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The *Speech Association of Minnesota Journal* is an annual Spring publication of the Speech Association of Minnesota. The Editorial Advisory Board welcomes manuscripts dealing with a wide variety of issues related to Speech Communications and the Dramatic Arts. Teachers, students and other interested individuals are encouraged to submit to the Editor two copies of their manuscripts for consideration by the Advisory Board. Please note that effective fall, 1978, Mr. Ilkka will assume the duties of Editor. Writers should submit their articles by October 31, 1978, for inclusion in the subsequent volume.

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FILM AS PART OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

by Kathy Holliday and Roger Kjos

Movies have a profound influence on the lives of high school students. It has been estimated that the average student spends more time watching movies than studying in the classroom. According to recent surveys, the average student has seen 7,750 feature length motion pictures either in movie theatres or on television by the time he reaches graduation. But the time he has spent in the classroom is the equivalent of only 5,400 features. ¹

The high school teacher has only to examine the reactions, viewing habits, and tastes of his students to determine what kind of impression is made as a result of the enormous amount of time spent watching movies. From discussions with students both in and outside of class, we have detected that many students have a difficult time differentiating between high quality entertainment and that which specializes in excessive violence, sex, or other forms of sensationalism. In discussing popular contemporary films at the beginning of our film study unit, we have consistently heard rave reviews of low-budget, inferior quality films like *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, *The Student Teachers*, or any of the many "Sasquatch" films. Furthermore, many of the character stereotypes and situations presented in such films as *Billy Jack*, *Walking Tall*, or *The Longest Yard* can have a definite effect on a student's concept of society. Many students come away from these films believing that policemen are intolerant "pigs," that prison officials are corrupt, or that the only way to fight crime is by using violence. In short, we have found that young people in our community have a propensity for merely accepting whatever they see on the imposing silver screen at the neighborhood theater. ²

Like the writer who chooses his words, sentences, and paragraphs carefully, the good filmmaker chooses his shots, sequences, dialogue, and actors carefully. A combination of effective cinematography, good acting, and a meaningful script can generate and manipulate emotional responses, can change points of view, and can influence ways of thinking just as literature can. An untrained viewer not exposed to a serious formal study of film may become especially susceptible to subtle filmic techniques which can produce changes in his way of thinking because of his inability to perceive and acknowledge the potency of these manipulative elements. Since the level of sophistication in viewing and evaluating films is generally not very high and since access to fine films is limited in smaller communities, many high school students are not aware of the power of the director and the camera to manipulate. Film, like television, has become a passive recreational activity in which there is little or no regard for evaluation, analysis, or any other

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form of thoughtful input.

A study of film, however, supervised by a qualified instructor with a knowledge and respect for the power of film in society today can effectively control these influences.³ A study of film can help the student develop critical standards and powers of discrimination and can raise his level of sophistication in viewing habits and tastes. By exposing the student to films which are considered either high quality entertainment or artistically superior, the student will learn that big name stars, colossal media build-ups, and a few controversial or sensationalized events do not necessarily make for a good film. *The Towering Inferno*, for example, utilized a great deal of media buildup. However, it has not received critical acclaim equal to what was said about it in advance publicity. On the other hand, *The Last Picture Show* was warmly received by critics and viewers alike with relatively little media exposure. By carefully examining each film for its overall quality, thematic statements, or its values, the student will be less vulnerable to cinematic misrepresentations or false values. By carefully examining filmmaking techniques, the student will become less subject to manipulation because he will learn exactly how his emotions or points of view are being manipulated. The film camera is a powerful tool and adults can be just as subject to its influences as young people can. But with the world growing ever more visually oriented, it is imperative that we equip students with the tools to combat the influence of a potentially dangerous medium and to discern the differences between quality entertainment and cheap imitation, between artistic excellence and mediocrity.

There are several other reasons why film studies can be of great benefit to students. As a counterpart to literature, movies can help in the analysis and understanding of novels, plays, and short stories. Movies like *Of Mice and Men* and *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* are excellent cinematic versions of standard literary works frequently used in the secondary school and can help not only in providing a concrete interpretation of the literary work, but may also stimulate more effective discussions. A student's understanding of plot, characters, theme, structure, or any other literary element can be deepened by a visual interpretation of the original work, provided the instructor uses a suitable approach.

Film studies can also lead to valuable learning experiences in other areas as well. To study effectively Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin*, the film must be prefaced by a study of the Russian Revolution and other significant historical events surrounding the mutiny aboard the ship. In discussing *Potemkin's* "collective hero," it is necessary to deal with the political philosophy of Communism. To study photographic and mechanical developments leading to the creation of "moving pictures" as mass entertainment in the latter part of the 19th Century, it is necessary to teach certain principles of science. And many films can be used to study contemporary issues and values. For

example, a film such as *The Ox Bow Incident* can generate interesting discussions and learning experiences dealing with specific contemporary social issues. In other words, whatever knowledge that can be imparted through the use of a particular film, regardless of whether or not it deals directly with the evaluation of the film as a film, should not be ignored. This can only deepen the student's understanding and appreciation of the film.

Once a teacher is convinced of the need for a film studies class, problems can be encountered in justifying the class to an administrator. We all know the first question a principal will ask is "how much is it going to cost?" In these times of budget cuts of educational programs, an administrator needs to be convinced that a new program is valid. A few prefacing remarks like "Well, nothing is too good for our students," or "Perhaps you had better sit down," are definitely in order at this point. It often helps to explain that in a film study course, the films are the textbooks and their cost should be regarded as an investment. The films, if well taken care of, will last much longer than textbooks which need to be replaced periodically.

Film studies are expensive, especially if one marches into the principal's office to declare the need for a new projector, screen, curtains to darken the room, as well as a budget for rental and purchase of films. It is more effective, however, to be humble and explain that it will take three to four years to build the program. A long term budget outlining equipment, film purchase and film rental costs might be a good idea. Budget considerations should also include whether to invest in 8mm or 16mm films (each has its advantages and disadvantages), the purchase of a good manual-loading projector (which will save on damaged film) and the division of the film budget into two areas, rental and purchase.

Justification of purchasing films can easily be done weighed against the long-term cost of renting year after year. The eventual goal is, of course, to purchase enough films with which to teach the entire course and, if possible, to allow for some variety from year to year. But it is important to leave a percentage of the budget to rental so that one may "try out" films with students to see if they are effective in teaching specific concepts or to test student reactions to certain films. It is often a good idea to use a film two to three times before the decision to purchase. Reactions and results vary from class to class and since films are not cheap, the decision should not be made lightly.

There are several other ideas that might prove helpful in justifying the cost of a particular film or the film budget in general.

First of all, it is a good idea to have some support. A librarian, audio-visual director or administrator might have knowledge of federal funds available for purchase of audio-visual equipment or

even to fund an experimental program. Furthermore, having the support of one other person gives weight to arguments when approaching a skeptical principal.

Secondly, many films can serve a dual purpose within a school district. Often a classic film deals with an historical event and can be used also by the history department, or a film using animation can deal with a math concept. There are also some delightful films that have extremely simple plots that point a lesson that an elementary teacher might use while the film studies class examines the film for its technical proficiency, economy of image, camera movement, framing and other technical elements. Students, even teachers, might complain that boredom will result if they have to watch a film in more than one class. The approaches and concepts taught will be quite diverse, however, and a few words on the inability of anyone to grasp 24 frames a second on a single viewing will silence this argument.

The cost of a film study course often needs justifying not only to the principal but also to fellow teachers as well. As they scrimp to get by on their meager audio-visual budgets and scour catalogs for free films, they might well question the purchase of a feature film that costs as much as their entire budget. Taking the time to describe the film studies course, and the objectives as well as to explain that films are the textbooks can help colleagues to understand and eventually to support the program.

One day in the teacher's lounge as we excitedly described the film we were going to see in class, a colleague turned to us and said, "I hear all you do is watch movies in that class." It occurred to us that justifying the budget of a film studies class is only the beginning of the justifying. Culturally speaking, although few deny nowadays that film is an artform, for most of society, films are still just entertainment. "I don't like movies that make me think," is not an uncommon response. Having several well-chosen examples of films that are both entertaining and artistic is an effective defense. The films of Charles Chaplin were incredible box office successes at the time of their release and even today, audiences regard him as among the best, if not the best, of the silent comedians. Furthermore, an analysis of his comedy for its precision, timing, pantomime, and creative imagination reveals an artistic genius many critics would argue has never been surpassed.

Another issue raised by the film studies critics is the "What's fun can't be educational" philosophy. After all, if students like watching a movie, it's not work and if students don't work, they won't learn anything. Students do enjoy movies. They are conditioned by our society to regard them as entertainment. A good film teacher can turn this natural affinity for the movies into curiosity and enthusiasm for the subject matter of a film studies class.

It is important not to overdo this "film is fun" argument. Administrators need to hear that students are undertaking a

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serious formal study of the art of the film and that, while uproarious laughter may at times be heard coming from the classroom, when the projector is turned off and the lights turned back on, students are required to read, write, discuss, and take tests on the material presented to them. This means that students are not just passively watching hour after hour of films only to be asked at the end of the marking period, "Who directed *The Gold Rush*?" or "Who stars in *Gone With the Wind*?" or "In what movie does the Odessa Steps sequence appear?" Rather, students are being trained to think and evaluate while they watch, to improve their skills in evaluating and analyzing. Traditional English skills need not go by the wayside in the visually-oriented film studies class. Essays can reinforce writing skills, grammar, and sentence construction as students eagerly explore an idea in a film. Library and research methods can be taught as students investigate a film movement, director, star, or the history of the film industry. It is essential, also, to supplement film studies with a comprehensive reading program made up of essays gathered from a variety of sources. 4

A further issue that may need justification is the time spent watching a film. Two or three class periods devoted to the viewing of a feature film may seem less than educationally sound. Indeed, to an infrequent observer, it may very well seem that all we do is watch movies. But pointing out that each film is prefaced and followed by reading materials, exercises, worksheets, discussions and evaluation helps to justify the actual viewing time.

In short, we believe an education in film to be essential to every high school graduate. Besides equipping that student with the knowledge and criteria to confront the visually-oriented society around him, film studies can produce and reinforce knowledge in many different areas. We further believe that any teacher who is convinced of these facts and who takes the proper steps in explaining the benefits and in justifying the cost, can successfully implement a film studies program in their high school.

¹Figures presented by Kenneth Clark, Executive Vice President of Motion Picture Association of America, in the forward to William Kuhns, Robert Stanley, *Exploring the Film* (Dayton, Ohio, 1968).

²For further discussion see Martha Wolfenstein, Nathan Leites, *Movies: A Psychological Study* (New York, 1970).

³An interesting teacher might refer to a readable text by Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies* (New York, 1975). The book also contains a useful and extensive bibliography of movie source material pp. 319-331.

⁴While we have found essays gathered from a variety of sources to be the most workable reading program for our students, we would also recommend the following texts for use with high school students: William Kuhns, *The Moving Picture Book* (Dayton, Ohio, 1975) and William Kuhns, Robert Stanley, *Exploring The Film* (Dayton, Ohio, 1968).

TAKE FIVE!

Julie Belle White

Students and Faculty members are realizing the potential of "Take Five," the motto of the Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities (ACTC)—Augsburg College, Hamline University, Macalester College, the College of St. Catherine, and the College of St. Thomas. By enrolling in one college, a student gains access to courses and programs on five campuses. Through cooperative planning and sharing of resources, Speech-Communication and Theatre Departments also realize the benefits of the consortium.

The present success of ACTC probably stems from its gradual evolution. Based on "mutually beneficial alliances," cooperation has steadily increased for nearly half a century.¹ In the 1930's, the Colleges of St. Catherine and St. Thomas collaborated on selected curricular and co-curricular activities. In 1953, they joined with Hamline and Macalester to offer a program in non-Western Studies. In 1965, the four colleges agreed to experiment with cross-registration for courses without exchanging tuition payments. To encourage this and other ventures, the Louise W. and Maud Hill Foundation (now known as the Northwest Area Foundation) granted \$600,000 to the informal association which expanded to include Augsburg College in Minneapolis.

During the last decade, the consortium has undergone impressive development. Supported by generous grants, administrators have implemented a variety of joint projects including admissions recruitment, educational counselling for minority students, urban teacher training, and bus transportation for students and faculty (during fall semester, 1975, the 1,914 students who were cross-registered in 2,610 classes were given an average of 9,727 rides a week). Unification is further exemplified by a combined 4-1-4 academic calendar, yearly publication of joint course descriptions and class schedules, tuition waiver for children of full-time faculty and staff (used by twenty-two students in 1975), membership in Cooperating Libraries in Consortium (CLIC gives access to over a million volumes), and regular publication of a journal serving ACTC faculty and staff.

The full force of the arrangement, however, may not be felt until faculty members, particularly through their departments, creatively and consistently cooperate.

For the last two years, the twenty-two full time teachers from Augsburg's Department of Speech, Communication, and Theatre Arts, Macalester's Department of Speech, Communication and Dramatic Arts, Hamline's Theatre and Communication Arts Department, and St. Catherine's and St. Thomas' joint Department of Speech and Theatre have been exploring cooperation. Perhaps interdisciplinary curriculae and complex

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for students. Administratively, it offers certain challenges. For instance, it soon became obvious that the equipment had to be stored, insured, and maintained through one department. Since production needs provide a special incentive for cooperation; converse, the diversity of our programs makes concrete planning difficult. At any rate, since February 1, 1976, the Speech/Theatre group has established several goals, implemented some specific projects, and continues to generate other ideas. Being in the forefront of exploring ACTC potential means that we are particularly sensitive to the power of cooperative planning and the problems inherent in the ACTC format.

In general, several goals are continually before us: increasing communication; planning joint activities; and coordinating curriculae. It is not surprising that for Speech/Theatre types, communication is paramount. Simply keeping informed about each department's activities through other means than the newspaper is a major task. Since communication increases proportionately with how well individuals know each other, we have placed a high value on having regular social and work meetings. Until these gatherings were initiated, some faculty members had taught comparable courses for years, yet had never met each other. A major outcome of cooperation centers on regular meetings which bring together Departmental Chairpersons about twice a semester, all faculty at least once a year, and interest groups as special projects warrant. At the very least, then, we are systematically consulting with each other.

The second goal of offering joint activities has brought the most direct benefit to the students. Despite the variety of courses offered and the various talents of faculty members, not all the needs of our majors can be met without cooperating on special projects which encompass all five colleges. For instance, St. Catherine's, St. Thomas, and Hamline had all dropped their forensic programs, even though some students on those campuses still wished to participate in intercollegiate debate and individual events. Since new forensic programs were not going to be initiated, these students simply had to do without or transfer to a college with a forensic coach. The answer to this dilemma came when these colleges negotiated an arrangement whereby these students can participate in Macalester's excellent program. For the last three years, about twenty-five students have been coached and competed in tournaments under Macalester's auspices.

Since many grant agencies wish to encourage cooperation in educational institutions, we were able to receive a sizeable grant to purchase equipment for an 8mm film course. According to the main purpose of the course proposal, each student has a camera and editing equipment with which to learn. The Jerome Foundation funded the grant which assures that an equal number of places be held open for students from each of the five colleges. Educationally, this class provides a unique experience

St. Catherine's originated the grant request, the equipment now belongs there. However, the class will rotate so that this year it is taught at St. Catherine's, next year it will be offered at Augsburg.

Theatre students are also benefiting from special activities. Last year, guest director David Feldshuh (formerly a director at the Guthrie) was hired by St. Thomas to direct *Taming of the Shrew* using students from all colleges. Through open casting, major and minor roles were given to students from four of the five colleges. Although initially students were wary about sharing the limelight with strangers, the plan—and the coordinate casting—proved to be a great success. Feldshuh also offered a week-long mime workshop which attracted ACTC faculty and students. Based on the warm reception given to this venture, the artistic and technical directors are now planning another major joint production. If all goes well, during the month of January, 1979, a cooperative production will be mounted in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium. Students and faculty will participate for Interim credit. For students, working with different directors and new actors on a major Twin Cities' stage will certainly be a worthwhile complement to their education.

In the meantime, coordinating and publicizing seasons, sharing props, costumes, and scenery, offering special workshops, sponsoring receptions after performances, and other activities are in various stages of implementation. The final major goal of cooperative curricular planning has proven most elusive. It is hoped by the members of ACTC that such planning might prevent unnecessary overlap of courses and also allow for new programs to be added. An example of a joint program is the newly adopted Russian Studies major. No one college could support such a major, but by sharing course offerings among the schools, a student now has this option.

Ideally, cooperative planning should allow the Speech/Theatre department to avoid unnecessary scheduling conflicts or course duplication, thereby encouraging students to take classes on other campuses. In addition, we might develop special workshops, or courses, or even major tracks to supplement the core curriculum.

Two aspects of our disciplines are presently under discussion at the consortium level. A grant to study an interdisciplinary Rhetoric major has brought together faculty from philosophy, theology, English, and speech-communication. Discussions about a Media Studies track have attracted faculty from several different disciplines. At this point, a student can take a sufficient number of courses in either area to constitute a major. We are investigating an agreement whereby, regardless of which department a student is in, he or she would take the same core courses in a Rhetoric or Media Studies track. Despite the difficulty of such long range planning, curricular cooperation continues, thereby introducing even more flexibility and diversity into our departmental offerings.

Certainly, assuring grass roots cooperation is a slow, sometimes painful process. Bringing five colleges together on paper has not automatically lowered barriers. Some departments discourage students from taking classes off campus, some faculty members perpetuate myths about their own school's superiority, some students just do not want to take a bus to attend classes off campus. Yet, if the speech-communication and theatre departments are any indication, the advantages of cooperation will erode these rigidities.

Many individuals sense that we have just begun to understand the potential of "Take Five," a system which secures the autonomy of each department within the diversity of a consortium.

¹Much of the following information was derived from a pamphlet "Historical Sketch," published by the Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities, 1488 Englewood Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104.

MAINTAINING A HUMAN SCALE IN COMMUNICATION

Robert L. Scott

Every college student knows how difficult it is to begin term papers: one is apt to make a number of false starts. So with me in my various outlines, sketches, and trial sections for this speech. As I looked at these I was suddenly reminded of a recurring dream I have. It's difficult to say just what is occurring in this dream because all is murky and confusing. But I seem to be struggling in water, drowning. Suddenly I see a distinct figure standing on the shore. I call out for help and he responds, quite calmly, "You know. You're drowning."

As I considered my early attempts in writing this speech, I suddenly saw myself as the figure on the shore saying calmly, "You know. You're drowning." Not very useful.

It's simple enough to characterize all as murky and confusing—the energy crisis alone is sufficient for that. As long ago as 1964 in his book *Presidential Power*, Richard Neustadt argued that crisis has become a way of life in America, so much so that we can scarcely tell one from the next. Feeling that things are simply much too much to cope with—carrying our sense of copelessness—is certainly a common human affectation. We may well want to echo the words of the poet Omar Khayyam, or at least the English words Edward Fitzgerald has given us for his Rubaiyat:

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things Entire,
Would not we smash it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's desire!

Of course we can't grasp the sorry scheme of things entire, and if we could and smashed it, we'd undoubtedly botch the remolding job.

Better that I try to chip away here and there and see if we can't get a couple of footholds. I shall try to specify what afflicts us; then I shall attempt to relate our affliction to a possible failure in making actual the potential expressed in the first amendment to our federal constitution; and finally I shall see if we can reassess the great instrument of free speech in such a way as to give us a glimmer of a promising road ahead.

What afflicts us is that we can neither believe nor disbelieve.

The failure of the first amendment is not that we are denied its protection but that we find ourselves impotent to exercise the power it traditionally has made available.

Robert L. Scott is professor of speech at the University of Minnesota. He is a past chairman of the department of speech communication at the University of Minnesota.

The promising road ahead is only a glimmer: re-discovering the sense of *civitas* as communication and community.

What do I mean when I say that we can neither believe nor disbelieve? Obviously I am indulging in hyperbole. We do believe and disbelieve. But we lack a full sense of each that can be creative. Instead we have our contemporary ersatz expressions: credibility gap and credulity bind.

The *belief* of which I speak is most closely caught in the concept of *faith*, a concept familiar to religious belief but not limited to formal religions. Political institutions often attract the sort of allegiance that can be described readily as faith. Billy Graham, for example, never seems to tire of citing dedicated communists as examples of the sort of selfless devotion he urges on his listeners. His example, designed to quicken a sense of guilt, illustrates not only our vapid espousing of religion but of government, too. Although I did enjoy a number of Bicentennial events and programs, two hundred years of American history seemed to reach its apogee in Revolutionary scenes rendered on beer cans: collect them all! Of course we are not surprised by the human inclination to exploit literally anything, but in this case, the ease, the naturalness of the exploitation made it thorough and smothering. Likewise, the easy cynicism of the responses of persons like myself. We neither believed nor disbelieved.

I very often ask the students in my classes to list beliefs about which they feel strongly. Over the years it seems to me that the lists have become shorter and shorter. Moreover, the beliefs have **become more and more apt to be couched in personal terms**, concern for the natural environment may be put as, "I am afraid that soon I shall no longer be able to enjoy canoeing in the boundary waters." What bothers me is not that these persons find private connections, but that they see beliefs so nearly exclusively as personal. Lately, I have had some students refuse to undertake making a list at all, on the grounds that such things are private.

I am interested in strong beliefs since these seem to me to be the spark of creative energy. For science as much as religion that seems to be the case. Michael Polanyi, himself a scientist before he became a philosopher, argued that it is the strong belief that there is something there, something not now known that can be known, that motivates the difficult search for scientific knowledge.

Disbelief is also a creative force. In political affairs, divesting oneself of old and often comforting associations makes fresh beginnings possible. In science, one advances, once the commitment to the worth of a quest is established, not so much by proof as by disproof. This feature of science is what Karl Popper has called the doctrine of falsifiability—only that which is in theory falsifiable can be accepted and then only after vigorous efforts to falsify; and then, only tentatively.

Neither strong belief nor vigorous efforts to falsify our belief are features of our public lives. Rather we are prone to weak attachments and given to easy loss of faith. Although the term became popular in a specific context, I believe we can call our general tendency to lose faith a *credibility gap*. Our loose attachments make credibility gaps nearly inevitable; our cynical conviction that no one can be credited who makes claims in public affairs makes a beautiful rationalization for binding ourselves only loosely, if at all.

It, that is, the sorry state of affairs we focus fuzzily on in a general sort of way, *it* is beyond us, much too complex, too recondite to grasp. Therefore, anyone who makes a strong claim concerning public problems must be a charlatan, out for some unsavory, personal end. We stand ready to pounce on any inconsistency or wavering of resolve to verify our assessment.

Ironically, our widespread inability to credit leaders is supplemented by what can be seen as an equally widespread tendency to believe stubbornly in whatever suits our convenience. As far as I know, the first person to use the term *credulity bind* was columnist James Kirkpatrick; the term doesn't seem to have caught on, although it describes beautifully the imperviousness of the beliefs of groups like the National Rifle Association, or at least those who dote on that organization's pronouncements, that laws to register handguns will lead inevitably to the confiscation of all firearms and the withering away of the rights of the citizens of a free state.

Without doubt, conspiracies do occur, but ours is a time that seems to find no explanation as satisfying as that some obscure network of malignant interests is at work to thwart our well being.

As paradoxical as the analysis may seem, our failure to assign credibility and our credulity mesh nicely quite often. Such a meshing may be examined in the maize of arguments that surround the twin crises of energy and environment. These two issues, that give us fascinating cross-currents, focus on the acme of American Culture—the internal combustion engine. On the one hand, the malignant forces of the profit crazy oil companies conspire to create an artificial gasoline shortage and on the other the fuzzy-headed environmentalists, whose testimony cannot be credited, preach that we must be deprived of the transcendent desideratum of our way of life.

Our inability either to believe or disbelieve fuels what might well be termed *unenlightened self-interest*. Our passions are engaged mainly by immediate indulgences. We adroitly choose a god-term from our culture referring to our purchases of trail-bikes, vans, snow-mobiles, and power boats and "investments"! We stoutly maintain that we have the *right* to protect our investments. And, of course, these investments mean jobs. All these passions we engage while perusing avidly the adroit advertising campaign that presents in beguiling variety Dodge trucks for 1977 as "Adult Toys."

As I said at the outset in stating the first point, and I'm about finished with that point, I am engaging in hyperbole: we do believe; we believe in Adult Toys, which, of course, take many forms. We have, perhaps, a new Age of Faith: one blind both to past values and hope for future good that goes beyond ourselves.

We might easily dub our propensity to find others unworthy of credibility, bad faith; our credulity seems to me bad faith also. Are we living, then, in an Age of *Bad Faith*? And, if so, what would good faith be in our times?

Even though I know that the generalization ignores a great deal about our times and ourselves, I do believe that calling ours an age of bad faith catches the peculiar weaknesses we are prone to. Assuming that I am correct, you might ask, quite fairly, how may we find the strength to avoid these peculiar weaknesses? How may we begin to change bad faith into good? You suspect that you will not get wholly satisfactory answers to such questions. After all, at the outset I promised you only a glimmer.

If I am right about our affliction, then we have failed somewhere, somehow. Probably many places, in many ways. But I shall suggest that the spirit of revivifying debate, the spirit that is life to a democracy, has become a mockery of the promise underlying the first amendment to our constitution.

The first amendment is one of those great negatives that entails a quite positive promise. Of course in passing the amendment, the citizens of the immediate post-revolutionary America were reacting to some strongly remembered abuses. They wished to make as certain as possible that those abuses would be absent.

Further, our best read and most thoughtful "forefathers" were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Age of Reason a chief tenet of which was that the mind needed but be unfettered from superstition and external restraint in order to enable individuals to achieve socially transforming acts of human good. This tenet has become a strong strand in the notion of *progress*, a notion that still binds together much that we think and do. Another strand in the notion is that of *competition*. Not only do we believe in progress economically through competition, but we believe that ideas and action progress through the competition given with free speech. In the unforgettable phrasing of John Milton, "Let her and falsehood grapple: who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter."

In a debate over the "Legal Eight Hour Question" in late nineteenth century England, Edward Foote concluded his last speech quoting Milton. His opponent, George Bernard Shaw, then began his final speech remarking that he was not sure what sort of conditions Milton was used to, but that if anyone asked him what sort of chance truth had then in England, he would answer, "I, Bernard Shaw, have seen truth bettered many times."

Shaw reminded his listeners, and we know quite well, that as important as the prohibitions that ensure freedom may be, we

cannot count automatically that freedom so ensured will be fruitful—the circumstances have a great deal to do with the matter.

The failure of the first amendment is not that we are denied its protection but that we find ourselves impotent to exercise the power it traditionally has made available.

Our power as individuals has been diminished by the sheer press of population and by the nearly instantaneous transmission of messages the electronic age makes possible.

It is easy to fasten on television as the great instrument, and an adequate example of all such instruments of modern technology, making it the scapegoat for the sins of our own impotence. I suggested at the outset that my first attempts to sketch a speech for you went badly awry, and it was just here that I erred gravely. The clever cynicism that has outrun "boob tube" for such terms as "the glass tit" or "the plug-in drug" may indulge our sense of outrage—to some degree undoubtedly justified—and help us expunge our feeling of responsibility—after all we are raging.

I do not wish to put down the critics of the medium, but neither do I wish to be swept away in an ecstasy of denunciation. We cannot wish away television, and I have a strong feeling that we should not want to. The question of the *effects* of television is one to which we scarcely have a definitive answer. Such answers as research have given us indicate that perhaps the very question is wrong headed: there are no *effects* if we take effects as being isolatable units of something or another. Television seems to function differently for different sorts of people at different times.

But we can draw some conclusions about this marvel of our age, a marvel, as I have suggested, that may typify our age as well as anything we could point to. My drawing these conclusions will testify to the fact that I do not disdain speculation, for they are speculative. Perhaps they will be speculative in a good sense—that is, they may appeal to your sense of meaningful experience while at the same time reminding you to stay wary; the results of our speculation will be tentative and tenuous.

The guarantees of the first amendment will scarcely be decisive if I own several television stations and you own a soap-box. Citizens of this country, and all other countries, have never had equal access to the important means of communication, but the obvious attractiveness of the electronic media and the concentration of commercialized message-making into vast, centrally controlled robot-hydras has intensified the disparities, and our sense of impotence. Even a relatively trivial undertaking like putting a cable service into my hometown, Fridley, was a million dollar undertaking.

Access to means of communication, and television specifically, is an important contemporary issue, although scarcely a burning issue for a majority, or even a sizable minority, of Americans. Cable television has been touted as an innovation which will make

increased access for ordinary citizens practical, but most have been, thus far, like that in Fridley has become, simply fragmented seating in a movie theatre.

From another point of view, problems of access have been alleviated by public financing of political campaigns. In 1960, Hubert Humphrey's run for the presidency was stalled in West Virginia when his efforts had to be turned to raising money to pay for television time. After that primary, his resources were exhausted.

Even though the laws that make it unlikely that a serious contender for the presidency will founder on financial shoals as did Humphrey may be extended to cover other offices, the remedy has probably intensified a more essential problem: that of scale.

Whatever we watch, political campaigning included, is a vast, complexly orchestrated drama. In spite of McLuhan's insistence that television is a "cool" medium that necessitates the viewer's participation, I would hold the opposite: we can only watch in passive awe, or flip to another channel as an active gesture toward a passive end, or "turn off" in disgust or boredom.

The recent events called debates between then President Ford and now President Carter were shows; the fundamental judgment concerning them was made pretty much along the lines on which shows are judged—they lacked entertainment value. But the stars could be referred to, like the stars of any TV show, in an off-hand sort of way by the round-up team during an NFL halftime show. The insiders could, and did, chat about what was going on around the networks. The greatest insight presented was the frozen twenty-seven minutes of facade that resulted from an electronic mishap. True enough the political commentators tried to poke under and around the facade for significant cues, rather like China watchers who adroitly attempt to piece together snippets of the mundane and trivial to hazard guesses as to what is *really* going on in that vast, difficult to grasp, alien culture.

Given the present trends, we should conclude that all television strives to the ultimate expression represented by the Superbowl. These occur on Super-Sunday and are numbered in the style of emperors or kings. The wealth involved is more than fees for broadcasting rights and playoff shares to persons with stupendous salaries. The wealth is symbolic—rather like the faithful who yearly used to pile diamonds on the scale to offset the weight of the Aga Khan.

Symbols are important. We live by them.

Suppose for example that you answered a knock at your door one day and found a well-dressed, middle-aged man standing there. "Sir, or madam," he would say. "I want nothing from you. I simply want to sit in your livingroom and, when you wish, I'll tell you stories. If you have young children in the house and would like to be relieved of the task of watching and playing with them after school or on Saturday mornings, I'll be glad to tell them

stories while you prepare supper, or shop, or go bowling, or mow the yard." Would you invite the man into your home?

We probably should not object to the fact that stories fill much of the time during the twenty-six hours a week average Americans watch TV, nor that the stories are so often paltry. What is upsetting is that television enjoys so nearly complete a monopoly of story-telling in our society. The product of this monopoly is refined by a system of stars and ratings and terminations and awards until only a few very distinct types of people and situations remain to fuel the imaginative stock with which we get our bearings as individuals in a society.

Undoubtedly I have overdrawn my second point. Television is not the villain. It is important as a phenomenon and indicative of the reality of which it is a part; it is formed by as well as forming of the social fabric. We live in a time and place in which much that is important to us is remote from us, but in spite of the remoteness we may feel strangely bound and powerless. If so, that I would say is a loss of scale. We are a free people unable to do much with our freedom.

In a strange way it seems to me that Dwight D. Eisenhower presaged our current state of affairs in his Farewell Address as President January 17, 1961. From that speech the phrase *military-industrial complex* has been taken and worn smooth by repetition so it fits easily with our locutions and thought. But shortly after he used that phrase, Eisenhower went on to warn that public policy itself might become the prerogative of "a scientific-technological elite."

Such an elite has been with modern industrial societies for decades, but as we become more a mass with nearly instantaneous communication, only such an elite seems sufficient to cope with the terrible task of grappling with the complexities; to the degree that ordinary citizens can participate, they are limited to making choices between well packaged alternatives. "You can vote by changing channels" is a familiar message. Is that enough for free citizens in a free state?

That question, of course, brings me to my final point.

When I say that the promising road ahead is the rediscovery of the sense of *civitas* as communication and community, I suggest an old and common idea. If that were not the case, the "re-discovery" would scarcely be an appropriate term.

We live in a society which has been, in Daniel Elazar's phrase, "more willing to become urbanized than citified." Although the terms "urban" and "city" are good enough rough synonyms, there is a contrast in their sense that is worth bringing out. "Urban" suggests conglomeration; thus far in this speech I have used the word "mass" to indicate that sense. The contemporary use of the expression "urban sprawl" is significant, picturing as it does a mixing, even a rolling, without unifying. The word "city" suggests an entity even though the components of that being may

be vast and varied. Two millennia ago *Rome* became more than a place; it was a symbol for a way of life. Even when in the minds of many that way of life became corrupt, the old symbol was appropriated to new uses—that center that gave a harmonizing focus to disparate elements, as in the Roman Catholic Church or the Holy Roman Empire. St. Augustine's vision of the unity of godhead in a fresh world was entitled *The City of God*.

So I make no special case for *city* in the sense of a big, specific place. Rather I argue for a renewed sense of the art of citizenship. Its spirit is important: the relationship of the citizen to his or her place, what the Romans call *civitas*.

Citizenship is an art; no one has a patent on it, no one has the perfect formula for it, nor is anyone likely to concoct *the answer* to the ever shifting problems the practice of the art poses. But the art must be practiced; like all great arts it is at once understanding and skill.

As I read about the debate in that remarkable convention that formed the federal constitution, I am impressed by both the wisdom and eloquence of many who argued there. For me, James Madison is especially sage with his focus always on the balance that would make "government by discussion" possible.

Today, the word "dialogue" is definitely in fashion, but the thrust of my effort has been to raise the question: Is dialogue on public questions possible? Communication as technology makes a phone-in with the President of the United States possible. I do not question the sincerity of the phone-in; I do assert that communication as technology is not enough for dialogue.

A major aspect of solving the problems we face as a polity lies in the modern inclination to refer all problems to technical solutions. We continually phrase our awarenesses of problems in such ways that technical responses are not simply called for but taken as definitive of solution. I ask you to consider the current controversies over health care. It strikes me that part of the current skein of problems we face is the very style of an earlier solution, that is, we created medicare. Consider that term, *medicare*. Medical care for the older persons in our society is transformed by a quasi-technical term into a matter to be appropriately resolved, *machined* might be the better term, by certified specialists. I do not wish to disparage technology. I do wish to echo Eisenhower's warning: Public policy itself should not become the prerogative of a scientific-technological elite.

We might notice some subtle changes that have come about in the attitudes of those close to certain technologies. For example, in the current controversy over placing ceilings on the rise of hospital costs, spokespersons for the hospital associations have argued, both in Minnesota and before the Congress, that such ceilings will force hospitals to defer adopting new technologies and thus lower the quality of medical care. Interesting. What happens, however, to the stock American idea that advances in

technology make production (or the rendering of service, one would assume) more efficient and thus make unit costs lower?

That question arises in a different context. In May of this year, William Norris, chairman of the board of the Control Data Corporation, argued at the Minnesota World Trade Conference that the federal government should finance research into improving industrial technology. Why? Because high costs and the unpredictability of profits from such research discourages business from sponsoring needed innovation. Mr. Norris may be right. But what happens to the stock American idea that the *risk* of venture capital justifies profit from the use of capital?

Undoubtedly technology is important and decisions about its use and financing difficult. But these very assertions should caution us that broad social values are involved both in making such decisions and by forces generated by technology itself. In short, we cannot refer all our questions to experts without becoming something other than a free people in a free society.

I would hazard that the meaning of "the American Way of Life" can be well discerned by an attentive reading of the advertisements in mass circulation magazines and the careful viewing of the commercial breaks on television. The maximum leisure and the maximum consumption of material goods equals the good life. Of course we can cite all sorts of deviations from that proposition. These are the glimmers I alluded to. The dominant vision, however, is still that packaged for us by communication taken as an industry.

What would communication be like taken not as primarily a technological question to be solved by experts but rather as a community concern to be lived by people? The vision of the dynamic interaction of community and communication is older than Cicero, but few saw it more clearly than he did. Interestingly, Cicero worked to revivify the idea just as the Roman republic was reaching its eclipse. He held that the grave defect in his culture was the separation of wisdom and eloquence; he saw that wisdom was often without power, and power without wisdom.

Of course for us *eloquence* is a quaint word good, perhaps, only for a faint smile. It certainly isn't one of the words in vogue. I do not care whether or not we reclaim the word, but we do need to reclaim the understanding and skill entailed there. As James Madison reported in his "Notes of the Debates in the Federal Convention," Gouverneur Morris said, "All we can infer is that if the plan we recommend be reasonable and right; all who have reasonable minds and sound intentions will embrace it . . . This country must be united. If persuasion does not unite it, the sword will." Power still flows from the sword. Persuasion is the sort of power Madison and Morris preferred. But they could not have foreseen the extent to which persuasive power can be packaged, can be made as efficient as an armed striking force. Certainly they, and others like them, wished to curb abuses, and consequently they formed the prohibitions within the Constitution

and, especially, of the Bill of Rights.

But given those safeguards, how can we create the will and the skill sufficient to make the practice of public arts, the art of citizenship, general enough to challenge the hegemony of experts in public opinion manipulation. Philosopher Richard Lueke has put the question well: "How do we desist from bringing certified problem-solvers to repair communities and start creating communities able to pose and resolve new problems?"

The answer to that question will scarcely be singular and stable. Each of us may believe that he or she could cite a number of favorite devices and laud several promising trends. I ask only that we recognize together that the value of public discussion and the skills relevant to participation are vital among other devices for continuing the promising trends.

Birthrights are readily bartered in times such as ours. We feel the pressures of immediate, economic needs; we sense the threat of other places with differing ways. We see too many signs about us of the hedonistic consumption on the one hand with its pseudo-individualistic message: I'll get mine while I can. And on the other, a withering battery of fanaticisms promising to dig deep gulfs to divide and protect.

Turning inward can be health preserving. We need to sustain our sense of self, but that turning inward must be balanced with a sense of community. In the 1970's, our colleges and universities seem to me to have been much more successful in serving the first need than the second. If I am right, I suspect that the reason is because serving the need of turning inward is more in harmony with the cynicism that besets us generally when we think or act in the public sphere. We must do better in serving the balancing need.

To reduce the hope from a glimmer to a formula, consider this: the act of speaking is both value and instrument. This formula requires the individual to be implanted in a community and a community to be sustained by individuals engaged in communicating. But as a formula we lose all the richness of detail necessary for specific meaning. More is demanded of us than seeking to understand what the tradition of public discussion has meant. We must create the specific detail for our times in which the values of the past will be actively transformed into ways that assure a human scale in communication.

Now I conclude.

The dedication here of a building is to me among the glimmers of hope. The *purposes* to which that building is dedicated are among the deep birthrights that free citizens enjoy.

FREE SPEECH IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE: IMPLICATIONS OF MASS MEDIA

David M. Berg

Although I don't think of myself as especially sentimental, or as one particularly prone to nostalgia, I must confess that the process of preparing this paper, and the prospect of returning to this campus after many years away, has stirred up a myriad of all-but-forgotten memories. This building, as we all know, has now been remodeled from a women's gymnasium into a beautiful and functional speech and theatre facility. But when I was here as a student, it was not even a women's gymnasium. It was simply THE gymnasium and, as such, was the only building on campus capable of holding a gathering of any size—there was no Boe Memorial Chapel and there was no Skogland Field House. To illustrate to you just how long ago this really was, when my roommate and I were asked to arrange a special session for the Lutheran Student Association, which met in this building on Sunday evenings, and we decided to do the program on sex and marriage, it was considered such a risqué subject for public discussion that virtually the entire student body showed up. That, you must agree, had to have been a long time ago.

In addition to chapel services, convocations, choir concerts, and basketball games—and because ballroom dancing was strictly prohibited for Saint Olaf students—this building was also the scene of some rousing square dances.

Unfortunately, we caused Miss Hilleboe, the Dean of Women, a good bit of concern by managing to introduce more body contact into our square dancing than the activity actually called for. Ironically, it was only a few years later that I attended—in this same building—the first homecoming dance ever held at Saint Olaf College. It probably would have corrupted my morals, too, but I was already married by that time.

Lest you think, carried away by these reminiscences, that I've forgotten the purpose of this gathering, let me introduce my contribution to the subject of this symposium by relating an event from my Saint Olaf days that did have something to do with freedom of expression. During the fall semester of my junior year, while I was co-managing editor of the *Manitou Messenger*, the Lutheran Brotherhood decided to hold a conference on campus. Learning of this, Professor Wilkens (always alert to pedagogical opportunity) announced to his group discussion class (of which I was a member) that they could have a day off from class in order to attend a session or two of the Brotherhood conference and hear some real, live, group discussion. Unfortunately, it was later brought to Professor Wilkens' attention that the meetings were to be closed to the public, whereupon he cancelled the assignment,

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and informed us that class would be held as usual. I was so incensed by this unhappy turn of events that I immediately sat down and vented my ire in the form of an editorial. That editorial was published in the *Messenger* on the Friday that our Lutheran Brotherhood guests were to arrive on campus, and it referred to their closed conference, among other things, as "a junior experiment in totalitarianism."

Two things happened as a result of that editorial. First, contrary to tradition, I *was not* selected to become the co-editor-in-chief of the paper during the spring semester. Second, I *was* invited to a conference of my very own with the college's Director of Public Relations, David Johnson, and the News Director, Jack Laugen. They were, as I recall, not pleased. And, in retrospect, I can't say that I blame them. However, in spite of the immature rantings of myself and others which went into that college newspaper, I cannot recall a single occasion when the administration resorted to censorship of any kind. I doubt, were I to be placed in their position today, that I would be so permissive. Yet, at the time, I would have undoubtedly reacted to any attempt at control with loud protestations that my First Amendment rights were being violated. As a matter of fact, if I remember correctly, I met Johnson and Laugen's attempts at "counseling," not with apologies for undermining the college's public relations efforts, but with the arrogant assertion that the press could not be intimidated.

The attitude I expressed as a student editor is not atypical of Americans in general. We are a nation steeped in the tradition that our own personal freedom of speech is an inalienable right stemming from an inherent human need. The assumption, so firmly entrenched that it is often left unarticulated, clearly deserves examination. Not long ago, for example, I was watching a televised interview with a college-educated, professional Cuban woman. When the interviewer asked whether she didn't find stultifying the restrictions on free expression imposed by the Castro regime, she responded with incredulity that anyone in her country would even want to speak contrary to the wishes of their government. As strange as it may seem, that philosophy is at least vaguely related to the fourth U.S. Circuit of Appeals which, within the last month, upheld the verdict of a county court that sentenced three men to jail for engaging in an anti-Vietnam protest at Madison College in Harrisonburg, Virginia, in 1970. The three men, two of them students and one a young English Professor at the time, had argued that their constitutional right to free speech had been violated. Although, at one point during the appeals process, that argument was upheld by a federal district court, the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the decision, saying "First Amendment rights of students on campus are not so broad as those of a citizen in public places."

The First Amendment, among other things, states very simply that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." The concept, however, is not so simple.

As Marilyn Lasher, winner of the National Association of Broadcasters First Amendment Essay Contest, notes: the amendment "is set forth in language that is at once vague and specific. It specifically names Congress as the addressee of the protection but is vague as to the recipient; it is rigid as to the guarantee but vague as to the substance of the guarantee. This failure to define the major concepts has caused a swell of confusion. Today scholars are still asking: Freedom of the press for whom? From whom? Where? When? To what degree? Which press? What speech? Is the right absolute or qualified? Does it guarantee publisher's autonomy or the people's right to know or the people's right of access? Is it oriented toward issues or toward persons? Is its purpose to free the publisher from the government or to free the people from the publisher?"

In the face of this ongoing uncertainty as to what the First Amendment does or does not—should or should not—do for us, it may be well to take a step backwards and consider the often forgotten, but basic, question: Why is it that we want freedom of expression? What purpose does it serve? It is only when we have made some progress toward answering this question, it seems to me, that we will be in a position to determine in any sense whether, as the theme of this conference asks, First Amendment rights are illusory in a highly technical age.

In facing this basic issue, it will, I suppose, come as no surprise that I intend to argue in support of the human need for free expression. In framing this argument, however, I will take as my point of departure the premise that human beings must express themselves freely, first and foremost—not because in so doing they will contribute to the determination of truth, or to the process of political decision-making, as important as these matters may be—but because it is the very nature of being human to do so. In taking this position, I am operating from the assumption, as articulated by Kenneth Burke, that the defining characteristic of man is his use of symbols. Further, I would add, at the most basic level of self-fulfillment, symbol-using takes the form, not of communication, but of expression. Writing of the expressive function of language, the French philosopher Georges Gusdorf says, "I speak. . . in order to emerge into reality, in order to add myself to nature." It is, as Shelly describes it, the poetic function of language. "A poet," he attests, "is a nightingale who sits in darkness and sings to cheer his own solitude with sweet sounds."

In denying government the right to stifle free expression, therefore, the First Amendment, in its most fundamental application, can be viewed as an affirmation of every individual's right to the discovery and exercise of his full human potential. In fulfilling this function, and in spite of the growth of technology, First Amendment guarantees are as real today as they were at the ratification of the Bill of Rights almost two hundred years ago.

In emphasizing the expressive function of language as a basic rationale for the First Amendment freedoms, I do not mean, in any

sense, to minimize the importance of communication. I do, however, at least for the sake of this analysis, wish to stress the difference between expression and communications. Expression requires no audience, no other; communication does. Whereas expression aims at self-fulfillment, communication aims at either the *assessment* or the *alteration* of the environment in which we live.

The distinction between expression and communication is significant to any discussion of First Amendment freedoms. The right to expression can be guaranteed by law; the right to communication, however, because it requires the participation and cooperation of others, can not be guaranteed. The only thing that a government can really insure is the right of citizens to *try* to communicate. It is in this realm of *communication attempts*, and in the effect that those two dominant institutions of our society—government and the mass media—both have and should have on those attempts, that we confront the most pressing freedom of speech issues facing the nation today.

To analyze those issues, we can return to that category of communication which I earlier identified as having as its goal the *assessment* of the environment. Evaluating this assessment function of language, psychologist Paul Watzlawick and his associates write: "If we realize that in order to survive any organism must gain not only the substances necessary for its metabolism but adequate information about the world around it, we see that communication and existence are inseparable concepts."

In order to qualify as "adequate," information must be both plentiful and accurate—qualities which today are profoundly affected by the mass media of communication, particularly television. Because of the media we know more about the world in which we live than man has ever known before. By the mere turn of a dial we can become privy to events from every corner of the earth, often within minutes of the time they occur—the kind of information that only a few years ago our forebears would never have know, or would have learned of only long after the fact. Because of mass media technology we can escape the fury of elements (we know, for example, of the location of potential hurricanes from the time they are no more than "tropical depressions"), we can follow the progress of Panama Canal negotiations taking place thousands of miles away, and we can evaluate the performance of our President because we know in excruciating detail everything there is to know—both relevant and irrelevant—about his friend and subordinate, Bert Lance. But, as the tone of my remarks may have already suggested, this abundance (overabundance?) of information made possible by media technology is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, there is no question that these data have sometimes enhanced our ability to survive in an increasingly complex world; but, on the other hand, we are faced with the problem of processing what has been estimated to be thousands of message units every day. The

results are predictable. No longer is there time for fine distinctions. Phenomenon once dealt with individually must now be categorized, and narrow categories must now be broadened. Considered generalizations have become broad generalizations, and broad generalizations have become stereotypes. Recognizing our problem, and fearing that we may flee the scene of battle in utter confusion and despair, the media industry has presented us with "news" which is increasingly processed and pre-packaged. Depending upon your mood and tastes, we can select sensationalism or happy-talk; local, regional, or world news; weather news, sports news, general news, or, in the words of Edward Epstein's book by the same name, *News from Nowhere*.

Our problems in assessing the state of the environment, however, are not limited to the processing of overwhelming amounts of information, for *quantity* is only one measure of information adequacy. We are also faced with the persistent and perplexing problem of evaluating the *accuracy* of those images of reality conveyed by mass media.

Evidence has now reached overwhelming proportions that, despite the good intentions and the best efforts of reporters and editors, and despite their sometimes vehement protestations to the contrary, the communications media do not simply reflect reality—they also create it. I recall, for example, during the evening of April 5, 1968—the day after Martin Luther King was killed—I received a phone call at the Chicago hotel where I was attending a convention. It was from friends in Minnesota, concerned because newspaper and television reports made it seem that the entire city of Chicago was under siege by rioters reacting to the assassination. Later that night I watched the news for the first time since arriving at the hotel, and only then did I discover why my callers had been worried—it *did* look as though the whole city was in flames.

Some time after my Chicago experience, with civil disorders becoming a way of life in this country, a large city newspaper commented editorially on the effect of television coverage on this kind of event:

The plain fact of life in the 1970's is that a few people can throw a great city into panic or a nation into confusion by well-planned and calculated acts of terrorism. In most cases the people react with greater fear than is justified. . .

But in this age of instant communications these assaults on society can seem much greater in the part of the moment than they are in the whole of current history. . . A riot or a street fight, as viewed in the small confines of a television screen, seems to encompass creation. The reality of the event can take place in one street without the rest of the city being aware of it at all.

Whatever else you can draw from this evidence, it does suggest

that the world will, some way or another, look different to us when we see it via the mass media of communication. Support for this impression is provided by anthropologist Edmund Carpenter when he points out that "any medium abstracts from the given and codifies in terms of that medium's grammar. It converts 'given reality' into experienced reality." Media, in other words, have the capacity to "create" reality.

In the face of overwhelming dominance which mass media have come to exercise over the environmental assessment function of communication, two diametrically opposed interpretations of the First Amendment are competing for preeminence. One of these, commonly referred to as the *laissez-faire* tradition, is, in the words of Lashner, "rooted deep in the Libertarian philosophy of Milton, Locke, Mill and Supreme Court Justices Holmes, Brandels, Black and Douglas." It "gives trust to man's reason and to his ability to seek out truth in the marketplace of ideas; . . . freedom of the press means editorial autonomy, no government restraint prior to dissemination." Print journalism, perhaps because it is an old and familiar face, has been allowed (with only occasional challenges by the government) to function within a *laissez-faire* interpretation of the First Amendment.

A second interpretation of the First Amendment, sometimes referred to as the *regulation tradition*, is described as Lashner as "grounded in fear of the technological revolution, in a less optimistic view of man and society, and in doubts about the efficacy of the Libertarian philosophy. . . Freedom of the press in this context. . . means government oversight where, in the name of protection, economic and editorial freedoms are compromised by an authoritarian system of rules and regulations enforced by a hierarchy of punitive sanctions." Beginning with legislation requiring the licensing of broadcasters, the regulation tradition of the First Amendment has, in the face of the growing influence of broadcast media, pyramided regulation upon regulation and guideline upon guideline in an attempt to insure that the reality-creating potential of television is used, not in the best interests of the media, but in what government perceives as the best interests of the public. Thus, not only are we supposedly insured, thanks to the Fairness Doctrine, of a balanced view of political activity, we are also protected from false and misleading advertising, deceptive program practices, obscenity, indecency, violence, and much, much more. In other words, we have come from a point in 1912, when the Federal Government first began to license radio stations, to a point today where regulation in broadcasting has been extended "to such areas as engineering specifications, network arrangements, multiple and cross-media ownership, business practices, commercial advertising, employment practices, procedures for accountability, and—most important from a First Amendment standpoint—program content" (Lashner).

The same circumstances which have caused mass media to become such an important part of the environmental assessment

function of communication has provided them an equally significant role when communication functions persuasively as a means of *altering* the environment. The process of alteration usually begins with what Professor Lloyd Bitzer of the University of Wisconsin has referred to as the perception of an "exigence"—the feeling that something is significantly wrong with the world and needs to be corrected. Although the source of our knowledge of such defects need not be the mass media, in this day and age it most frequently is. Thus, communication scholar Arthur Smith points out, in relation to the black revolution of the 1960's, that "when sharecroppers in Georgia, exhausted and angry, sat before the television and saw blacks beaten in Chattanooga, hosed in Birmingham, and electrized with cattle prods in Louisiana, they entered the fields with a new reality the next morning. This, Smith continues, "was true for blacks in the North as well as the South," and led directly to such action alternatives as those expressed in Malcolm X's classic speech, "The Ballot or the Bullet."

Regardless of the extent to which mass communication may have contributed to a problem, because of its capacity to command immense audiences those who seek to remedy that problem almost always perceive the media as playing an important role in their plans. The problem, however, is that who or what gets on the established media is determined almost exclusively by a relatively few leaders of the communications industry. These "communication opinion-makers," as political scientist James Rosenau calls them, "operate the theatre in which the opinion-making drama unfolds. They are in a position to draw the curtain, change the scenery, redirect the spotlights, and control the amplifying system." A common problem for all who seek access to the media, therefore, is to gain the attention of the communication opinion-makers.

Such attention may possibly be gained in two ways. The first, most traditional, and surest means is to become newsworthy, a venture in which those with position and power have an obvious advantage over those who lack such attributes. The powerless and positionless must, in Rosenau's words, "either be content with a small, off-Broadway channel, or they must act with sufficient drama to gain access to the well-equipped stage of the playhouse which the communications opinion-makers run in the very heart of the theatre district." As a number of groups of individuals have demonstrated in recent years, it is not terribly difficult to produce the kind of dramatic event requisite for media coverage. The price, however, may be high—as in those cases where the kind of behavior generated for the sake of attention obscures or even contradicts the intended message.

The second way of coming to the attention of the communication opinion-makers is through the sanction of law as extended from the First Amendment. Although the debate over the extent to which freedom of speech rights should guarantee access to the mass media has raged for a number of years, there has, thus far,

been no definitive answer. The legal acceptability to the general principle of such access would seemingly be implied by the Fairness Doctrine. The courts, however, continuing the *laissez-faire* tradition of the print media, have rejected the right of access to newspapers by the public. Similarly, Congress has indicated its willingness to limit the application of the Fairness Doctrine in political debates to the major party candidates. Under present circumstances, therefore, relying on the First Amendment for access to the mass media would, at best, appear tenuous.

Where then does this leave us with regard to First Amendment freedoms at this point in the Twentieth Century, and where should we go from here?

To begin with, it seems apparent that our freedom of speech, regardless of technological development is not illusory. The expressive function of language is still guaranteed and, further, is within the province of any citizen to exercise, in one form or another, at any time. Further, print journalism, despite the attempts of the Nixon Administration to impose prior restraints, is continuing strongly in the *laissez-faire* tradition.

The broadcasting media, particularly television, present some important unresolved questions. On the one hand, it appears to me that, despite the heavy hand of government regulation, television remains in many ways the "wasteland" that Newton Minnow described it as some years ago. On the other hand, I find somewhat appealing the argument that it is precisely because of this regulation that the television industry has been "forced to compromise and retreat; . . . blandness, sameness and triviality oft-times become attractive for their safeness from government reprisal" (Lashner).

Although I am fully aware of the wealth and power of the broadcasting industry in this country, I personally would like to see what would happen if the *laissez-faire* tradition of the First Amendment were applied to the electronic media as it has been to the print media. After all, it has never really been given a chance. Beyond that, however, I'm inclined to agree with Eric Sevareid when he says, "It is the power of government, especially the federal government and more particularly its executive arm, that has increased in my time. Many politicians have come to power in many countries and put press people in jail. I can't think of any place where the reverse has occurred. . . (The press) has no power to arrest you, draft you, tax you or even make you fill out a form."

Finally, I think that there is a better way to cope with the power of the media than through proliferating government regulation—a way which was pointed to by Aldous Huxley, himself a champion of individual liberties, and which should have significance to people in education generally, and to those of us in the communication field specifically. "Never before," writes Huxley, "thanks to the techniques of mass communication, have so many listeners been so completely at the mercy of so few speakers. Never have misused words—those hideously efficient tools of all

the tyrants, warmongers, persecutors, and heresy-hunters — been so widely and disastrously influential as they are today. Generals, clergymen, advertisers, and the rulers of totalitarian states — all have good reasons for disliking the idea of universal education in the rational use of language. To the military, clerical, propagandist, and authoritarian mind such training seems (and rightly seems) profoundly subversive."

The solution, in other words, would seem apparent. So long as Saint Olaf College — and places like it — does its job in providing the kind of "subversive" education described by Huxley, First Amendment freedoms will never become illusory.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH: ALIVE AND WELL?

Ruth M. McGaffey

Is the First Amendment illusory in a Technological Society? I will argue that the First Amendment has always been illusory and continues to be so today. I do not think that the technological advancement of our society is the real reason that First Amendment rights are an illusion. It is certainly true as Professor Scott stated this morning that we feel impotent in the face of the power of the mass media and the "sheer press of population." It is undoubtedly true that for many people the concentration of power in the media is entirely irrelevant because they do not have anything to say. But if an issue comes along on which people wish to speak—another VietNam, integration, the cost of natural gas, the right of public employees to strike, an increase or decrease in welfare payments, the American Nazi Party or racial admission quotas to graduate and professional schools—the people will speak, and if they can not get an audience through radio, television and the written press, they will demonstrate, and they will march again through the streets, they will sit in at lunch counters, burn flags and draft cards, face the national guard as they did at Kent State and the police as they did at the Democratic convention in Chicago. Yes, when the people are aroused, they will speak—or at least some of the people will speak and some of the rest of the people will attempt to shut them up—and that is why I think First Amendment rights are illusory—because the American people don't really believe in them. I will argue today that a large part, perhaps a majority, of our people have never believed in allowing the bad guys to speak—whatever the bad guys might have been at any time in American History. Furthermore, I believe that the situation is substantially the same today. For many of our citizens there are ideas too repugnant to be expressed, and certain people too obnoxious to be tolerated—and that is the danger to the First Amendment. Let us begin by looking at history. History will show that Americans have never been a tolerant people. We have used Vigilantes, police, censorship boards, librarians, school boards, federal, state and local laws and the entire judicial system to suppress expression. We are still doing it.

In the early years of our history we did not rely on federal law to suppress freedom of speech. We simply chased people out of town, tarred, feathered and sometimes even killed them if the views they held were unpopular. Leon Whipple wrote a book in 1927 entitled *Civil Liberty in the United States*. In that book he documented vigilante type persecutions of Quakers, Catholics, Mormons, Abolitionists, labor organizers, Japanese and members of the Salvation Army. One particularly distasteful episode

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concerned the Mormons and is known as the Haun's Mill Massacre. Whipple quotes a contemporary account:

In the afternoon of Tuesday, October 30, 1838, there occurred in Caldwell County the following incident. At Jacob Haun's mill on Shoal Creek had collected about twenty Mormon families. Not one member of the little community had ever been in arms against the Gentiles or had taken any part whatever in the preceding disturbances. However, Colonel Jennings and the militia marched swiftly out of the timber towards the doomed hamlet.

Taken wholly by surprise, the Mormons were thrown into extreme confusion. Perhaps twenty men ran with their guns to the blacksmith shop and began to return the fire. It was wild and ineffective; that of the militia accurate and deadly. Many were shot down as they ran.

Coming upon the field after it had been abandoned, the Gentiles perpetrated some horrible deeds. At least three of the wounded were hacked to death with cornknives or finished with a rifle bullet. William Reynolds found a little boy only ten years of age, named Sardius Smith, hiding under the bellows. Reynolds drew up his rifle and shot the boy as he lay. Charley Merrick, nine years old, ran out but received a load of buckshot. He did not die, however, for nearly five weeks. Thomas McBride was 78 years old and had been a soldier in the revolution. He lay wounded and helpless, but still alive. A Davies County man demanded his gun and finding that it was loaded deliberately discharged it into the veteran's breast. He then cut and hacked the body with his cornknife. The militia had not lost a man and had only three wounded. Mormon dead and mortally wounded numbered seventeen. The severely wounded numbered eleven.

Even allowing for some exaggeration, the stories Whipple tells are not pretty ones. He concluded his book by writing, "We find that the most extensive and frequent losses of liberty are not due either to court or to executive, but to the failure of the force of government to protect men from violence or mobs. The history of liberty could almost be written in terms of mobs that 'got away with it,' and were never punished—from the Tory hunters of 1778 to the Ku Klux Klan of 1927."

It did not take long, however, for the citizens of this country to realize that state, local and federal laws could be passed limiting expression—in spite of the apparent clear wording of the First Amendment, "*Congress Shall Make No Law.*" The Alien and Sedition Acts were neither the beginning nor the end. Laws were passed and enforced banning the advocacy of anarchy, the display of red flags, criticism of the United States government,

advocacy of overthrow of the government and many other kinds of verbal and nonverbal activity. Often the motivating factor for passing such laws was real fear of the results of expression. In 1917, for example, the United States was involved in her first World War and the majority of the American people as well as most of the lawmakers in Washington saw German agents hiding in every corner. Loyalty was a primary concern. The result was the passage of the 1917 Espionage Act which was amended a year later to make illegal not only any attempt to cause insubordination in the military and obstruct recruiting, but also to "utter, print, write or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous or abusive language about the form of government of the United States or the constitution of the United States or the military or naval forces of the United States or the uniform of the Army or Navy" as well as a host of other things. The penalty for violation was twenty years in prison, a fine of \$10,000 or both. At least 2000 people including Socialist presidential candidate Eugene Debs were sentenced to and served prison terms. In Minnesota a man named Gilbert was sentenced to prison for using the following words in a speech.

We are going over to Europe to make the world safe for democracy. But I tell you we had better make America safe for democracy first. You say, "What is the matter with our democracy?" I will tell you what is the matter with it. Have you had anything to say as to who should be President? Have you had anything to say as to who should be governor of this state? Have you had anything to say as to whether we should go into this war? You know you have not. If this is such a great democracy, for Heaven's sake, why should we not vote on conscription of men? We were stampeded into this war by newspaper rot to pull England's chestnuts out of the fire for her. I tell you that if they conscripted wealth like they have conscripted men, this war would not last over forty-eight hours.

Zechariah Chafee, former professor of law at Harvard, reported in his classic work, *Free Speech in the United States*, that:

Many men were imprisoned for arguments or profanity used in the heat of private altercation, on a railroad train, a hotel lobby or a boardinghouse table. In one case two strangers came to a farmhouse and asked the owner if he could let them have some gasoline, saying that they had been stranded out in the country. He not only gave them the gasoline, but invited them to dinner. An argument arose during the meal and the farmer presumably used unpatriotic language in the presence of his guests, two hired men, two neices and some children. The guests reported his language and he was convicted of a wilful attempt to cause disloyalty, insubordination, mutiny and refusal of duty in the military and naval forces of the United States.

Rev. Clarence Waldron of Windsor, Vermont was charged with handing to five persons, among whom were a woman, two men apparently above military age, and another clergyman, a pamphlet to show where he himself stood on the war. The gist of his explanation was:

Surely if Christians were forbidden to fight to preserve the person of their Lord and Master, they may not fight to preserve themselves, or any city they should happen to dwell in. Christ has no kingdom here, His servants must not fight. . . I do not say that it is wrong for a nation to go to war to preserve its interests, but it is wrong to the Christian, absolutely, unutterably wrong. . . Under no circumstances can I undertake any service that has as its purpose the prosecution of war.

Rev. Waldron was convicted for causing insubordination and obstructing recruiting and sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

A man in Montana was convicted and also sentenced to fifteen years of hard labor for uttering contemptuous and slurring language about the American flag. A crowd had tried to force him to kiss the flag and he had refused, saying it might have microbes on it. After conviction he applied to the federal district Court for a writ of habeas corpus. Judge Barquin found himself unable to set the man free, but said of his sentence:

It goes far to give color if not justification to the bitter comment of George Bernard Shaw that during the war, the courts in France, bleeding under the German guns, were very severe; the courts in England, hearing but the echoes of those guns were grossly unjust; but the courts of the United States, knowing naught save censored news of those guns, were stark, raving mad.

Were these prosecutions necessary to save the nation? Perhaps one answer is to note that in Massachusetts which probably had more military bases and munitions factories than any other state, no attempt was made to enforce the Espionage Act, and not one act of sabotage was reported.

With the conclusion of the First World War, the fears of the American people turned to the Russian Revolution and the Socialist Menace. The red flag of revolution became a target of state legislation as almost every state passed laws forbidding the display of a red flag. This caused a little problem in Massachusetts when the legislature realized that such a law would also prohibit the banners of Harvard University. Massachusetts quietly repealed the law, but Connecticut did not. The *Yale Law Journal* contained the following comment:

But surely there is comfort in the fact that now at last the home of Yale University may be considered safe. . . . It has sometimes been thought that the care of criminals was a burden on the tax payer. But now at length while the wrong doer blanches, the taxpayer

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may leap with joy. "Carry a red flag," says the statute—"or any other emblem . . . which may incite people to disorder, "display a red flag" says the ordinance—"punishable by fine." And the Harvard game approaches in New Haven—if not this year, then next.

Here is how Socialists were treated in New Jersey in 1919. The state secretary of the Socialist Party had arranged for a public meeting in the city of Rahway, but had been denied a permit to speak. There was a home for disabled veterans in the area and the mayor feared apparently that the veterans would be aroused by the appearance of the speaker and might provoke some disturbance. Secretary Harwood decided to speak without a permit and announced that he would make a legal test of the matter. The mayor, therefore, told the fire chief to be in the vicinity with his fire truck and if the speaker attempted to speak, to turn the hose on him. The speaker did appear. He had spoken about 700 words when the water was turned on him, washing him from the platform, soaking everyone in the vicinity and adjourning the meeting. The speaker sued the mayor, but the jury found the mayor's orders completely reasonable. The judgement of the trial court was affirmed on appeal, but Judge Minturn wrote the following somewhat sarcastic dissent. He wrote:

When the plaintiff sauntered forth in the afternoon of Decoration Day, 1919, to enter the city of Rahway, as an itinerant disciple of economics and politics, he possessed an inflexible purpose, and, as the events proved, a flexible platform. He also had the notion that, if perchance his preachments were at all obnoxious to law and order, he would be duly informed of the fact by the police officers and if he persisted, haled to the police station where he might assert his legal rights. He also possessed the idea that the water cure was peculiar to the sanitarium, and that the fire department in cities was utilized for the suppression of fires and the police department for the suppression of vice and disorder. He was speedily disillusioned in these respects for the mayor, doubtless guided by the Biblical lesson that "some souls may be saved yet as by fire" and by the doctrine of the Grand Monarch of France that after him came the deluge, called out the fire department, and before the plaintiff had concluded his exordium, turned the fire hose upon him; and under the strenuous impact of 22 to 23 pounds to the square inch of water, the plaintiff was taken from his feet and the inflexible platform was taken with him and law and order in the city of Rahway were thus vindicated.

Although I have tried to pick out examples which I thought were especially colorful, they are not isolated cases. Nor did official repression of expression end in the 20's. In the 1930's labor organizers and Jehovah's Witnesses were the "out" groups

which city and state government attempted to silence. In the early 1940's began our attempt to beat the Commies by making it illegal to advocate the violent overthrow of the government. The 40's and 50's also saw states and localities as well as the federal government attempt to enforce conformity by means of compulsory flag salutes and loyalty oaths. In the 1960's civil rights and anti-war demonstrators started out as minority groups, but became too numerous to silence effectively. By then, perhaps frustrated by the inability or at least difficulty of getting an audience by conventional means, protestors turned to forms of non-verbal communication, and laws were enforced forbidding symbolic protest by means of demonstrations, flag desecration and draft card burning.

Now we are in the seventies. We are going through another one of our periodic attempts to define obscenity—and have at least temporarily concluded that the people of a local area can decide within certain unclear limits—which expressions of sexually explicit material are too offensive to be tolerated.

In some parts of the country the American Nazi Party is the subject of repressive legislation. Milwaukee has again considered a group libel ordinance which would make it a criminal offense to slur a group or a group member, and Skokie, Illinois has been trying a number of methods to prevent the Nazis from parading in uniform. In cases of speech like these, which involve "ideas we hate" it is easy to defend repression and very unpopular to suggest that freedom of expression does not mean protection only for "good ideas."

Suppression of ideas, of course, does not only occur by action of courts, legislatures or police officials. There have been and continue to be thousands of cases of censorship by groups, school boards, librarians or just plain public opinion. In the 1950's for example, the national debate proposition proposed recognition for Red China. Military academies and many state and private schools did not allow their debaters to participate in intercollegiate debate that year. In 1969 Northwestern University was still keeping certain morally questionable books locked up in an iron cage and even thirty year old graduate students could only observe this dangerous material with the written consent of their instructors.

The Eldon, Missouri board of education banned the new American Heritage Dictionary last April because it includes too many four letter words. The decision was in response to a complaint by a Missouri Highway Patrol trooper who was offended by thirty-nine objectionable words. He said, "If people learn words like that it ought to be where you and I learned them—in the streets and in the gutter."

The Wisconsin Education Association Bulletin reports that Censorship is alive and well in Wisconsin. Mauston high school students were not allowed to debate the pros and cons of legal abortion. *The Naked Ape*, *Ms. Magazine* and *Catcher in the Rye*

were considered too explicit for high school students in several communities and *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* was taken off the shelves in Roseville because it was un American.

The history of freedom of Expression in America is not all bad. Repressive laws have sometimes been repealed when the panic period was over. The Courts have struck down some laws as being unconstitutional infringements of free speech.

Courts as well as legislative bodies are of course reflective of popular will—and that has been the problem. Americans believe in freedom of speech more in theory than in practice and are often quite ready to forbid "bad ideas." In the late sixties the Education Commission of the States, a non-profit organization with funds from the Carnegie Corporation asked 90,000 persons if they would permit Americans to hear these statements on radio and television: "Russia is better than the United States," "Some races of people are better than others." "It is not necessary to believe in God." Sixty eight percent of those aged 25 to 35 said they would refuse to permit the broadcast. So would 94 percent of the boys and girls 13 years old and 78 percent of the 17 year olds.

In 1970, 57 percent of the persons polled by the Harris poll agreed that officials should be given the authority to censor films, television, radio and theater for unpatriotic or revolutionary conduct; 52 percent agreed that newspapers that preach revolution should be banned from circulation; and 34 percent agreed that no one should be allowed to possess pornographic materials. By 1975 the numbers had declined slightly, but still around half of the people polled believed that such ideas and materials should be banned.

These would-be censors say that some ideas are worthless, that some content and language is offensive, that some ideas might cause violent reactions from opponents and that other ideas may cause violent actions by supporters. These arguments are probably true. The question, however, is whether any or all of them justify the conclusion that "ideas we hate" should be repressed. I do not think that they do.

All of the previous arguments are based on the idea that there is a hierarchy of content value and that the content at the top should be constitutionally protected while that at the bottom need not be. This theory has appeared several times in many forms. Some speech such as obscenity, "fighting words" and libel has usually been thought to have little value and thus has not been granted constitutional protection. Until recently the Supreme Court has also included "commercial speech" in this category. Philosopher Alexander Meiklejohn argued for years that while there should be no restriction on speech that is relevant to self-government, there could be restrictions on other speech. Others have thought that even within the category of political speech, some topics are more important than others. During the 1950's peaceful labor picketing was granted some constitutional protection because the topic

was considered so important.

It is hard to disagree with the idea that some speech is worth more than others. I would simply say, however, that that argument is irrelevant. There are at least two reasons why I take this position.

First, what I consider to be one of the underlying purposes of the First Amendment is subverted if all ideas are not allowed expression. Oliver Wendell Holmes expressed the underlying philosophy of the marketplace of ideas in 1919 when he wrote, ". . . when men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct 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 marketplace." This may be a slightly naive idea in light of the competitive advantage given to those ideas which find time and space in the mass media, but the fact does remain that if all ideas are not expressed we are neither testing their worth in the marketplace nor considering all ideas in our search for truth and wisdom. It certainly does not follow that the majority will hate only bad or wrong ideas. We take a risk in suppression that something of value will be lost.

Secondly, if hateful ideas are to be repressed, someone must decide which ideas those are. Who should make that decision? Should it be the Attorney General, a Congressional Committee, the Director of the FBI or CIA? The local vice squad or the school board? Legislative bodies? Vigilante groups or the Supreme Court? This country has tried most of those and I have just spent several minutes discussing some of the results. I do not believe any person is competent to make those decisions for others.

Scholars disagree as to what the Founding Fathers really meant by the First Amendment, and I am not sure that it matters. This nation must every day determine what the First Amendment *should* mean. I have argued that the greatest threat to freedom of expression lies in the tendency of the American people to repress views which they do not understand and thus fear, or ideas which they do understand and therefore hate as well as fear. Even if the fears are justified, I do not think the repression is justified. If people are or even pretend to be rational, the answer is in more discussion, not less. If people are not or do not want to be rational, there is very little hope for us anyway.

After Oliver Wendell Holmes had enunciated the marketplace theory and had said that the best test of truth was its ability to get itself accepted in the marketplace, he concluded with these words.

That at any rate is the theory of our Constitution. It is an experiment as all life is an experiment. Every year if not every day we have to wager our salvation upon some prophecy based upon imperfect knowledge. While that experiment is part of our system, I think we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check

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the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to
be fraught with death unless they so imminently
threaten immediate interference with the lawful and
pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check
is required to save the country.

I agree with those words. Those of us in the speech field have
traditionally held that the best way to make democracy work is to
teach people to listen and think critically, to weigh evidence and
argue effectively. The adversary system may not work all the
time. It may appear naive to base a government on the theory that
if both sides of an issue are effectively presented men and women
will usually make a reasonable decision, but that is the way this
nation works, and few other systems have worked better. To
make that system work, freedom of expression in practice as well
as in theory is needed.

I am proud to be a St. Olaf graduate. I am proud to be a product of
the Department of speech. I am especially proud to have been a
St. Olaf debater. That's where I really learned that there are often
good arguments on both sides of an issue—and evidence to back
them up. I learned that argument from biased authorities did not
win a debate round and that argument ad hominum did not
destroy the opposition.

I am also proud to be a faculty member of the University of
Wisconsin. Wisconsin is a schizophrenic state and has been the
home of Joe McCarthy as well as Robert LaFollette. The
University of Wisconsin struck a blow for free speech in the
1890's when prominent citizens tried to force the dismissal of an
economics professor for his liberal views toward labor. The Board
of Regents held a hearing and in its decision included the
following words which have been emblazoned in Bronze at
Bascomb Hall in Madison and Mitchell Hall at U. W. Milwaukee. It
says:

Whatever may be the limitations which trammell
inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the Great State
University of Wisconsin should ever encourage that
continual sifting and winnowing by which alone the
truth can be found.

COMMENTS ON THE NEW MSHSL STORYTELLING PROPOSAL

Editor's Note: At the 1977 SAM Convention, Michael Tillmann, SAM President-elect and speech coach at Marshall High School, proposed a revision of the rules governing the Storytelling event. A lively discussion ensued over the following specific changes:

A. One hour before speaking, students will draw a single plot outline. The plot outline may be a complete story structure or a simple list of characters and a brief statement of conflict.

B. Students will have one hour in which to create a story based on the plot outline they have drawn. During this time they may not confer with other students or with their coaches.

C. Using a maximum of fifty words of notes, students will tell their own original stories within a time limit of six minutes.

Subsequent to the meeting, Linda Berger and Carol Gaede submitted a position paper to the *SAM Journal* in support of the proposal. In order to avoid presenting herein the views of only the proponents of this change, the Editor has invited Mr. Tillmann, as MSHSL Director, to report first the arguments of those who favor the current procedures.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS OPPOSING CHANGE

(reported by Michael Tillmann, SAM President-elect)

I have been asked to summarize the objections which have been forwarded to my office regarding the proposed change in the Storytelling event. While I am greatly in favor of the proposal, I believe it is necessary that the objections be heard as well.

At the 1977 SAM Conference there was, of course, discussion on both sides of the question. In addition, I have received three letters which raised objections; all three listed the same two major arguments.

A. This proposal will further cause speech activities to be "elitist." Students in Storytelling in the past have often been seventh and eighth graders who could handle the fairy tale type of literature with ease and enthusiasm. Most, the letters said, would not be able to make up stories on their own. One letter further argued that senior high school students of "lower ability" were better able to participate under the present format.

B. Who would create the plot outlines? There seems to be considerable belief, at least among these three statements, that coaches would be at a loss in helping students to prepare. One suggested that if this proposal were adopted, the League must provide sample plot outlines and a good deal of pre-season clinic

work to help coaches.

Finally, one of the coaches said that "We have changed too much. Why can't we just leave things alone for a while?"

These statements summarize the opposition arguments heard by me as MSHSL Director. They deserve our consideration.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF THE PROPOSED CHANGE

The following comments and suggestions are given in support of Mr. Tillman's proposed revision of the Storytelling event format. The ideas are also presented for the encouragement of coaches in search of new techniques for working with students in this event whether or not the proposed change goes through.

From the Coach's Corner: *(submitted by Linder Berger, Speech Coach, Mineota High School)*

Storytelling, as a speech category, has been "in trouble" for the past few years (as attested to by a decline in numbers of students participating in the event). The fairy tale concept of storytelling became tedious, and the lack of available material is evidenced by the use of *The Violet Book of Fairy Stories* for two years. The book used last year was an anthology of some good (and some poor) short stories that were rather effective in their use of language and thus were readily adaptable to *interpretation*, but many were so vague on plot and characterization (two essentials for storytelling) that students, coaches, and judges were simply at a loss as to how to utilize the material.

The proposed change encourages creativity (something which students enjoy—look at the growing popularity and innovative ideas in the category of Creative Expression). Thus the storytelling experience would no longer simply be a condensation of the written short story but could truly embody the student's imaginative use of the story "skeleton." Obviously, coaches will be looking for students with imagination, and renewed interest could be generated among junior high students (many of whom enjoyed the fairy tale concept but found last year's "serious" stories far too difficult).

As a coach, I would prepare students in the areas of characterization and plot development. In practice sessions, students can experiment with various physical and vocal traits that will distinguish characters from each other. Sample plot outlines can be prepared by the coach, beginning with a simple three-stage outline (beginning, middle, and end) and working up to more complex structures. This type of practice will undoubtedly prepare students for this specific event but will also encourage development of both physical and vocal skills (one of our prime objectives for any event).

As with any proposed revision of the rules governing an event, it

may take several seasons and subsequent revisions to minimize problems. For example, the controversy over acting may become an issue, thus necessitating some guidelines for the use of physical movement, props, etc., but the category could undoubtedly become highly entertaining and beneficial under the proposed format. As educators, we should be willing to explore new avenues for the growth and development of the speaking experience, and although we cannot guarantee that a revision of the rules will solve all problems, there is ample indication in this case that a new format could prove highly beneficial.

From the Judge's Point of View (submitted by Carol Gaede, Assistant Professor of Speech, Moorhead State University)

It has been my experience in judging the Storytelling event that the most successful competitors are the most creative ones. A student who is not limited by the words of a particular story but rather can truly "tell" a story in his/her own words will have an advantage over the one who simply tried to parrot the written style. It has also been my experience in teaching Storytelling courses that the student who is new to the techniques of this art form is tempted to rely too heavily on the specific language of a story. Time is wasted in trying to memorize phrases which are then delivered in a mechanical manner. I often begin classes by asking each student to relate a personal experience. We then move quickly to an impromptu session of telling familiar fairy tales, and the class members finally progress to preparing outlines from stories, practicing them, and telling their tales.

As a judge of this event, under the proposed ruling, I would use the following criteria for evaluating competitors:

A. Imaginative development of the story elements. Since the students will be given only basic outlines, they will be expected to create their own, more detailed descriptions of plot, characters, and settings. This use of imagination would become particularly noticeable if the contest manager chose to have each student in a round work from the same outline.

B. Fluency. The student who can perform with confidence and flair will be rewarded for his/her efforts. I have always felt that achieving fluency of delivery is one of the major benefits students should derive from participating in forensics competition.

C. Concentration. This involves the performer's ability to be completely immersed in his/her character. It has long been the maxim of professionals in creative dramatics and children's theatre that a young audience will accept characters, however exaggerated or "unreal," as long as the performer is consistent and sincere in the creation of such a character. I believe the same is true for any audience.

D. Personal communication and rapport with the audience. The ancient art of storytelling was a means of communicating information and culture from one group of people to another, from

one generation to the next, long before the written language was readily available to large segments of the population. If the Storytelling event is to be more than an isolated exercise and if the skills developed by the student are to have any long-range benefit, the activity must be viewed as one type of face-to-face, interpersonal communication. When the student is encouraged to develop a story "in his/her own words," rather than to merely condense words written by someone else, the goal of refining the participant's communication skills is more likely to be accomplished.

The proposed revision of the Storytelling event provides an opportunity for young performers to express themselves in unique and individual ways through the use of their imagination, mind, voice, and body. The event will definitely be a challenge to students and coaches alike, but the main requirement will be imagination—something every young person possesses, probably in greater abundance than the adults who worry that only "exceptional" students could enter such an event.

I don't know if e. e. cummings ever entered a storytelling contest, but his "Advice to Poets" seems to suggest that the person with imagination is "someone who feels, and who expresses his feelings through words . . . Nothing is quite as easy as using words like somebody else. We all of us do exactly this nearly all the time—and whenever we do it, we're not poets."

APPLICATION OF THE "BUDDY SYSTEM" TO CLASSROOM SPEAKING ASSIGNMENTS

David Congalton

As any speech teacher knows, public speaking courses are difficult classes to teach well. Problems abound from initial planning to assessment of final grades. In this paper, I would like to focus on two of the more formidable problems in such a class as well as a possible solution for them.

The first problem involves the varied public speaking experience of the students. In any given class, a teacher might have debaters and other speech oriented people as well as students who have never given any kind of public speech. Such a mixture forces the teacher to direct the course content at both beginning the new student as well as maintaining the interest of those more experienced students.

A second problem the teacher faces is speech anxiety. Many students are excessively fearful at the thought of speaking in front of the class. Personal conferences with such students can help, however, students are often afraid to admit their lack of confidence. Still other students panic the night before when there is no teacher to turn to, forcing them to turn to a sympathetic, but not always helpful, brother or roommate.

The problems of varied experiences and speech anxiety can be minimized, if not functionally eliminated. A possible solution lies in the concept of a "buddy system" among the students. The "buddy system" is an approach whose concept has proved successful in many areas outside of communication. The "buddy system" is basically an approach that breaks down a large group of people into a series of pairs. Each member of an individual pair then assumes a mutual responsibility for the guidance, protection, and well-being of the other member. Children who are sent out swimming, girls who go walking outside at night, and even soldiers in combat have all used a system where one person watches out for the other.

This "buddy system" can easily be applied to speech classroom activities. The setting up and application of this system involves four basic steps:

1. The first step involves having the class evaluate themselves in terms of their own confidence and ability as speakers. Stressing to the class that they be honest in their evaluations, their comments should only be a brief sentence or two. In addition, the students should rate themselves on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest rating of confidence. Such a rating will be helpful in providing the teacher a numerical translation of their own ability.

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II. Given the evaluations, the teacher should then break the students into pairs based upon their own evaluations. Priority should be given to pairing those more confident students with those who remain apprehensive.

III. Once pairings are established, the list should be announced in class and students should be allowed to meet with their partners.

IV. Each student will be responsible for introducing his/her partner when it is time for that person to speak in class.

This buddy system is an attempt to help students work with each other in the preparation of their speeches. Students act as sounding boards and advisers in helping each other select topics, conduct research, and prepare mentally for their speeches.

Why the fuss? Why should the "buddy system" be applied in a public speaking class? The possible advantages are many:

I. The "buddy system" allows the more experienced student to apply his/her knowledge and experience to helping those who need that knowledge the most. The system poses a new challenge to the student who has mastered speech anxiety; a challenge to help others.

II. The "buddy system" allows the inexperienced student someone to relate to other than a teacher who might not be available. Students might also feel more at ease in dealing with another student in a dorm room, library, or recreational setting.

III. The "buddy system" aids the teacher because the system allows more time outside of class to be spent on the actual problem of anxiety. Thus, the constant reassurance stems not only from the teacher but also from people who will actually constitute the listening audience.

This system is suggested to complement the teacher. The burden should not be passed entirely to the students. Still the system can be helpful in allowing students to face a common problem together. My own experience with the "buddy system" has been very positive; student satisfaction towards speaking has been higher. However, if the students fail to take an active interest in each other, the system has very little to offer. There is no guarantee that the "buddy system" can solve the anxiety and experience problems for all teachers.

The "buddy system" is one approach to dealing with student anxiety in a public speaking class. Inherent in the system are additional aids for the beginning student as well as new challenges for the student who has overcome anxiety. The system has worked well in other areas and it holds a strong potential to help students interested in public speaking.

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