates more than 1,000 cable systems in the United States, providing multichannel video programming services to about 24 million subscribers.

Concentration of media ownership, including vertical integration and horizontal integration, can help media firms improve economic efficiencies. For horizontally integrated media firms, the primary advantage of having concentrated ownership is economies of scale, which refers to the reduction in cost per unit as more units are

produced. One of the basic economic characteristics of the media business is high fixed costs and low variable costs. Horizontally integrated media firms such as radio and television groups can achieve economies of scale by spreading fixed costs over a larger number of stations. For vertically integrated media firms, the primary advantage of having concentrated ownership is economies of scope, which exist when the cost of joint production of several products is lower than the total cost of producing each product separately. The benefits for vertically integrated media conglomerates with multiple products in multiple markets include improvement in profitability, reduction in financial risk, and increase in market power.

One of the assumptions of media ownership regulation is that there is a link between the number of different media outlets in a market and the diversity of voices. Increasing concentration of media ownership has raised concerns of the public and the academic community due to the belief that source diversity influences programming diversity. A number of studies show that diversity of the media marketplace has been declining, and concentration of ownership is one of the key factors that led to this decline. According to studies on broadcast radio and television ownership conducted by Free Press in 2006 and 2007, women ownership and minority ownership are at extremely low levels in the broadcast radio and television industries (Turner & Cooper, 2007).

When the marketplace of ideas is controlled by a handful of media conglomerates, localism and public interest may be hindered. Due to the relaxation of media ownership rules at both local and national levels, radio and television station groups and newspaper chains were able to acquire more outlets. In many local markets, there are fewer and fewer locally owned radio and television stations or newspapers. Corporate owners are mostly profit driven, and centralizing operations is one of their common practices for the purpose of cost saving. Therefore, interest in local matters and public interest may not be incorporated in the station group or newspaper chains' daily operation.

The development in communication technologies made it technologically possible and economically feasible for media conglomerates to establish distribution and production networks across continents. A number of U.S. media conglomerates that dominate the U.S. media markets, along with a few Asian and European media conglomerates such as Sony Corp., Bertelsmann, Vivendi, and Pearson, dominate the global media landscape. These media conglomerates have operations worldwide and distribute their content or provide services to a world audience.

Different countries have different approaches to foreign ownership in media. Some countries encourage foreign ownership for the sake of cultural diversity. The United Kingdom allows foreign companies, especially non-European companies, to invest in media in order to introduce

new perspectives to the British media. On the contrary, some countries have passed regulations to limit foreign companies' equity of media to a minority role and thus to control foreign ownership in media in their countries. For example, the Chinese government only allows foreign companies to provide certain media services via joint ventures with Chinese companies and has passed regulations to restrict foreign companies to minority equity holders.

Capital and Financing of Media Firms

Most media firms need to raise capital to support daily operations, purchase equipment and facilities, and acquire other media properties. The process of raising capital is different for privately owned media firms and publicly traded media firms. Capital can be directly invested in privately owned media firms, whereas capital can only be invested in publicly traded media firms in stock markets. For example, investors cannot invest directly in Hearst Corporation, which is a private company, but can invest in the publicly traded McClatchy Company through share purchase in a stock market. Capital markets play a critical role in media firms' growth and expansion due to the large amount of capital required for media start-ups and for acquiring media properties. Capital markets are essential for media firms that intend to acquire other media properties. Without capital markets, it would be impossible for media companies to grow.

Media firms use a variety of financial agreements, such as mergers, acquisitions, leveraged buyouts, spin-offs, and others. Media firms employ these financial agreements to improve performance and pursue growth opportunities. Mergers and acquisitions are very commonly used by large media firms seeking growth and expansion. A merger refers to the combination of two companies. In a merger, two companies agree to combine, and the new entity retains all the assets and liabilities of both companies when the transaction is completed. In an acquisition, one company acquires the operating assets of another.

Liberalizing media ownership regulation has removed some of the conventional regulatory barriers for mergers and acquisitions. Since the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the number of mergers and acquisitions in media industries has increased, and the average value for these transactions has been increasing too. Capital markets make mergers and acquisitions possible for media firms—media firms use capital borrowed from capital markets to acquire other media firms. The influx of capital into the media markets, and therefore a large scale of mergers and acquisitions in media industries, led to the increasing concentration of media ownership.

Characteristics of media markets, such as strong cash flow dynamics, relatively low capital expense, and high growth rate are appealing to investors. Private equity firms showed an increasing interest in media markets and invested in a number of billion-dollar deals involving media firms since the late 1990s. For example, the buyout

of Tribune Co. by the private investor Sam Zell, completed in December 2007, was valued at \$4.3 billion; the buyout of Cengage Learning Inc. by an investor group, announced in July 2007, was valued at \$7.8 billion. Private equity firms eventually sell off their investments. This is one of the factors that contributed to the increase in change of hands of media properties.

Conclusion

The first section of this chapter described the three key approaches to studying media economics, including microeconomics, macroeconomics, and critical perspective. Microeconomics, which examines specific aspects of the economic system, including individual markets, firms, or consumers, is the approach guiding the majority of media economics studies. The SCP paradigm is the most commonly used analytical framework in media economics. The fundamental assumption of this framework is that there is a causal link from market structure to firm conduct to firm performance. Market structure is the focus of most media economics studies in the I/O tradition. Other theoretical domains applied in media economics include concentration studies, niche theory, relative constancy, demand studies, and others.

The majority of media economics studies are empirical research. With different theoretical domains, media researchers use a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods to examine research questions and hypotheses. Some of the common research methods employed in media economics studies include trend analysis, survey, content analysis, intensive interviews, case study, and secondary data research. Media researchers use these methodological approaches to investigate media firms, industries and markets, audiences, and advertisers.

In the second section, media ownership issues were discussed, including media ownership regulation, concentration of media ownership, and capital and financing of media firms. Media ownership regulation restricts media ownership at both local and national levels to prevent concentration of economic power and to promote diversity of voices. Emerging issues in media ownership regulation include whether or not the industry-specific regulatory approach is still appropriate in the convergence of media industries and whether and how the Internet should be subject to media ownership regulation.

The relaxation of media ownership regulation, combined with development in communication technologies and the increase in investments in media markets, led to more mergers and acquisitions in media industries and thus media consolidation, in the form of horizontal integration or vertical integration. On the one hand, media consolidation can improve the economic efficiencies of media firms due to economies of scale or economies of scope; on the other hand, it can hinder competition, diversity of voices, and localism.

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MEDIA POLICY AND REGULATION

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Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

First Amendment

The purpose of this chapter is to provide (a) an overview and understanding of the policies that serve as a foundation for media regulation in the United States, (b) an overview of regulatory oversight bodies in the United States, (c) an overview of regulatory policies with 21st-century implications, (d) an overview of policy development for the Internet and future directions for Internet regulation, (e) an overview of the robust debate surrounding the role that marketplace forces versus government forces should play in the development of and oversight of media policy, and (f) a synopsis of the future of 21st-century policy and regulation as it develops domestically and globally.

Despite having been created in the early 20th century, it is essential to examine the past regulatory policies as numerous sections of those policies remain in effect today and are still being enforced by the federal government. Moreover, not only do the policies continue to play a significant role in the day-to-day operations of media outlets, but they also have a significant influential role in the future development of the telecommunications industry in the 21st century. In 2007, Case stated, “The year looks to be business as usual when it comes to government regulation over the media, with perennial issues like media ownership, indecency and the battle between the telcos and cable companies still on the agenda” (p. 16).

The rationale for regulating mass communication has been supported by the scarcity theory, which asserts that there are limited frequency allocations for radio and television stations on the electromagnetic spectrum. Accordingly, broadcasters who are privileged enough to be granted access to the nation’s limited radio and television frequencies, considered a scarce national resource, should attempt to serve the interests of the public in the geographic region to which they are licensed. As a result of the scarcity theory, broadcasters are required through media policy to serve the “public convenience, interest and necessity” within their respective communities. Broadcasters refer to this as the “public interest” standard.

Media Policy and Regulatory Foundations

Radio Act of 1927 (Public Law Number 632 by the 69th Congress)

In the United States, media policy has paralleled the development of media technology. The first notable piece of media policy that was designed to regulate the broadcasting industry was the Radio Act of 1927. The Radio Act

of 1927 was signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge in February 1927 and was designed to eliminate deficiencies in the Radio Act of 1912. The specific objective of the 1927 act was to provide stability to a rapidly proliferating radio industry.

The Radio Act of 1912 was deficient in a number of ways. Notably, it did not provide the Department of Commerce the full authority to regulate the radio industry. The 1912 act did not permit a governmental regulatory agency the ability to regulate the power or hours of radio transmission, allocate frequencies, and deny radio licenses—all of which, were needed at the time to stabilize the new industry.

The radio industry experienced exponential growth during the early to mid-1920s due to the popularity of commercial programming. The development of commercial programming enabled radio stations to generate profits. As is natural in a capitalist society, the profits served as the impetus for the rapid growth of radio. Beginning in 1922, the radio industry made several attempts to impose rules and regulations on its own industry. This attempt at self-regulation failed after several years of annual conferences to work out the details.

After the failed attempts at self-regulation, the Radio Act of 1927 replaced the Radio Act of 1912. The new act contained several important initiatives that allowed for needed regulation of radio to stabilize the industry and reduce chaos over frequency allocations. The 1927 act created the Federal Radio Commission (FRC) to serve as the government's agency to regulate the medium of radio.

The new regulatory agency usurped authority from the Department of Commerce and the Secretary of Commerce and Labor. The president appointed five individuals, or commissioners, to the FRC from five geographic zones in the nation. Those individuals were required to go through the Senate confirmation process. Importantly, the FRC was provided with the authority to allocate radio frequencies and licenses. The Davis Amendment provided that the allocation of radio frequencies, radio licenses, times of operation, station wattage, and wavelength be equally distributed across the designated geographic zones from which the commissioners were appointed.

The “public interest” standard was a component of the 1927 act and, as already noted, is based on the belief that the public at large owns the electromagnetic spectrum, or the radio spectrum, and that individuals should be provided the authority, through licensing, to use a portion of the radio spectrum via radio frequencies. Since applications for radio frequencies outnumber the available frequencies, the individuals who are granted a frequency license must agree to serve the “public interest, convenience, and necessity” of the community in which they are licensed. This requirement by the government to serve the public's interest was not new to the federal government as it had already used the “public interest” approach in earlier legislation that was designed to regulate the nation's public utilities.

Each radio licensee was, and still is, required to document how the broadcast station is serving the public

interest. Although the Radio Act of 1927 provided First Amendment protection, radio programming was not permitted to contain obscene, indecent, or profane language. The courts have ruled that the mass medium of broadcasting is too pervasive to permit questionable programming during times of the day when minors are likely to be present. The FRC was not granted the authority to regulate radio advertising, however. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has been assigned that authority.

Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 609) (Title 47 of the U.S. Code)

In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt directed Daniel Roper, the Secretary of Commerce, to establish a committee to conduct a study examining the issues of regulating the radio industry and auxiliary communication industries such as telephone and telegraph. The Department of Commerce's report asserted that there was an inadequate regulatory structure in place, thus causing the president and Congress to modify the regulatory structure that had been created by the Radio Act of 1927.

In the Department of Commerce report, it highlighted the fact that the FRC only had authority to regulate wireless communications and needed additional regulatory powers to provide oversight to all communication industries. Accordingly, it was recommended that regulation of both wire and wireless communications be combined under one regulatory agency. Previously, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) provided regulatory oversight to the telephone and telegraph industries. Hence, Congress began the process of drafting a new policy to address the deficiencies. Once the Communications Act of 1934 was crafted, it completely replaced the Radio Act of 1927. The Communications Act of 1934 was signed into law in June 1934 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

During the years following the enactment of the act, numerous amendments were made to the Communications Act of 1934 to keep it current with technological advancements. Most notably, amendments to the act were made to address satellite technology, public broadcasting, and cable television. The 1934 act replaced the FRC, whose existence needed to be approved annually by Congress, with the permanent Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC was assigned the authority to grant licenses for telecommunications operators and ensure that rules created by the 1934 act are followed by the licensees. Like its predecessor, the 1934 act also required that broadcasters continue to serve the “public interest,” and they were required to provide documentation of such programming.

The Communications Act of 1934 prevents the FCC from censoring the content of programming. However, the FCC does have the ability to levy huge financial penalties against broadcasters who violate policies regarding profanity, indecency, or obscenity. Observers of the telecommunications industry argue that financial penalties create a chilling effect on free speech and First Amendment

rights. Although indecent programming is protected by the First Amendment, it can only be broadcast during times of the day when children are least likely to hear or see the program.

As already noted, the Communications Act of 1934 was amended as technology advanced. This was especially true in relation to the cable television industry. The FCC asserted in 1962 that it had regulatory authority over the cable television industry since channels were being sent using microwave transmission. The cable television industry challenged this assertion. In 1968, in *United States v. Southwestern Cable Company*, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the FCC's right to regulate the cable television industry citing its ability to influence the traditional broadcasting industry.

In 1984, the Cable Communications Policy Act was passed by Congress and was an attempt to deregulate the cable industry. This act also gave cities and counties the ability to play a role in cable television regulation by being able to grant franchise licenses to cable operators on entry into local communities. In 1992, Congress passed the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act, which was designed to regulate rates that cable operators could charge consumers. The 1992 act was also an attempt to create a more competitive marketplace for the cable industry by allowing for more than one cable system per community to operate. In the Telecommunications Act of 1996, cable rates were further deregulated, and policies were designed that encouraged telephone companies to offer cable television services. The 1996 act also permitted cable companies to offer phone service to consumers. This cross-platform approach to encouraging competition was a new philosophy.

**Telecommunications Act of 1996
(47 U.S.C. § 101 et seq., Pub. L.A.
No. 104–104, 110 Stat. 56)**

Although there had been numerous amendments and revisions made to the Communications Act of 1934, Congress found the legislation to be antiquated and in need of attention due to rapid technological advancements. Moreover, Congress wanted to deregulate the communications industry in order to stimulate competition in the marketplace. Thus, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was passed by Congress and signed into law by President William J. Clinton in February 1996.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 supersedes the Communications Act of 1934 and is very complex. But there are some key initiatives in the 1996 act that affect 21st-century communications policy and regulation. The basic underpinnings of the Telecommunications Act remain based on the “public interest, convenience, and necessity” standard. Again, it requires broadcasters to serve the interests of the community in which they are licensed.

An important, and controversial, aspect of the 1996 act allowed corporations to own up to 35% of the nation's television viewing households. It was controversial due to concerns of creating an environment where only a few

conglomerates possessed access to the majority of the broadcast frequencies, thus limiting multiple perspectives and opinions. The act eliminated all national radio ownership limits and allowed for corporations to own more stations within each media market. The duopoly rule for radio was repealed, allowing for the ownership of up to eight radio stations in the larger media markets and five stations in the smaller media markets. Critics have argued that rather than create a competitive environment, the 1996 act promotes concentration of power and conglomerate mergers.

The 1996 Telecommunications Act also allows for cross-ownership between media platforms. Telephone companies can now offer cable television service, and cable television companies can offer telephone service. Specifically, telephone companies are permitted to offer video service as an over-the-air provider, as a common carrier, as a cable television system, and as an open video service that is a hybrid cable system and common carrier. To avoid paying franchise fees to local cities and counties, cable television companies are permitted to provide video service as an open video system. The 1996 act permits consumers to purchase their own set-top boxes to acquire programs. Before the 1996 act, consumers were required to pay monthly fees to cable television companies for set-top boxes. The 1996 act also permits consumers complete access to direct broadcast systems (DBS) and prevents any local entities from banning satellite dishes.

The Communications Act of 1934 required that licenses for television stations be renewed every 5 years, whereas radio stations had to go through licensure every 7 years. In contrast, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 changed the licensing periods for both television and radio to 8 years and simplified the renewal process. The FCC will automatically renew a station's license for an additional 8-year period if during the previous 8 years, (a) the station has demonstrated no patterns of abuse, (b) the station has no serious regulatory violations, and (c) the station has served the public interest.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 also assigned a digital television channel to all existing analog television channels at no cost to the existing channel licensee. Initially, all television analog channels were scheduled to be phased out by February 2009. But, Congress approved a request by President Barak Obama to move the date of the analog-to-digital transition from February to June 2009. The Obama administration was concerned that rural residents were not prepared for the transition. To assist with this monumental transition, Congress passed the Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005, which included a provision designed to help consumers make an affordable transition to high-definition, or digital, television. It provides coupons to offset the cost of set-top boxes to convert the digital signals back to analog signals since many consumers still own analog television sets at the time of the conversion. The 2005 act allows all

U.S. households to obtain a maximum of two \$40 coupons to offset the cost of the converter boxes. Only consumers whose television set is analog and channels are received over the air will need the converter box.

The 1996 act focused on programming content regulation. It established fines for programming that transmitted obscene, lewd, or indecent material with the intent to harass another individual. The Communications Decency Act (CDA) was included in the 1996 act; however, in *Reno v. ACLU* (1997), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the CDA was unconstitutional. The act also required cable television systems to scramble all audio and video of any indecent programming at no cost to the consumer.

Furthermore, the act required that all new television sets include a V-chip to allow parents to block violent or other inappropriate programs to prevent children from being exposed to them. All programs would include ratings that were assigned based on the content of the programs. Interestingly, a much noted weakness of the 1996 act is that it did not anticipate the rapid rise of the Internet. Maxwell (2005) stated, “Tellingly, the 1996 Act mentions the Internet in only two sections—those dealing with ‘communications decency’ and universal service support for providing Internet access to schools and libraries” (p. 15). And the communications decency portion of the legislation was deemed unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Regulatory Oversight and the 21st Century

Communications policy is created by, and regulated by, several federal agencies. They include (a) the FCC, (b) the FTC, and (c) the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

Federal Communications Commission

Before examining the structure of the FCC, it is important to review its predecessor. The Federal Radio Commission (FRC) was created as a result of the Radio Act of 1927, and its primary role was to establish policy and regulations for the burgeoning radio industry, which included assigning frequencies and issuing licenses. The proliferation of new radio stations and the emergence of television created a need to modify the oversight structure. Accordingly, the Communications Act of 1934 replaced the FRC with the FCC. The FCC’s first day of operation was July 11, 1934, and it has remained in operation since that time as the federal agency responsible for providing regulatory oversight to the telecommunications industry.

Specifically, the role of the FCC is to regulate the telecommunications industry, which includes telephone, telegraph, radio, television, cable, satellite, and video-programming distribution. Notably, the FCC does not have

regulatory powers over the Internet. Individuals, known as commissioners, serve on the FCC. In 1982, as a result of political partisanship, Congress changed the membership from seven commissioners to five commissioners. The commissioners are all appointed to 5-year terms by the president and go through Senate confirmation prior to serving. There can be no more than three members from any one political party. The president gets to designate one of the five members to serve as chair of the FCC, and this individual serves as the commission’s leader.

Federal Trade Commission

The FTC was created by Congress in 1914 to establish policy and regulations for the advertising industry. There are five commissioners of the FTC who are appointed to 7-year terms by the president and must go through Senate confirmation prior to serving. Like the FCC, there can be no more than three commissioners from the same political party on the FTC at the same time. Hence, the president’s political party most always controls the majority of the membership of the FTC. The responsibility of the FTC is to identify unfair and deceptive advertising practices.

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

The ICANN was created, in 1998, by a Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Department of Commerce and the ICANN to provide oversight of the Internet’s unique system of identifiers to the global community. Although the ICANN is not responsible for creating or enforcing any Internet regulatory policy, it does, however, play an essential role in the oversight of the Internet.

Specifically, the ICANN globally coordinates (a) the allocation and assignment of all Internet domain names, (b) Internet protocol and autonomous system numbers, and (c) protocol ports and parameter numbers. The ICANN also coordinates the operation and evolution of the domain name system, root name server system, and it coordinates all policy development related to these technical functions. The ICANN replaced the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), which was operated at the University of Southern California through a contract with the Department of Defense. The ICANN maintains a 5-year contract to oversee the Internet, consisting of 1-year renewals.

Regulatory Policies With 21st-Century Implications

Fairness Doctrine

In 1949, in the *Report on Editorializing by Broadcast Licensees*, the FCC created the Fairness Doctrine. Its objective was to ensure coverage of controversial issues as

well as to ensure that multiple viewpoints were provided. The doctrine was modified by Congress in 1959 with Chapter 315(a) of the Communications Act of 1934, by requiring broadcasters not only to provide coverage of controversial issues within the communities to which they were licensed but also to specifically provide multiple viewpoints of the controversial issues through (a) public affairs programming, (b) editorials, and (c) news coverage.

Fairness Doctrine rules also applied to political editorializing. For example, if broadcasters endorsed political candidates, then the opposing candidates were allowed an opportunity to respond to the radio or television station's political viewpoint. There was much debate about the Fairness Doctrine's constitutionality. However, in 1969, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Fairness Doctrine in *Red Lion Broadcasting Company v. Federal Communications Commission*. The Red Lion decision discredited the arguments that the Fairness Doctrine violated First Amendment rights.

Despite the Supreme Court's decision, the Fairness Doctrine remained a controversial policy. In 1987, the FCC abolished the Fairness Doctrine. Through the Syracuse Peace Council decision, the FCC repealed the Fairness Doctrine on the grounds that it infringed on the First Amendment rights of broadcasters by creating a chilling effect pertaining to coverage of controversial issues. Moreover, the FCC believed that the proliferation of new media had provided adequate additional avenues for expressing contrasting viewpoints.

In an attempt to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine, Congress passed the Fairness in Broadcasting Act of 1987, but President Ronald Reagan vetoed the act. Despite its demise, there is robust debate as to whether the Fairness Doctrine should be reinstated. In 2007, Congress considered reinstating the Fairness Doctrine, but the attempt failed. The political editorial rule remained in effect until 2000, and that aspect of the Fairness Doctrine has not been revisited.

Indecency and Obscenity

Indecent material is legal and is protected by the First Amendment. The U.S. Supreme Court defined indecency in the *FCC v. Pacifica Foundation* case in 1978. In the *Pacifica* case, the Court asserted that material was indecent if (a) sexual or excretory organs or activities are depicted and (b) community standards would deem the work to be patently offensive. To further clarify the definition of indecency, the FCC considers the context in which the material was broadcast. The FCC considers (a) how explicit or graphic the material is, (b) if the material only focuses on sexual activity, and (c) if the material is designed to disturb or sexually excite the audience. Due to its subjective nature, both courts and broadcasters have a difficult time determining whether programming falls within the legal parameters.

Media policies have prevented broadcasters from airing obscene, indecent, or profane language since the Radio Act of 1927. The FCC has established hours during the day when indecent material may be aired. These hours are referred to as "safe harbor" hours since they are times when children are least likely to be listening to the radio or watching television. The safe harbor hours are from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

Obscene material is not legal and has no First Amendment protection. One of the first attempts to regulate obscene material took place in 1873, when Congress passed the Comstock Act, which prohibited the mailing of obscene, lewd, or lascivious items relating to contraception and abortion. The act was named after Anthony Comstock, who lobbied Congress to pass the legislation. In 1876, the act was amended to include pornography. Anthony Comstock was appointed as a postal inspector to enforce the act and held the position for 42 years. Even today, it is still against the law to mail any materials deemed obscene.

As courts ruled on obscenity violations, it became clear that there were different applications of the law being applied. Accordingly, the U.S. Supreme Court made a landmark ruling in 1973 that defined whether a material was obscene or indecent. In *Miller v. California*, the Court asserted that a material is obscene if (a) an average person, applying local community standards, found that the material as a whole appealed to prurient interests, or morbid and shameful sexual thoughts; (b) the material depicts, in a patently offensive manner, sexual conduct; and (c) the material has no literary, artistic, political, or scientific value whatsoever. All three parts must be met before an item is deemed obscene. Again, obscene material does not have First Amendment protection.

Despite the U.S. Supreme Court's three-pronged definition of obscenity, there still remain confusion and challenges in the legal system regarding whether a material is obscene or not. Moreover, when 21st-century technology is added, things become even more unclear. In 1996, in *United States v. Thomas*, a federal appellate court upheld the local community standards prong of the Miller test. In this specific situation, a U.S. postal inspector ordered videotapes containing sexually explicit material from an Internet bulletin board.

The Internet bulletin board was based in California, while the postal inspector who ordered the videotape was in Tennessee. As a result of mailing the videotape across state lines, the Internet bulletin board operator was charged in Memphis, Tennessee, and found guilty of distributing obscene material. The Internet bulletin board operator appealed the conviction, asserting that local community standards cannot be applied in this situation since the Internet is not defined to any specific geographic area. The appeals court rejected the argument and reiterated that local community standards apply to obscene materials regardless of the Internet's uniqueness. Interestingly,

although obscene material is illegal to make, sell, exhibit, and distribute, it is not illegal to have obscene material in private possession. Of course, this provision excludes child pornography. The assumption is that the federal government cannot tell people what to watch or read.

Copyright Law

The proliferation of new media in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has created situations where regulation and policy have been developed to address specific needs arising from these technological advancements. In 1790, the first U.S. Congress created a copyright, and it has been modified many times since its original draft. In 1870, the U.S. Congress created the Library of Congress and provided it with the responsibility of serving as archivist and depository of copyrighted materials. There were slight modifications made to the Copyright Act in 1909 that extended the length of time that a material can have copyright laws applied.

In 1976, the Copyright Revision Act was passed by Congress to address the special needs of new technology. However, due to the rapid proliferation of technology, the copyright law eventually faced some shortcomings. New technology such as the Internet required that Congress take another look at modifying the law. In 1998, Congress passed the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), which was designed to address the new copyright problems associated with the proliferation of 21st-century media. It was designed to address the copyright issues surrounding digital media and the Internet. The DMCA protects Internet Service Providers (ISPs) from being prosecuted for copyright infringement if subscribers violate the law. Instead, the individual subscriber is held responsible.

With regard to Internet copyright infringement, peer-to-peer file sharing of copyrighted material has been found by the U.S. Supreme Court to be a violation of the law. In previous court decisions, peer-to-peer file-sharing networks such as Napster, Grokster, and Morpheus were found liable for copyright infringement since they knowingly provided a forum for the sole purpose of copyright infringement. Interestingly, the Supreme Court differentiated these peer-to-peer file-sharing networks from Sony's Video Cassette Recorder (VCR), arguing that the VCR had the ability to offer users options other than just copyright infringement.

Future Directions: 21st-Century Policy Considerations for the Internet

Like the print media, the Internet has full First Amendment rights and remains unregulated by the FCC. The ICANN is responsible for assigning domain names and providing some standardization to the Internet for the

global multitude of computers to communicate with each other creating networks.

Although the Telecommunications Act of 1996 contained the CDA, which prohibited the distribution of obscene, indecent, or patently offensive material to children, as noted earlier, the U.S. Supreme Court reviewed the constitutionality of the CDA and found it to be an infringement on First Amendment rights. In *Reno v. ACLU* (1997), the U.S. Supreme Court noted that the Internet is not a scarce commodity such as broadcast frequencies. Instead, the Supreme Court noted that parents had an option to not subscribe to Internet services if they did not want their children to be exposed to indecent material. The Supreme Court asserted the Internet was not as invasive as broadcasting.

In 2005, in *National Cable & Telecommunications Association v. Brand X Internet Services* (125 S. Ct. 2688), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the ISPs are not regulated by the FCC. Despite efforts by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to deregulate the communications industry and encourage marketplace competition to lower prices for consumers, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled this aspect of the act unconstitutional. With regard to an ISP and a cable television company, the Court ruled that the FCC cannot require cable television companies to lease their cable lines to external ISPs in order to offer consumers additional Internet service options via cable modems. The FCC initially reasoned that additional competition would produce competitive rates.

Internet advertising has limited regulation. The FCC and the FTC provide regulatory oversight to both the Internet and broadcast advertising industries. Several policies have been passed by Congress to help regulate Internet advertising. In 2003, Congress passed the Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing (CAN-SPAM) Act, which was designed to prevent unwanted electronic mail advertising, referred to as spam. The CAN-SPAM Act prohibits false identity headers in electronic mail and requires that electronic mail advertisements have unsubscribe, or opt out, options available to consumers. Unlabeled pornographic material was also prohibited from being sent to consumers under the CAN-SPAM Act.

In 2005, several states passed legislation that prohibited Internet advertisers from embedding spyware software on consumer computers. Spyware is software that remotely attaches itself to consumer computers and obtains personal information about the Internet habits of consumers in an effort to target advertising that might interest consumers based on previous Internet usage patterns. Spyware software also has the potential to allow for theft of personal information from computer hard drives. Accordingly, most states have passed legislation prohibiting spyware software from attaching itself to computers without the consumer's knowledge and permission.

To protect intellectual property, or copyrights, there was a global, multilateral approach to regulating this aspect of

the Internet. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Performances and Phonograms Treaty of 1996 was adopted by 171 countries around the world. The WIPO was designed to enforce copyright laws around the globe and officially applied international copyright law to the Internet. Although this was an important first step in enforcing copyright law on the Internet, Eko (2001) stated that “given the fundamental cultural and legal differences among nations with respect to certain aspects of intellectual property and moral rights, the harmonization of different, even conflicting intellectual property law regimes on the Internet is still a work in progress” (p. 456).

Global Comparison

The United Nations is examining the manner in which the United States regulates the Internet in a way that might encroach on Internet usage in other countries around the world. McChesney (2004) asserted, “Linked closely with the tempestuous negotiations surrounding global and regional trade deals and economic agreements, the future of the Internet is anything but certain” (p. 220). In 2005, at the World Summit on the Information Society, nations discussed the governance of the Internet and whether the United States should remain in charge of key Internet governance issues.

The European Union was not comfortable with the United States having unilateral control of the Internet through the ICANN and instead preferred a more multilateral approach to Internet governance. Geist (2005) stated,

It is difficult to fault the European Union and other foreign governments for expressing discomfort with a system that grants ultimate control over the Internet to a single government. Dozens of countries, including Canada, have identified the Internet as a critical public resource that plays an essential role in commerce, communication, and delivery of social services. While it is unlikely the U.S. would shut down the domain name system of another country, the threat that such a power exists is justifiably worrisome to many government leaders. (p. D03)

Despite the controversy surrounding Internet policy development and regulation on a global scale, Eko (2001) stated,

The nations of the world find themselves struggling to develop regulations and policies for a medium that has been so successful in inter-connecting computer networks around the world in such a short time that policy makers have not had the time to think through the complex implications of the technology on international communication, commerce, economic development and cultural exchanges. (p. 447)

Thus, the basic foundation for a regulatory structure and ancillary policies for the Internet in the 21st century remains a work in progress.

21st Century Regulation: Marketplace Forces Versus Government Oversight

In the 1920s, when the radio industry requested the government to intervene and provide regulatory oversight to minimize the confusion of frequency crowding, it was indeed an unprecedented move by a market-driven, commercial industry. What started as an unbiased mediator for broadcasters in the 1920s has blossomed into a juggernaut with an established regulatory agency, known as the FCC, which wields an enormous amount of regulatory influence and oversight.

There have been cycles of increased regulation and cycles of deregulation by the FCC. There has been, and remains, a very robust debate surrounding the continued need for government regulation of the telecommunications industry in the 21st century. Although the mid-1990s brought deregulation to the telecommunications industry in a major new policy, some observers believe that additional policies to deregulate are still needed. Maxwell (2005) asserted,

The 1996 Act made positive contributions to the telecommunications industry, particularly by facilitating competition in local telecommunications. But it was built on a foundation of legal and regulatory categories created over the preceding 60 years that have grown increasingly inconsistent with today’s marketplace. These inconsistencies now stand as a barrier to even more competition and even greater innovation. And while the Act was avowedly deregulatory, the FCC created more regulations than it eliminated, in effect attempting to stimulate competition while, at the same time, managing it. (p. 5)

McChesney (2004) observed that media policy is very important in the development of media industries and argues that policy created by and implemented by the federal government is what creates and perpetuates technological advancements. For example, the government created radio, satellite, and Internet technologies and then gave those innovations to the commercial industry. To illustrate the important role media policy plays in the development of new technology, the development of high-definition television, or digital television, is used as an example. McChesney suggested that high-definition television channels could have doubled the number of channels from which the public could choose; instead, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) successfully lobbied Congress to give the digital channels to existing television station owners to broadcast existing analog content side by side, thus reducing competition and reducing additional options for consumers.

Even though the government created the new technologies and stabilized them before handing them over to media industry leaders, McChesney (2004) further asserted that “any future efforts to exact public service from the

huge firms granted all these privileges will be dismissed as a callous attempt by the government to interfere with the free market” (p. 215).

McChesney (2004) suggested that despite regulatory attempts to create a media environment that encourages competition and promotes more options for consumers, an oligopoly has been created instead where only a few conglomerates control the media. Accordingly, this environment reduces competition and reduces more options for consumers. McChesney stated,

It means that media markets may “give the people what they want,” but will do so strictly within the limited range of fare that can generate the greatest profits. The more competitive the market, in economic theory, the more control consumers have over expanding that range. The argument in oligopolistic markets becomes circular: people consume from a relatively narrow range of what media firms find most lucrative to produce; then when consumers select from these options, the firms say, “See, we must be giving you what you want.” (p. 199)

In contrast, Maxwell (2005) stated,

Anti-competitive acts should be prevented, and the industry should draw upon the lessons of the Internet in promoting open systems, such as ensuring that all of the disparate platforms can be interconnected. A key component of policy in the new era of telecommunications will be the principles of openness—openness regarding platforms, network attachments, applications, and content—and the prevention of unreasonable discrimination that reduces openness. (p. 33)

Conclusion

From a policy and regulatory perspective, the Internet has become and will remain a major force in the 21st century. Every policy developed and every regulatory action taken both within the United States and by other nations around the globe must account for the Internet. The Internet and ancillary technological advancements of new media have altered the traditional manner in which media policies and regulations occur.

Past regulatory efforts have focused on media that were confined to specific geographic regions or nations. The Internet has completely changed this paradigm of media policy development and media regulatory attempts. The Internet has no geographic boundaries, and enforcing policies is oftentimes difficult, if not impossible. Due to the global nature of the Internet and its lack of geographic boundaries, nations are changing the way in which regulatory policy development is approached. Regarding global Internet regulatory attempts, May, Chen, and Wen (2004) noted that the “movement toward global regulation of Internet activity is not an easy task. Rooted in each state are cultural, political, social and economic differences that impact approaches and perspectives on regulation and regulatory methods” (p. 260).

The proliferation of new media and the rapid advancements of technology are changing the way in which consumers obtain news, listen to music, and even watch television. In 2007, the Internet World Usage Stats reported that more than 1.1 billion people worldwide were accessing the Internet and the worldwide Internet penetration is at 16%. Although the United States has the largest number of Internet users, there are still significant numbers of users from every corner of the globe who are quickly adopting new technologies, and these new Internet users bring cultural and language barriers to the policy table for consideration. These numbers and demographics are expected to continue to increase as technology becomes more affordable and even more user-friendly. Thus, there will be a need for a multilateral approach to regulation and policy development of the Internet in the 21st century. Some nations argue that non-governmental regulatory agencies such as the ICANN should not have complete authority to oversee the Internet outside the United States. Some nations have challenged its mission.

In 1999, William E. Kennard, the chairman of the FCC at the time, delivered a report to Congress titled *A New Federal Communications Commission for the 21st Century*. The report noted that technological advancements had changed the landscape of media regulation and policy development and that the FCC needed to modify the manner in which it approaches its mission in the 21st century. The report stated that those core functions included (a) providing universal service and access to all citizens, (b) consumer protection and privacy, (c) promotion of pro-competitive goals both domestically and globally, and (d) oversight of the electromagnetic spectrum. The report stated, “In the [media] marketplace of tomorrow, it is expected that traditional industry structures will cease to exist” (p. 3).

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RADIO AND TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

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Programming is at the heart of radio and television operations. Various distribution techniques (terrestrial broadcast, cable TV, subscription TV, satellite radio, Internet, etc.) come and go. But one thing remains constant: the need for desirable content. This need is constantly increasing. In the 1920s, there were fewer than 400 radio stations (White, 2003), and today there are more than 13,000 AM and FM stations (Regents, 2003), most of them operating on a 24-hour basis. In addition, there is satellite radio, cable radio, Internet radio, and podcasting, all of which need audio content. In the television realm, NBC aired 601 hours of programming during 1939, its first year of broadcast (Shanks, 1976, p. 65). By 1979 it was airing 7,000 hours per year (Auletta, 1991, p. 93). Add to that the many hundreds of broadcast and cable networks, satellite television, Web sites, and other forms of distribution, and it is easy to see that the appetite for program material is insatiable.

People involved with programming are the ones who initiate content ideas or solicit them from others. From the idea stage, they develop the concept into a workable product that people will want to watch or listen to. They then decide how best to make the program available by planning its scheduling and distribution. At some point, they evaluate the effectiveness of their work and make changes, if necessary. Meanwhile, of course, they are initiating, developing, and scheduling new programming projects.

This chapter will discuss these various processes related to programming, pointing out similarities and differences among the various distribution channels. It will describe where programming comes from, how it finds its way to an increasingly elusive and fragmented audience, and how the

programming process might change in the future. But first, to set the stage, here is a short history of programming.

A Short History of Programming

The concept of programming did not exist when radio first started in the 1920s. The novelty of radio was such that people would stay glued to the earphones of their huge battery-operated sets just to hear someone reciting call letters from an early radio station. Free talent wandered into stations to sing, recite poetry, or play musical instruments, but eventually the novelty wore off, and performers wanted to be paid. After stumbling through several experiments, radio practitioners settled on advertising as a means of raising money, despite the fact that the then–Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover opposed advertising saying, “It is inconceivable that we should allow so great a possibility for service to be drowned in advertising chatter” (Barnouw, 1966, p. 96).

Advertising chatter, however, prevailed, and in the 1930s, most of the programming was undertaken by advertising agencies. Several networks (NBC, CBS, ABC) had been formed to distribute programs to stations throughout the country, and advertising agencies bought blocks of time and filled the time with programming and mentions of the sponsor and its product line. Often the product became part of the story line—the show’s announcer would visit Fibber McGee and Molly and talk about waxing the floor with Johnson’s Wax. The advertisers came up with concepts, hired the talent, and oversaw production. They paid the networks to distribute the programming, but the networks

did little programming decision making. As long as the advertiser was happy with the program and its time slot, it was left alone. As a result, many programs aired on radio for years. For example, Jack Benny was on radio from 1932 to the mid-1950s at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, sponsored primarily by Jell-O.

When television started in earnest in the late 1940s, it adopted the same model. Advertising agencies provided the networks with *Texaco Star Theater*, *Kraft Television Theater*, *Alcoa Hour*, and many other similarly named shows. But television production proved more expensive than radio production, so it was difficult for one sponsor to pay all the costs associated with a weekly series. The old advertising-agency-dominated programming model started to fray. In some instances, several companies would share the costs, and the program would be “brought to you by Buick, Lucky Strike cigarettes, and Ivory soap.” The downside of this was that viewers did not identify the program with the product as they had during radio’s heyday (Sterling & Kittross, 1990, p. 161).

Then came the quiz show scandals of the late 1950s. Quiz shows, where contestants locked in soundproof booths agonized as they tried to answer difficult questions, were big moneymakers for advertisers. Audiences were large and engaged to the extent that products from Revlon, which sponsored *The \$64,000 Question*, sold out nationwide. When it was discovered that popular contestants had been coached to keep them on the air, Americans’ trust of television plummeted. There were many speculations about who knew about this coaching—advertisers, agency executives, TV network programmers, but the end result was that television executives decided to take charge of their programming rather than depending on the advertising agencies to supply it to them (Goodwin, 1989, pp. 51–52).

Actually, the trend toward broadcaster control of programming had started before the late 1950s. When television became popular in the late 1940s, it took away most of radio’s prime network shows and the talent associated with them. Radio had to reinvent itself and did so mainly by programming music hosted by local disc jockeys who appealed to the new radio audience—teenagers. Radio became a locally based medium, with different stations emphasizing formats of music rather than individual programs. This style of programming was not conducive to sponsorship by individual advertisers. Rather, the stations began selling ads (called spots) for insertion within their programming. The programming decisions rested with local program managers and station managers.

In the television of the mid-1950s, there were strong-minded executives who wanted to control their own programming. One was Sylvester L. “Pat” Weaver who, while president of the NBC from 1953 to 1955, devised what he called the magazine concept. Advertisers bought commercial insertions in programs such as “Today” or “Tonight” and had no say about content. But it was the quiz scandals

that pushed program decision making from the ad agencies to the TV executives (Peysner, 1979).

Network executives now began to consider their programming schedule as an overall entity. They developed strategies—some to keep the audience watching their particular network throughout the evening, some to get viewers to sample programming, all to increase their revenue and recognition. Audience measurement became important, and executives canceled shows that did not have adequate ratings. They created broadcast standards and practices departments to function as internal censors to keep off objectionable programming with the intent of reassuring the public that responsible people were minding the store. Networks and stations still worked with advertising agencies to obtain ads, but it was the broadcasters who were in the programming driver’s seat. Throughout the 1960s, this was a very lucrative driver’s seat, not only for ABC, CBS, and NBC but also for local TV stations, because most of them were affiliated with a network.

Then several things happened that complicated programming decision making for network executives. In 1970, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) took a look at TV network programming practices and decided that the networks had too much power. Not only did they produce and own much of the programming, but when they did buy programs from independent sources (such as Norman Lear’s Tandem-TAT or Aaron Spelling Productions), they usually established financial interest in that programming and received part of the profit when the show was sold in syndication for reruns. The FCC thought that this gave the networks too much power, and so it instituted financial interest and domestic syndication (fin-syn) rules that barred networks from having a financial interest in programs produced by outside companies and forbade the networks from receiving money from syndication. The FCC also imposed limits on how much of their own programming networks could produce themselves. All this led to a healthy independent production landscape, wherein proprietors of small companies could pitch ideas to network programming executives and make substantial money when the programs were aired and rerun, but the networks’ profits declined (Vane & Gross, 1994, pp. 55–57).

Something else that happened in the 1970s was that the number of independent television stations grew. Prior to the 1970s, most of the TV stations had been affiliated with ABC, CBS, or NBC, and those that weren’t aired primarily network reruns. The FCC, mainly because technology had improved, authorized many additional TV stations in the early 1970s. These stations strived to do something new that was not on the networks. Some of them capitalized on movies or local interests, and many bought “first-run” programs—ones sold by independent production companies and syndicators who produced the shows with the idea that they would be shown on stations as opposed to the networks. Independent stations grew from 28 in 1961 to 103

in 1979 and to 339 in 1989 (INTV, 1990). This growth further fueled the independent production companies and also cut down, to some degree, network viewership.

Public television and radio came to the fore after the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 made them viable entities (Avery & Pepper, 1980). This further increased viewing and listening options, but it also enabled the networks and stations to try to reduce their public service programming, stating that public broadcasting was there to fill that need. Also, several new broadcast commercial networks (Fox, then UPN and WB, which merged into CW) emerged to further erode the TV audience of the original three networks.

The real force to fragment viewing, however, was cable TV, which exploded during the 1980s. Once a sleepy form of distribution meant to extend the range of TV stations' signals, it came into its own after satellites were developed. These satellites were able to transmit multiple networks (HBO, Showtime, ESPN, CNN, etc.) to cable TV head-ends, and from there they were sent by wire to subscribers' homes. The number of cable TV networks rose from 8 in 1980 to 290 in 2003 (Hofmeister, 2003). Program decision making at these networks differed from that of the broadcast networks. Rather than trying to obtain the largest possible audience like the networks did, the cable networks went after niche audiences—children, sports fans, adherents to a particular religion. Cable networks adopted or revised some of the broadcast network programming strategies and created some of their own.

One of the offshoots of cable TV's popularity was that the broadcast networks were able to convince the FCC that they were no longer the powerful forces they had been in the 1960s. They pointed out that they were being hamstrung by the fin-syn rules because they were not able to produce and profit from the programs they aired, whereas the cable networks had no such restrictions. In 1995, the FCC agreed with the broadcast networks and abolished fin-syn (Bielby & Bielby, 2003). What happened, of course, was that the broadcast networks began producing much of their own programming, cutting down the amount of work available for independent production companies.

Meanwhile radio was slowly changing from a local medium to a national one, but one that was very different from original radio. Congress passed the Telecommunication Act of 1996, allowing companies to own more radio and TV stations than in the past. Several companies started on a radio-station-buying spree and wound up programming many stations but still giving them a local feel. Among other tactics, they developed voice tracking, wherein one announcer would, at one sitting, read material for many stations, making it sound local with local weather forecasts and the like. This material would be interspersed with music played on all the stations. The whole radio network and syndication market grew as the demand for programs that were not truly locally produced expanded (Perebinosoff, Gross, & Gross, 2005, p. 16).

The 21st century has seen a variety of distribution forms emerge—satellite TV, satellite radio, the Internet, cell phones, iPods. With digital video recorders, CDs, DVDs, and various other consumer goods, people can “program” for themselves, deciding when they want to watch or listen to particular material. Ordinary individuals can also participate as sources of programming to a much greater extent. But content is still king; people must come up with ideas that interest others, and these ideas must be taken through a process so that they can reach an audience. That is what programming is all about.

Sources for Program Ideas

Program ideas can come from just about anywhere—a newspaper story, a dream a TV executive has, something overheard in an elevator, a best-selling book. However, simply having a good idea does not make a TV series. Most ideas must be funneled through an organized structure of suppliers that provide the money and technical and production know-how to make programming a reality. Yes, several friends can shoot and edit a 2-minute production starring their dogs and put it on YouTube, but that is not likely to be financially rewarding. It takes companies with “deep pockets” to withstand the many programming failures while awaiting the next big hit.

In the media business, the people in stations and networks (both cable and broadcast) come up with ideas for much of their own programming. ESPN executives, for example, decide which sports events they want to telecast and then bid against other networks for the rights to cablecast the event. Producers on the staff at NBC decide what items will be included in each *Today* show. In the same manner, local TV station employees decide what will be aired on their 5:00 p.m. newscast, and radio station programmers select music to play. Sometimes a network executive will come up with an idea (e.g., a reality show featuring ex-cops) and then hire someone from the outside who has a successful track record to actually execute the idea. In recent years, networks have merged with movie studios (ABC/Disney, CBS/Paramount, NBC/Universal, CW/Warner). In a symbiotic relationship, the network executives use the studios to produce programs, and executives at the studios take their ideas to the network.

Television outlets also get ideas and programs from independent production companies. Known as “indies,” these are usually small companies whose owners function as the chief creative contributors—Steven Bocho, Robert Greenwald, Jerry Bruckheimer, David E. Kelley. These people come up with ideas and pitch them to the network executives, who then decide whether or not they like the idea. Since the abolishment of fin-syn, these indies get less work from the broadcast networks than they used to, but they are still hired for some projects, and they pitch to cable networks and other forms of distribution. Sometimes

these indie companies have umbrella deals with the larger major movie production studios. They are housed on the studio lot, and the studio helps finance and sell the indie products in return for sharing in any financial success. For example, John Wells's company (*ER*, *The West Wing*) is housed on the Warner lot, and Dick Wolf (*Law & Order*) is with Universal (Perebinosoff et al., 2005, p. 30).

The major studios and the indies sell the program to whoever will buy it. It helps to have an ownership relationship with a particular network, but there is nothing to keep Universal from selling an idea to ABC, even though it is part of NBC Universal. In addition, the movie studios supply their theatrical movies to whichever entities will buy them—CBS, Lifetime, Showtime, Netflix, and so on.

There are many other sources stations and networks can look to as they are trying to fill all their hours with programming. A number of them research and use programming from other countries. Public radio and television have aired a great deal from England, as has A&E, and there are cable channels and radio stations that program material specifically from another country. In addition, American companies often coproduce with other countries, in part so that the program or series will have a good chance of airing in all the participating countries.

Syndicators are also a source of programming material. These are companies that package material from other sources and create some themselves. They may, for example, purchase rights to 10 movies from Paramount and package them as “adventure movies” to be run on TV stations. The programs that are produced for TV syndication tend to be game shows, talk shows, and tabloid news such as *Wheel of Fortune*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, and *Entertainment Tonight*. For radio, many talk shows, such as Rush Limbaugh and Dr. Laura, are syndicated. The line between network and syndicator is blurred in radio in that both offer programs that radio stations can cherry-pick (Keith, 2004, pp. 330–333).

On occasion, advertisers still come up with programming ideas, such as Hallmark Hall of Fame. In fact, some stations and networks choose to air infomercials, which are really 30-minute advertisements that appear to be information shows because they include interviews and demonstrations related to a particular product.

Companies that own many TV or radio stations sometimes come up with a programming idea and try it on one station. If it is successful, it becomes a programming idea for all the other owned stations.

The Internet is awash with ideas for programs. Every computer has the potential to be a source for program material. Many conventional distribution forms such as networks and syndicators are putting programs or parts of programs on the Internet (and cell phones, iPods, and other electronic gadgets), as well as their usual channels. Hundreds of individuals have established Internet-only radio stations and programming on YouTube, which would have been unheard of in the past. Just where all this will

lead in terms of idea generation is yet to be determined. But new ideas are always welcome. Anyone who has had a programming job that involves coming up with material to fill a channel 24 hours a day 365 days a year will attest to that.

The Development Process

Once programmers feel that they have found a good idea, be it one of their own or one pitched by someone else, they must shape, fine-tune, and perfect it so that it is ready for public consumption. This process is called development—sometimes referred to as “development hell.” Many people find it hellish because it is time intensive and very costly and the odds for success are exceedingly slim. It is difficult to develop a TV series that has the potential to make millions of dollars in syndication, a radio format that will bring a station from Number 10 in the ratings to Number 1, or a new reality show that will be first in its time period.

Development differs from medium to medium and project to project, but there are a number of steps commonly taken. One of these is obtaining rights, especially if the idea is based on a book or a person's life. This step should definitely involve legal counsel that can draw up a contract stipulating the nature and duration of the agreement, any compensation that will be given and how it will be distributed, how the credits will read, whether the purchaser can assign rights to another party, and other important stipulations. One tricky decision involves when to ask for the rights. Ideally, the person with the idea should have rights even before pitching the idea so that securing rights does not slow down the development process. But obtaining even tentative rights usually costs money, and then if the project goes nowhere, that money is lost.

To help move some projects through development, it is wise to attach a well-known star, writer, director, or executive. The downside is that the well-known people attached may not be right for the idea, and once they have been attached they are hard to get rid of. Sometimes it is better (and cheaper) to go with unknowns who can become stars, such as happened with the cast of *Friends*.

The pitch that is made for a project is very important and sets the stage for many other factors related to development. Whether the pitch is coming from an independent production company, a radio station disc jockey, a programming vice president trying to convince a network president, or anyone else, it should have an easily understood concept. Sometimes this concept is referred to as a log line because it is often what winds up on various program guides that describe a show in 25 words or less. It must be attention getting, informative, pithy, and short—something that both a busy executive and a potential audience member can grasp easily. Many successful log lines start with “when” or “after”—“When a stockbroker's life is threatened, he . . .” or “After the woman has been jilted

by her long-time lover, she . . .” Other things people should think of before pitching an idea to someone else include the following: Who are the main characters? What are the conflicts? How are the conflicts resolved? What is the opening scene? How can the show (or series, or format) be promoted?

It is difficult for a newcomer to get a pitch meeting with a high-level network executive (Koch, Kosberg, & Norman, 2004, pp. 81–88). Usually, executives want to deal with well-established people. Those without a well-established track record are apt to meet with low-level executives who then pitch the idea to their bosses. Often it takes a telephone prepitch to get into the door. The seller gives a very brief rundown after which the programming executive may tell the seller that there is no interest in the idea or may invite the person in for a more detailed pitch. On the other hand, some programming executives demand that their staff members come up with frequent program ideas—in essence, doing an internal pitch as often as once a week.

If the pitch is from an external production company, there will usually be a number of sellers present—perhaps the company owner, a writer, and a producer—and there may be one or several people listening to the pitch. After the initial small talk, the sellers have about 5 minutes to lay out their characters, sample scenes, and other elements that show that they have a solid proposal. The buyers ask questions for which the sellers should have answers. If all goes well, the buyers will ask for more information, perhaps a treatment that further outlines the idea or even a sample script. The buyer’s and seller’s lawyers will draw up a contract, and the development process will move along with the buyer picking up much, but not all, of the cost. The project can be axed at many points, but if it makes it through several paper-based stages, the seller will probably be asked to produce a pilot consisting of one produced show that is supposed to be representative of the series.

Once a pilot is produced, it is tested, usually in a small auditorium. A group of people are shown the program and asked to fill out questionnaires or in other ways give their opinions. The ideal audience for testing most programs is a cross-section of Americans, so testing sites are often set up at places where tourists from all over the country are likely to congregate—Las Vegas, Universal Studios, Hollywood Boulevard. Testing is a nervous time for the project creators because a bad test can kill their dreams. Sometimes a test will show that the concept is sound but the idea needs some tweaking. The network will ask the show creator (which may be itself) to make some changes and then test the program again (Perebinossoff et al., 2005, pp. 99–121).

The type of development just described is common for broadcast and cable TV series and for some radio programs. There are variations for other types of programs and distribution outlets; for example, a network movie of the week would not have a pilot because it is not a series. Radio is more concerned with developing format ideas

rather than developing individual programs. Syndicators often pitch material that has already been produced but that they have packaged in an original manner. The main form of testing for radio involves having people who are regular listeners assess music to help the station programmers decide what music to include and when it is time to stop playing certain selections because people are tired of them. The Internet is still the “Wild West”; on the one hand, individuals can put up programs that exhibit self-expression while on the other, traditional program providers are using methods similar to what they have used in the past for broadcast and cable networks.

The end result of conventional development, however, is a decision, usually made by high-level executives from programming, sales, research, promotion, and other areas. They consider all the programs that made it to the pilot stage (or all the possible formats or syndicated packages) with an eye to their quality and the needs of the particular media outlet they are programming. They decide which programs are worthy of being put on the air, which might be held in abeyance so that they can be replacements for shows that fail, and which should be dropped all together. For many networks, the most intense decision-making time is in the spring, when they are deciding programs for the fall schedule, but nowadays programming decisions are made year round. Often executives work with a large chart that shows all the time periods they need to program. The names of all the shows, both proposed new programs and series from the past that are being considered for continuation, are often on magnetic cards, and the executives move them around the chart until they are happy with the overall schedule. Sometimes a program will be eliminated, not because it is a weak show but because it does not fit the scheduling needs of the network (Adams, 1993).

In this manner, the development process is tied to and flows into scheduling. New programs have ostensibly been shaped and perfected and are ready for public consumption. Now the executives must decide the best way for all their programs to find their audience.

Scheduling Strategies

Most scheduling strategies are designed to attract and keep an audience. They are undertaken in an attempt to beat the competition and also pair segments of the public with the type of entertainment and information they will enjoy. As scheduling strategies have evolved, they have been given interesting names, such as dayparting, counterprogramming, hammocking, tentpoling, bridging, supersizing, blunting, stacking, stunting, crossprogramming, stripping, and repurposing (see Figure 96.1).

Dayparting is undertaken by many media programmers. People’s needs, activities, and moods change throughout the day, and dayparting takes this into account by changing what is programmed and how it is presented (Blumenthal & Goodenough, 1991, p. 111).

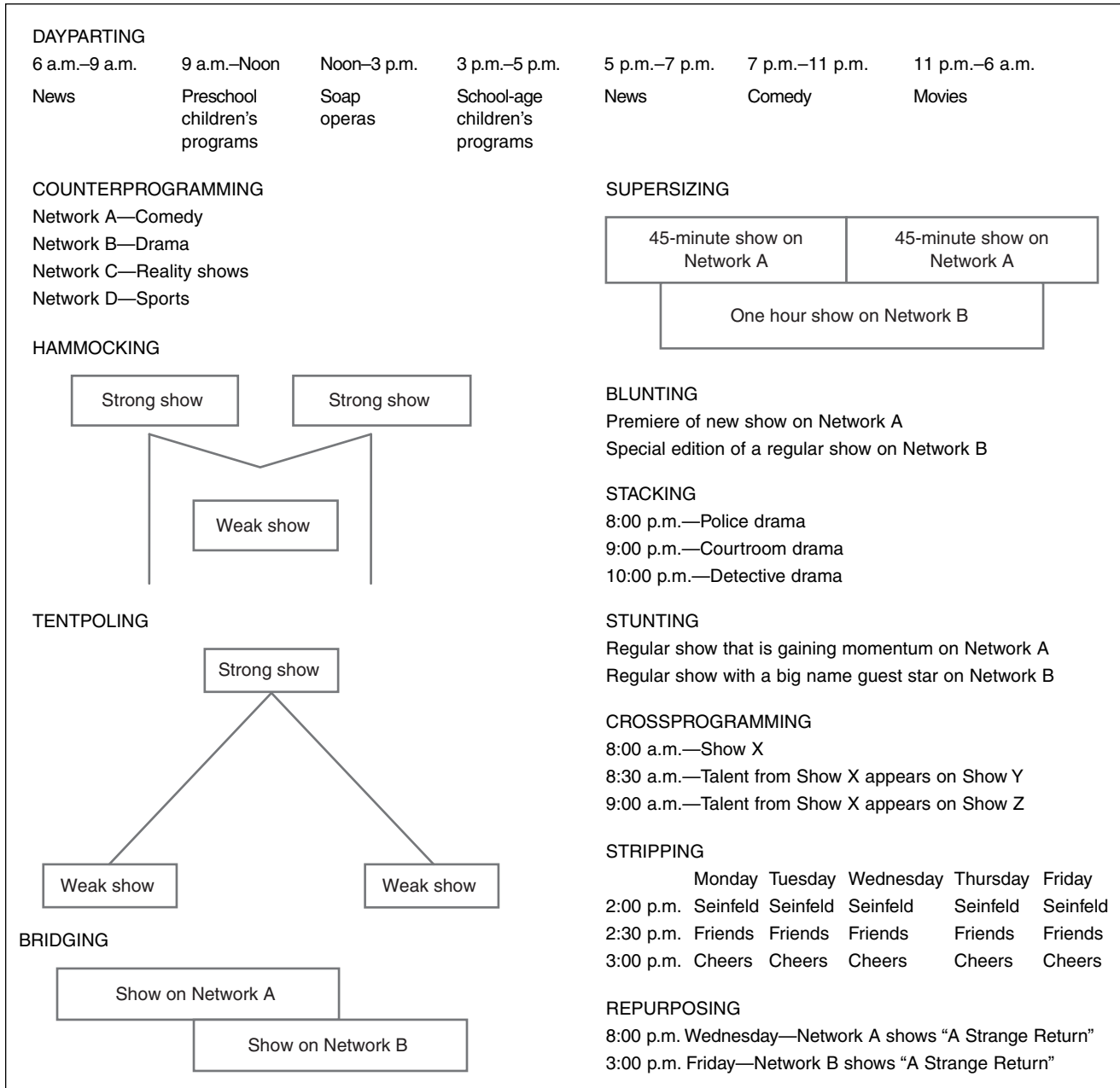


Figure 96.1 Scheduling Strategies

When people first wake up in the morning, they want information to help them plan the day. As a result, radio stations air more news, weather, and traffic in the morning than during other parts of the day. Because most people go to work, they do not have a great deal of time to spend with media. So early-morning TV shows are divided into short segments. Early morning is also a good time to program for children as they often watch TV while their parents get ready for work. As the morning wears on, people who spend time with the media can do so in a more leisurely fashion, so radio is heavier on music, while game shows, talk shows, and soaps dominate TV. Late-afternoon is

another good time to program for children, and radio's evening drive time has modest increases in news and traffic information. Evening is the main time for leisurely TV viewing, and segmented talk shows are popular as people are getting ready for bed. Weekend programming is different from weekday programming, generally containing more sports. Of course, some channels don't daypart as much as others. Children's channels such as Disney and Nickelodeon program to children all day long, but they daypart to some extent in that they program to different ages at different times. For example, they target preschoolers during the time that other children are in school.

Counterprogramming involves airing a form or genre of programming that has a different appeal than what the competition is airing. For example, if NBC is airing dramas on Tuesday nights, CBS might offer comedies, ABC sports, and Fox reality shows. In the days of three or four networks, counterprogramming was fairly easy, and although certain blockbusters such as *I Love Lucy*, *The Cosby Show*, and *Dallas* tended to attract large portions of the audience, in general each network was able to attract a different group of viewers. Today, it is impossible to counterprogram all the networks that exist, but the broadcast networks still tend to counterprogram each other, and some of the niche cable channels that are similar (i.e., Discovery and A&E) have periods of counterprogramming.

Hammocking involves placing a new or weak program between two strong programs in the hope of strengthening the audience of the middle program because it gets pass-along viewing from the preceding program and anticipated entertainment from the following program. For example, when NBC introduced *A Different World*, it hammocked it between *The Cosby Show* and *Cheers*.

Tentpoling is similar, except that the new or weak program has only one hit program assisting it—usually the program preceding it. For example, in 1976, ABC had the smash hit *Happy Days* at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. When it introduced the spinoff *Laverne and Shirley*, it placed the program at 8:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. Both hammocking and tentpoling are still valid strategies. People are likely to be tempted to watch something that is scheduled close to a favorite show. Even people with digital video recorders (DVRs) get to see teasers for the next show that might entice them to set their DVR to record it the next week.

Bridging is a technique used by one network to keep audience members from sampling a program on another network. The most effective way is to have something exciting under way when the competitor's program starts. If one network starts an hour program at 8:30 p.m., knowing that the competition is starting a strong program at 9:00 p.m., the first network may be able to have people so involved in its program that they do not switch networks.

Supersizing is a more recent version of bridging that involves adding 10 or 15 minutes to a show in order to bridge the start of a competitor's show. In 2003, NBC aired supersized versions of *Friends* and *Will & Grace* in an effort to cut into CBS's *Survivor* audience.

Blunting is a cousin of bridging and supersizing in that its purpose is to keep people from sampling the fare of the competition. When one network knows that another is planning to launch an important series, the first network can blunt the introduction by having a particularly attractive element in its own programming. For example, in 2001, NBC programmed a special edition of *Fear Factor* to try to hurt the premier of CBS's *The Amazing Race*.

Stacking is a tactic used to try to establish audience flow—keeping audience members from one program to another (Webster, 2006). Usually, it is undertaken by

programming shows that will attract people with a particular interest for a considerable block of time. PBS has frequently stacked three cooking shows in a row on a Saturday.

Stunting involves inserting entertainment elements not normally associated with a series into a show to obtain a ratings spike. Sometimes this is undertaken to blunt a competitive show, but it may also be done because competition is picking up momentum, because it is a major ratings period, or because, for whatever reason, the show needs an injection of audience appeal. One way to stunt is to have a big name movie personality, sports star, or other celebrity appear in the show. Another is to program a multipart program with cliffhangers at the end of each episode. Weddings on TV are always popular and good fodder for stunting. A major stunt occurred in March of 1980, when, in the last episode of the season, J. R. Ewing, the unscrupulous oil magnate of *Dallas*, was shot by an unknown assailant and rushed to the hospital. For many months, fans wondered who had shot J. R. The first episode of the fall season, the one that revealed the shooter, was not shown until November 1980, and the fervor was such that it had one of the highest ratings in TV history (Garner, 2002, pp. 34–37).

Crossprogramming is an interconnection of two shows for mutual benefit, generally involving shows produced by the same production company or network. Usually, it involves a storyline that starts on one show and ends on another. For example, in November 1991, NBC's *The Golden Girls* opened the Saturday evening programming with an episode about a hurricane that was about to hit Miami, where the Golden Girls characters lived. The show after *The Golden Girls* was *Empty Nest*, and one of the Golden Girls cast members dropped in on that show to warn the characters about the hurricane. During the third show of the night, *Nurses*, another Golden Girls cast member volunteered to help at a local hospital. All three programs were produced by Witt/Thomas/Harris, making the interconnection possible.

Stripping is a strategy used mostly by local stations and cable networks wherein episodes of the same program are shown at the same time every weekday and sometimes also during the weekend. It is particularly common when a station or network shows reruns of a series that has been shown before, on either a broadcast or a cable network. An example would be USA network's stripping reruns of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* at 7:00 p.m. each evening. It is a useful strategy because audience members know when and where to find a favorite program.

Repurposing is a glorified method of rerunning. Rerunning usually refers to repeating a program on the same network where it was originally shown or reshowing it much later when it is syndicated. Repurposing involves rerunning a show on a different outlet shortly after its initial airing to maximize the show's worth. For example, in 1999, ABC's *Once and Again* was aired on Lifetime just a couple of days after its ABC airing. The term *repurposing*

is used when programs are streamed on the Internet shortly after being aired on a network or station.

This list certainly does not exhaust possible programming strategies. Many new programming ideas are surfacing as a result of media forms (the Internet, iPods, cell phones) that allow people to access programs when they want to see them, sometimes referred to as video-on-demand. In part, conventional media must develop programming strategies to compete with these newer media, and in part, they must join in with the new distribution forms and be part of devising strategies to bring product to people in new ways.

Evaluating Programming

Part of a programmer's job is evaluating programs and scheduling strategies. If a program is not obtaining an audience, is it because of inherent flaws within the program, or is it because the program is running at a bad time? What should a programmer do when a particular show or time period is not measuring up to expectations?

Historically, the most prevalent form of evaluation has been a body count in the form of TV audience measurement data from Nielsen (2007) and radio data from Arbitron (2007). These companies, which operate independently from stations and networks, use sampling methodology to determine how many people are watching or listening to particular programs or dayparts. A series that does not score well in the Nielsen or Arbitron ratings will be scrutinized carefully.

The series, whether new or old, will be examined to see if it lacks focus. Sometimes producers of shows get wrapped up in new projects and don't keep a close eye on previous shows, which then begin to drift off course. Internal bickering and story lines that are too convoluted can also lead to lack of focus. Sometimes all the programmer needs to do is sit down with the principals and discuss the problem openly so they can rectify it.

In a similar vein, there can be particular elements of a show, such as the demeanor of the lead actor, which are turning people off. Sending the show out for more testing often pinpoints the problem, and it can then be addressed. This is true not only for comedies and dramas but also for news shows where a particular anchor may be dragging down the show or for radio where the audience does not respond well to a certain disc jockey or talk show host.

Exhaustion is another reason that a series might fall in the ratings. Some series that have been on for many years simply run out of fresh ideas. Adding a new character (such as a grouchy uncle) to the series might help, as might bringing on some new writers. But sometimes a series has simply run its course, and it is time for programmers to let it bow out gracefully, as was done with many shows ranging from *M*A*S*H* to *Sex and the City* (Garner, 2002, pp. 38–43).

Yielding to exhaustion is particularly appropriate if the show is no longer in tune with social changes. *The Brady*

Bunch, with its traditional family values and lightweight adventures appealed to audiences when it was launched in 1969. But during the 1970s, networks, in line with social changes, began programming grittier programs with more adult themes, such as *All in the Family*. Audiences lost their appetite for *The Brady Bunch*, and it was retired from network TV in 1974 (Garner, 2002, pp. 20–27).

Sometimes a show can have high ratings, but they are the wrong demographics—not the coveted 18 to 34 that advertisers prefer. This is likely to happen with a series that is on for a long time. The original audience members would have been the desirable demographic, but as they stick with the show they grow older and younger people are not attracted to the show. Sometimes, adding elements that will appeal to younger viewers helps. If not, a programmer needs to make a decision whether to cancel the series or whether to stay with it and try to attract advertisers who target the older demographic (Mares & Woodard, 2007).

A show can be aired in the wrong time period. Certainly, trying out a children's show at midnight would not yield valid results, but airing a new, unknown series against a very popular series can lead to low ratings that have nothing to do with the content of the show. For example, Fox scheduled *Family Guy* on Thursday nights against *Friends*, where it understandably garnered abysmal ratings. Fox took the show off the air in 2000 and then put it back on Tuesday nights but coupled it with *Greg the Bunny*, and it did not do well. So Fox canceled it once again in 2002. It was the loyalty of its fans and its high DVD sales that made Fox reconsider, finally bring it back in 2005 and resting it peacefully before *King of the Hill*. Common sense would say that if a show is on at the wrong time period, a programmer should change the time period. However, that's not always possible without damaging some other show or disrupting the entire schedule. It is not a good idea to relocate shows frequently because the audience loses track of them and only die-hard fans will make the effort to find them.

A new program may fail to gain an audience because it was not properly promoted and people are not aware of it. If the programmer feels that this is the case, the network or station can institute a strong promotion campaign (Walker & Eastman, 2000). However, if the real problem is something inherently wrong with the program, the promotion campaign will amount to nothing more than a costly expense that does no good.

Evaluation is an ongoing process. Although ratings are the most important factor, the awards (especially Emmys) that a show wins can figure into the evaluation process, as can faith in the show creator, feelings that the show is filling a useful social purpose, and other gut reactions of the programming team. In fact, gut reactions of programmers have been responsible for many successes on radio and TV. Good programmers keep an ear to the ground, an eye on the future, a shoulder to the wheel, a finger on the pulse of the public, and their feet on the ground. Dealing with all those

contortions is one reason programmers turn over rather rapidly. But it is an exciting job and one that can have many visible positive ramifications.

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MEDIA CONVERGENCE

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People stood, pushed up against an outdoor stage among a crowd of rowdy fans on the Portland, Oregon, waterfront waiting for the Lady Miss Kirby to appear (the former lead singer of the late '80s to early '90s pop disco group Deee-Lite). The audience probably did not expect to be confronted with a moment of media convergence, if they even knew of that term. It was summer, it was a street festival, and friends were celebrating and enjoying the beautiful evening. And there it was, the Lady and the Mac.

Situated center stage sat a Mac laptop that controlled the entire performance. Through that computer, Kirby told the band when to start, added additional sound effects, and managed the playlist for the evening. She also recorded the live show for potential future distribution via multiple social networking sites. Kirby promised that she had rehearsed and practiced with the contraption, but she encountered several glitches, and some sound-tech support raced to the stage, worked their magic, and got the system up and running. With the electronics functioning, Kirby finally mustered the requisite computer skills apparently demanded of a modern pop diva trying to make a comeback and belted out a stellar performance for her rowdy fans.

The convergence of computers, music, and live performance did not end there. While prancing about the stage in her true diva style, Kirby told her fans that all the new songs she would perform that evening were already available on her MySpace page. People in the crowd with iPhones or other similar devices called up her page during breaks between songs to check out what was available. She also gave a shout out to all the camcorder operators she spied in the audience, challenging each of them to post their recordings to YouTube

as soon as possible. No longer did Kirby seek traditional routes to publicize her work. In an age of media convergence, she did not need traditional record labels to reach her fans. Given her outlandish outfits and the risqué direction her music had taken, one could assume that being free of traditional outlets, she could let her creative juices take her in whatever direction she wished, even if it included a song about oral sex titled "Baby go down on me." In a more controlled, regulated industry where the Federal Communication Commission deems wardrobe malfunctions that reveal a nipple for a half a second obscene, such a risqué and adult-themed song might not be possible for a pop diva. In a world where that diva can bypass studio executives, much more is possible.

While this simple vignette may seem odd and uninteresting to nonfans of Deee-Lite and the Lady Miss Kirby, it illustrates much of what media convergence brings to the media landscape. First, computers are infiltrating all forms of media, including live music performances. Second, many artists, not just musicians and singers, are using computers to sidestep traditional venues to get their wares out. Third, consumers use easily obtainable electronics to produce their own content, and finally, all this is easily distributable via inexpensive outlets facilitated by the World Wide Web.

This opening example, too, may seem frivolous, but what it helps illustrate is that in an atmosphere of convergence, fans and artists are feeling much more powerful. Each has the tools to go around traditional gatekeepers to produce or seek out content suited to their own specific needs and interests. Conversely though, convergence imposes limitations and steep learning curves on content producers and consumers in terms of mastering new technology and new distribution outlets. Kirby's miscues with

using a computer to run her show highlight this problem. Combine these limitations with a well-healed media industry that desires to cash in with new users and producers who seek to entertain and be entertained, to inform and be informed, and a frenzy of consumer, producer, and corporate issues ensue. Another concern is that the term *convergence* may be so overused that it has little meaning. Gordon (2003) argues that the term is being overused in so many different contexts that it has “lost its value in focusing discussions on journalism and the news media” (p. 60). Still, the metaphorical power of the term allows observers and critics the ability to understand the intersections between new and old media and how those intersections are changing the media landscape.

This chapter will tackle the admittedly fuzzy concept of media convergence. First, it is important to examine the various definitions of the concept. After defining convergence, the above example of Miss Kirby reveals three important areas to examine in relation to convergence. First, how are consumers and artists or content producers faring in an atmosphere of convergence? Next, how are media companies responding, and finally, how do educators prepare their students for a rapidly changing media world from both a consumer and critically aware citizen perspective and the perspective of students who hope to make a living working in the media in a convergent environment?

Defining Convergence

There is no one singular definition of convergence. According to Gordon (2003), the term had its origins in math and science. Gordon indicates that it is unlikely that we will ever know for sure who first applied the term with regard to media, but what seems to be a very early occurrence came in Pool's 1983 book, *Technologies of Freedom*, where he discussed convergence modes. Convergence modes were the coming together of conversations, entertainment, news, and other media, all delivered electronically. Since then, prolific use of the term has made a single definition of the concept difficult. Instead, most scholars and media critics writing about convergence parse the term into a variety of smaller ideas that are more easily defined.

Henry Jenkins (2001) highlights the difficulty in defining convergence when he wrote, “Part of the confusion about media convergence stems from the fact that when people talk about it, they're actually describing at least five processes” (p. 93). Those processes according to Jenkins are (1) technological convergence, where various forms of media find their way into digital formats; (2) economic convergence, which is highlighted by vertical and horizontal integration among media companies; (3) social or organic convergence, defined as what's happening inside a user's head as he or she learns to navigate new technological and information environments; (4) cultural convergence,

which emerges as new forms of storytelling develop from the intersection of various media; and (5) global convergence, as various cultures' media making collide to create a new sense of McLuhan's “global village.” Jenkins, in his text *Convergence Culture* (2006), focuses mostly on the new storytelling abilities we are discovering and the newly empowered consumer in convergence culture. Others tend to define convergence more narrowly and focus solely on journalism and newsgathering or on the media corporation consolidation happening among once separate media organizations.

Gordon offers two views of the term. First, he focuses on technology convergence in terms of content creation, distribution, and consumption. In each of these areas, the digital revolution influences how the media operate. Most content is now produced with computers, distributed and consumed in digital forms, such as being able to view last night's episode of your favorite ABC sitcom via the Internet and your personal computer. Gordon's other view is similar to Jenkins's. Gordon speaks of five areas of convergence: ownership, tactics, structure, information gathering, and presentation or storytelling. Ownership convergence is one most consumers and media scholars are aware of because it concerns the rash of media mergers in the industry. Companies are merging in both a horizontal and a vertical manner. They are acquiring more production outlets while also acquiring more distribution outlets, many of which are digitally based. Tactical convergence involves partnerships between two previously separate media organizations, such as a newspaper and a television station, while remaining separately owned. This form of convergence has the potential to benefit both entities in terms of sharing resources and information as well as opening up new ways to sell multiple advertising packages across different media platforms. But employees stay focused primarily on the main media format in which they work. Structural convergence takes tactical convergence one step further by actually creating merged jobs that require employees to cross into different mediums, such as having a print reporter actually produce a video piece to be aired or posted on a Web site. Information-gathering convergence brings together the tools of the trade from various mediums, where now a print reporter might carry along a digital camera or a digital video camera in addition to a notebook and pen to gather information for a story. The purpose is for journalists or information gatherers to obtain multiple types of content for multiple uses. Finally, with the almost unlimited space that digital storytelling offers, new forms of storytelling are likely to emerge in order to take advantage of this extra space. With the limit of space in print, the inverted pyramid dominates the way a story is told, but that might change in a digital environment when space is limited only by storage and bandwidth, when a written story can encompass thousands of words rather than a few hundred typical of a *USA TODAY* story and

could also be accompanied by a video clip that does not conform to a standard short broadcast news story. Instead of a quick lead-in by a talking head and a 90-second explanation, short videos lasting 5 minutes and longer are possible. New storytelling formats will emerge, and consumers could benefit in terms of becoming better informed. Alternatively, consumers may not be able to keep up with the growing demands on their time and may skip new formats in favor of a quick digital form of something like *USA TODAY* that is delivered to their e-mail inbox every morning.

Dupagne and Garrison (2006) offer a model of convergence that differs from the previous approaches discussed. The authors break convergence into four areas that have varying degrees of influence on each other and on the process of convergence: economic convergence, technological convergence, regulatory convergence, and convergence effects. According to the visual/graphic model of convergence offered, effects are produced by all three of the other categories, yet the model indicates that convergence effects have no influence over the others. This may be the case now, but as consumers take advantage of the opportunities that convergence provides, they will certainly influence economics and regulations, and with their purchasing and usage power, consumers will have a hand in which technologies thrive and which go the way of the 8-track. The model demonstrates that while there is no simple way to define convergence, there are many interrelated components that help understand convergence.

Menon (2006) offers one final example of how convergence has been defined by focusing simply on the technological aspect of convergence. Digitalization and integration of platforms, contents, and production processes in a global context are examined. Menon concludes that while convergence may be on the minds of many, in reality the convergence process on a global scale is only in its infancy. Developed countries have access to a wealth of technology and resources, but many other countries do not. Furthermore, no one standard for compatibility exists, making it difficult to bring many media elements and technologies together. Much more work in terms of technological access and compatibility needs to be done in order to realize convergence throughout the world.

Jenkins, Gordon, Dupagne and Garrison, and Menon offer comprehensive and overlapping definitions of the term *convergence*. Jenkins focuses most on entertainment and storytelling, particularly among fan cultures and the benefits convergence brings, while Gordon focuses more specifically on journalism and how convergence requires new skills for reporters and new opportunities for consumers to stay informed. Dupagne and Garrison offer a visual model that depicts the interrelations among various aspects of convergence, and Menon, with an eye toward technology as the backbone of convergence, indicates that whatever convergence might mean, we are far from living in a technologically converged global world.

There are many competing definitions of the term *convergence*, but most important to consider is how consumers are faring in an atmosphere of convergence. With the need to be informed more important than ever, are media consumers, are citizens, getting what they need? Or, as McChesney (2007) argues in *Communication Revolution*, are consumers poorly served by an increasingly consolidated media environment where good political journalism suffers and an age of infotainment rules? Can we take advantage of this moment, this “critical juncture” or “communication revolution” of changes in our public communication systems, to build a better, more robust democratic society? Consumers may not always be creating or be drawn to highbrow intellectual content, but the newfound ability that convergence provides, of consumers becoming more active creators of content, is encouraging.

The Consumer Turns Producer

Many argue that the consolidation convergence brings limits consumers and consumer choice, but lower entry costs and creatively active citizens and consumers are bringing much diversity to media content. Weblogs, or simply blogs, are here to stay and are perfect examples of how beneficial convergence can be for a community.

Take Steve Patterson's *Urban Review* (www.urbanreviewstl.com), a development-minded urban-oriented blog in St. Louis, Missouri, as an example. There are likely many community blogs to consider, but your author has witnessed *Urban Review's* popularity firsthand while attending a Media Forum conference held in St. Louis. First and foremost, Patterson has become a citizen journalist covering city hall, with a particular interest in development and zoning, in ways that local news outlets used to do. The buyout of local independent papers by large chains hurts local news coverage. Although the chains usually promised before taking over control of local papers that there would be little change, they usually cut expensive local staff and replaced local content with cheaper, nationally syndicated columns and more advertising. It was simply cheaper and more profitable to run a local paper in this manner, which made stockholders and Wall Street happy, but did not necessarily serve the local community well. Of course, citizen journalism has its limitations in comparison with typical objective journalism standards, but Patterson's contribution to community knowledge is vast, and he has been recognized by a variety of more traditional media outlets for his good work. *St. Louis Magazine* has recognized the blog on various occasions, including naming Patterson the best blogger in 2008. A local St. Louis alternative weekly paper, *The Riverfront Times*, named the blog the best civic-minded blog in 2005, and the blog won readers' choice for best blog in 2006 and 2007. The free benefit that Patterson provides to the community creates an easily searchable visual and

verbal archive and history of significant events regarding progress and development in St. Louis.

One limitation clearly is the potential for biased interpretation of events and ideas. Patterson reveals up front to readers of his blog the lens he uses to guide his posts. He is a new urbanist, who among other things predicts the end of *suburbia* (a term he borrows from a documentary of the same name) sooner rather than later. Regular followers of his blog know his bias up front. What they get in return is someone passionate about development and city politics, who bothers to attend as many council meetings as he can, makes sunshine requests, and then provides that information to the community. Patterson makes a very small amount of money via advertising on his site, and the greatest cost to him is his time in terms of attending meetings and following important project proposals in the community, time that he would give anyway.

When Patterson took on the local Alderwoman Jennifer Florida (D-15) over the approval of a very suburban-styled fast-food restaurant in a distinctly urban neighborhood, he shook up the political structure and demonstrated how what happens in the blogosphere often makes its way into more traditional outlets. *St. Louis Magazine* covered Patterson with a short article about the flap with Alderwoman Florida, complete with a creative graphic depicting Florida and Patterson as characters in a rock-'em-sock-'em robot game, a game Patterson eventually won, as the fast-food restaurant was never built. Many in the community post reactions and alternative viewpoints to his blog, a blog where he only edits posts for obscenity and the like. During the conflict with Alderwoman Florida, many posted that he was no journalist and he had no right to be harping on the story. He was invited on local talk radio to discuss the issue, and he made it clear that of course he wasn't a journalist, he was a concerned citizen with a wonderful new tool for free speech—a blog. These new tools provided Patterson and fellow concerned citizens the ability to stand up to politicians and corporations and be heard. Previous avenues of attending meetings and voicing opposition, while helpful, pale in comparison with the publicity and reach that a blog provides.

Patterson crossed over into two other mediums, radio and print, from his popular *Urban Review* blog, which gets an average of over 80,000 hits a month. His prolific posting before and after a stroke keeps regular viewers of his site well-informed about the happenings at city hall regarding development in a way that the local paper does not, and since most do not have the time or the passion to attend often long and boring council meetings, his blog clearly provides a service to the community. Furthermore, because space limitations are much less pressing, he can provide detail that other media simply cannot. His blog also demonstrates the synergy that often occurs between blogs and more traditional forms of media, such as radio and print. And having joined the board of the St. Louis chapter

of the Society of Professional Journalists, Patterson will certainly learn about journalism while also influencing how we define journalism and journalists in the future.

Patterson has become handy with a digital video camera. With that camera and the advent of YouTube, he has been able to illustrate many problems and opportunities in St. Louis. His videography may not be of broadcast quality, but the images he captures reveal problems such as lack of handicap ramps and access, unfriendly pedestrian environments, and ill-planned development. He has also posted at least two “gotchas.” First, he taped a restaurant owner shouting obscenities at him as he complained about all the street parking near a restaurant taken up with valet parking cones, and second, he caught on tape a city official parking illegally on several occasions to do business more conveniently.

The *River Front Times* has called him a town gadfly, and perhaps he is. Patterson has gained a much enjoyed local notoriety that brings more attention to his Web site and his point of view. Some reader posts to his blog criticize Patterson for fueling controversy when compromise might work better. But what he does illustrate is that concerned citizens have access to the tools to get messages to the public in ways that they never have before. However, what has not changed is that those concerned citizens must still be active citizens, significantly involved in the community, if they are to have a message at all. Patterson must take the time to attend council and community meetings, to stay abreast of proposed development and zoning regulations, and to keep up with the local political climate if he is to maintain a blog that attracts the numbers that he does.

Patterson's blog is but one example in many of how consumers are becoming producers of content. Civic mindedness is not the only impetus that energizes consumers' creative juices. Jenkins (2006), in his text *Convergence Culture*, highlights a variety of other avenues that various fan cultures and media consumers are taking advantage of, including inexpensive audio and video production and easy distribution methods such as YouTube and other Internet sites. Jenkins outlines how fans of reality shows used the social networking capability of the Internet to spoil the popular reality show *Survivor*. In addition, fan cultures of many different films and shows, most notably *Star Wars*, have produced alternative takes on well-known stories as well as clever spoofs such as Chad Vader or, though perhaps more mainstream, *Family Guy's* “Blue Harvest” episode.

According to an interview on the DVD edition, *Family Guy's* episode was sanctioned by the *Star Wars* franchise, and there is an interview conducted by the creator of *Family Guy* with the *Star Wars* guru, George Lucas. Not all spoofs are sanctioned though, and many media companies, including Lucas's media enterprises, explore ways in which they can maintain control over their intellectual property while still encouraging fan participation. At times, media companies have used their deep pockets and

media lawyers to threaten consumers with law suits if they infringe on copyrighted works, even if the infringement is only intended as spoof or homage.

There are countless examples on a local or national scale that illustrate similar concepts, but a local civic-minded example was chosen purposely to highlight the benefits to local communities that blogs provide. The blogosphere, when attended to by savvy users, provides information outlets with great benefits. From the bloggers' side, they find a way to express themselves and their passions in ways unavailable just a few years ago. And a personal benefit to Patterson was the outpouring of community support after his stroke. Patterson truly has become a fixture in the local community, and his recent accolade of best blog of the year according to *St. Louis Magazine* demonstrates clearly that the new and old media are not just colliding but mixing in terms of function and content.

Cable television arguably began an era of narrowcasting, where the audience was segmented into specific taste groups. Viewers could tune into music videos, BET (Black Entertainment Television), Spanish-language channels, cooking shows, sports, and politics—the options are endless. Corporate media producers, however, select the options that viewers encounter. With the advent of digital media, consumers are further segmented into different taste groups. Academics can tune into podcasts of lectures at scholarly conferences that they are unable to attend; editorial cartoonists, such as the creative team behind *JibJab*, can animate and distribute their work with limited obstacles; and everyone via social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace can make friends across the world and learn of different cultures and different viewpoints with a few simple clicks of the mouse on the computer.

Certainly, the other examples of fan participation are not as beneficial from a civic-minded point of view, but they are examples of media consumers becoming media producers. No longer are consumers relegated to being passively perched on their couches at home letting the latest entertainment offerings wash over them. No longer must consumers restrict their participation in community affairs to reading the local newspaper and perhaps writing a letter to the editor—they can now participate much more actively and contribute to the public dialogue on countless topics. Unfortunately, countering such good examples of new media converging with old, such new opportunity for media consumers are corporations that seek to co-opt the process and profit.

Corporate Convergence

Ben Bagdikian, in the latest revision of his now classic work *The New Media Monopoly* (2004), argues that the consistent movement toward more and more corporate media mergers hurts consumers by limiting the options they have for obtaining information. Mergers and corporatization also

damage the media business in general by limiting competition that might improve the overall quality of media. Bagdikian's text is a classic, having been updated multiple times as new information and mergers come to light. Bagdikian chronicles how media mergers reduce options for consumers and inhibit honest reporting. The text provides countless examples to support the claim that consumers and democracy are not served well by a growing conglomerated corporate media. Many corporations whose main business is not media are beginning to own the media companies that should be investigating unfair corporate practices. As Bagdikian argues, these multitiered corporations are often able to squash negative coverage before it blossoms. Although the text is not specifically convergence focused, it provides an important perspective on the current state of the media business. Croteau and Hoynes's *The Business of Media: Corporate Media and the Public Interest* (2001) builds on Bagdikian's argument. The authors examine corporate media through the lens of a market model versus a public sphere model of mass communication. In the market model, mass communication is guided by the overwhelming drive to deliver large audiences to advertisers via programming, including news programming. The public sphere model is guided by the general notion of "public interest," with the underlying assumption that having an informed citizenry is better for democracy overall. Croteau and Hoynes's belief is that the corporate media business environment fueled by media mergers values the market model over the public sphere model and in turn does a disservice to citizens by not serving the public interest. The question being asked is "Does Wall Street's demand for profits trump the need for a well-informed public in a democracy?"

Stephen Quinn (2005) views the conflict between market and public interest differently. The competing interests, he argues, are between a business model and a journalistic model. The business model sees convergence as a great opportunity to cross into multiplatform publishing and broadcasting, allowing for a repurposing of content from different media, a savings in resources, and a greater audience reach, which turns into greater advertising revenues and potential savings in terms of being able to reduce staff. Staff reductions may not be good for the journalism employment market, but proponents of the business model argue that they are better able to serve their customers and the public by providing multiple options for accessing information to consumers. The journalistic model sees convergence as a chance for reporters and other content providers to perform their craft better by giving them access to multiple storytelling methods and venues. Multimedia formats engage viewers more, allowing journalists and storytellers to more creatively approach their craft while providing better service and better stories.

Convergence, be it via horizontal or vertical media mergers or via multiplatform storytelling, has not always produced positive results, from either a market or a public sphere perspective. Gracie Lawson-Borders (2006) in

Media Organizations and Convergence: Case Studies of Media Convergence Pioneers indicates that “convergence pioneers” struggle to operate in a converged media environment and that the benefits of convergence are not always equal for the different converging groups. Differing cultures in the various news-gathering environments created conflicts and confusion as different news cycles and deadline structures clashed. Another case study on what is believed to be the first occurrence in the nation of convergence between a newspaper and a television station, both located in Oklahoma City, revealed little benefit for either entity. The authors of the case study, Stan Ketterer Weir, Smethers, and Back (2004), indicate that there was some useful collaboration between print and television journalists but collaboration was often difficult because previously these journalists were in competition for stories, scoops, and sources. Most helpful in the collaboration was the ability of television new stories to be able to point viewers to the newspaper for further information on a story. Such a result, given the time limitations of the broadcast medium and the relatively greater space availability of print, is predictable but also a clear theme within the convergence that consumers should expect. A video news package can only accomplish so much in 2 minutes, but the benefit of convergence may be in making it easier for news consumers to find additional information on topics of interest.

Television, according to John Caldwell (2004), has always been well positioned for convergence because of its well-developed infrastructure and networks. NBC, for example, was foresighted enough to invest in Tivo-style technology in order to have a hand in and understand a potential threat to their industry. Furthermore, television’s foray into the Web world succeeds by amplifying viewer interest in programming well after an episode of a favored series has been aired. Peruse any popular series Web site, and you can learn countless tidbits about the various characters and the actors who play them. Additional detail and backstory are often available, and if you missed an episode of a popular series, you can view it online at your own convenience, with limited commercial interruptions. ABC even provides ready-made widgets for free that viewers can add to their own blog, MySpace page, or Web site. These widgets may be free to viewers, but they also provide free advertising and linkage to what ABC is trying to sell. Television’s approach to convergence is increasingly sophisticated and demands a much more educated and critical consumer to respond critically and to participate actively in the process.

The one wild card for media corporations is regulation. The rules for cross ownership have been relaxed significantly recently, which fueled mergers and various forms of convergence. Consumers can now get television from their phone company or phone service from their cable provider, and satellite television companies are now offering Internet service. High-definition digital television is increasing in popularity and availability, and which companies are able

to own and offer the array of services consumers demand is in flux. Content regulation continues to be of concern. Janet Jackson’s wardrobe malfunction at the 2004 Super Bowl garnered a steep fine that, as of this writing, was reversed in court, but with a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that finds a half-a-second view of a breast indecent, what might be on the horizon for all the new home-grown media producers who show much more skin and deal with more adult content? Will the corporations that provide the Internet services that allow content to be distributed be liable for content that the FCC deems obscene? CBS argued that they did not know that the artists would be performing as they did, but the FCC still found them liable. The court that overturned the fine indicated that the FCC was being inconsistent and arbitrary, but the issue is not settled. Regulating a converged media environment will present significant challenges moving forward.

Teaching for Convergence

Educators in journalism, broadcasting, and communication programs face a challenge in preparing their students for careers in the industry. First, considering the rapid changes that convergence brings, keeping up with the pace in academic institutions that are programmed to move more slowly and deliberately is problematic. Second, making room for new courses and new technologies in already packed curricula is painstaking, and finally, in a more general sense, how do educators prepare the students of today and tomorrow to approach a converged media environment in a critical and thoughtful manner?

Traditionally, journalism curriculums are broken into tracks. There are print and broadcasting tracks, and perhaps photojournalism. As Elizabeth Birge (2004) points out, with the advent of the World Wide Web, individuals who graduated with multimedia skills were considered to have a leg up on their competition in the job market. For example, a previous student of the author who graduated in the early 2000s landed a job at ABC News in Washington, D.C., in part because, in the words of her supervisor, “She could write, and she had the technological skills to get some audio and video and edit a complete small story package.” No longer is the ability to write well necessarily sufficient to landing a job out of journalism school. The problem becomes then, in curricula that are already packed with course requirements, where do the multimedia courses fit? Some programs are creating multimedia tracks, and most programs are offering some form of converged writing programs and courses that teach students how to write for print, the Web, and broadcast. The need for quality writing will not vanish, but added into the mix now is a host of digital abilities that successful students (job seekers) must master.

A popular phrase in academia currently is “teaching and learning.” The phrase seems to presume that teaching

does not lead to learning, but in an age of convergence, how students learn has morphed significantly. A trip to the library today is markedly different from just a few years ago. Students are just as likely to be scouring Internet databases for articles, information, maps, and data than they are to be found trudging through dusty stacks of journals, books, and documents. Collections are increasingly more digitized and available to a much broader audience than just those who can travel to a particular library to peruse the collection in person. The Library of Congress serves as an exemplar of this phenomenon. Their collections of documents and images, from historical documents to photographs to editorial cartoons, are increasingly available in digital form via the library's Web site (www.loc.gov). Downloading them at your home office desk computer may not be the same experience as having a librarian bringing them to your desk in the stately Jefferson Reading Room in Washington, D.C., but the convenience and the increased access to multiple collections for a broader audience has great potential to produce better learning experiences for students and scholars who have the technology and the training to gain access to these collections. Access may not be available to all though, as many cannot afford the cost of the new digital world, and this fact raises issues of fairness and economic equality. POTS (plain ol' telephone service) was a standard that made telephony cheap and available to everyone to have a level technological playing field, but in a converged digital world, such a standard may be more difficult to achieve.

Conclusion

At the time of this writing, otherwise sane individuals were lining up at Apple stores across the country for the privilege of being one of the first to fork over \$199 for the new iPhone G3. One store in a suburban neighborhood in the Washington, D.C., area that is located in a small open-air shopping area with wide sidewalks and nice parks dealt with people lining up the day before. Many soon-to-be-proud owners of this new gadget spent the night camped out on the sidewalk on a hot July evening, waiting. In a Washingtonpost.com online video report the day the sale began (a perfect example of new storytelling methods), a camper was quoted as saying that he had to be among the first to have the "one little convergence device that does it all." Perhaps Jenkin's admonition that there will not be one little black box that does it all is not quite right. While the iPhone and similar devices cannot do it all yet, they can provide TV, music, movies, Internet, gaming, and phone service, and that seems as close to doing it all as you can get. Having a device that does it all, though, still does not solve what John Durham Peters terms the "intractable problem of communication." New techniques for human communication, be it writing,

the telegraph, or the latest convergence-driven electronic device, do not necessarily improve human communication. Peters (1999) writes,

Communication, in the deeper sense of establishing ways to share one's hours meaningfully with others, is sooner a matter of faith and risk than of technique and method. In the thinner sense of tuning to the same frequency, the concept is ultimately unhelpful as a solution to our most vexing puzzles. It makes knowing into the governor of our dealings with others. It puts the burden on husbands and wives, diplomats and colleagues to dial in: yet once the parties face each other in the same language, the adventure has not ended, but only begun. The dream of communication stops short of all the hard stuff. Sending clear messages might not make for better relations; we might like each other less the more we understood about each other. (p. 30)

Peters is not a Luddite, though. He does believe that new technologies can help:

Certainly people can improve in suaveness, coping and sensitivity. But the conceit that techniques can correct the painful and happy act of our mutual difference not only is misguided, it is based on rare scenarios in which the ambiguity of signs can be fatal. Most of the time we understand each other quite well; we just don't agree. (p. 269)

New communication technologies in a converged media environment provide multiple new avenues for citizens to be informed, for consumers to participate and be entertained and for corporate media to make greater profits, but these new techniques, in Peters words, stop short of the hard stuff. Patterson's blog might provide more information to St. Louis citizens and perhaps keep elected officials more honest; fan cultures and significantly reduced production and distribution costs may provide opportunities for individual participation in mass media in unprecedented ways, and new corporate media conglomerates may garner significant power to profit in this convergent environment, but all these new techniques will not magically fix or improve the age-old process of humans learning to live together.

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