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Although Marshall McLuhan (1968) once fostered the analogy, it is not currently fashionable to think of the news media as myths. "Myth," Chase (quoted in Bruner, 1968: 276) informs us, "is an esthetic device for bringing the imaginary but powerful world of preternatural forces into a manageable collaboration with the objective [i.e., experienced] facts of life in such a way as to excite a sense of reality amenable to both the unconscious passions and the conscious mind." Myths resonate with the unconscious; news, in contrast, claims to be a veridical account of reality addressed to a rational analysis of worldly events. Thus, when most contemporary researchers seek a metaphor for news, they reach for shadows—mass-mediated images projected on a wall and having some discernable relationship to the events they portray. Because the metaphor of myth connotes religion, primeval forces, Greek drama—not the painstaking reproduction of the everyday world intended by news—it is rejected.

Yet some recent authors, most notably Enzensberger (1974), have introduced notions that wed the news media to myth. Enzensberger writes of the media as "the consciousness industry." Forsaking a concern with attitudes and values, notions dear to contemporary social science, he unabashedly suggests that the modern media, including television news, encourage the "industrialization of the mind"; they foster a consciousness conducive to advanced industrialism, just as some 50 years ago, earlier industrialists and efficiency experts transformed the body into an extension of the machine (Braverman, 1974). The task of news, Enzensberger's work implies, is not merely to inform and to impart facts. Rather, in its adaptation of a particular mode of facticity, identified by Fishman (1977) as bureaucratically produced facts, it fosters the subordinate consciousness of the citizen-viewer (a term borrowed from Dahlgren, 1977), who is presented with a symbolically consistent construction. Myths, not shadows, are wedded to consciousness. Myths, not shadows, encode oracular visions of the everyday world and present themselves as both palpable and primitive realities. Nonetheless, past research analyzes news as a potentially accurate representation.

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PAST RESEARCH

With little reflection or self-consciousness, research on news has adopted one central tenet of newsworkers' professionalism: news is or should be a veridical account of occurrences in the everyday world.[1] Academic scholars have insistently sought to develop models and measures of the relationship between occurrences and news stories. For instance, Lang and Lang (1953) speak of how television "refracts" reality. Writing about MacArthur Day (a civic celebration in honor of the general after his recall from Japan by President Truman), they seek to determine the laws governing refraction, much as a physicist might search for the physical laws governing the passage of light through a prism. The metaphor implies that the objective reality of an occurrence may be reassembled, just as a physicist can reassemble the unity of light by passing its refracted, rainbowed diversity through another prism. Lang and Lang do not consider the theoretical possibility that television news inevitably accomplishes an intrinsic transformation of the transmitted phenomena, akin perhaps to the inextricable and observable distinction between animals playing at fighting and engaging in fights (discussed by Bateson, 1955, and Goffman, 1974).

The promise of an ability to fill in "what really happened" from television accounts—to construct the everyday world from the mass-mediated image—crops up consistently in Lang and Lang's frequently cited article. Writing of the television camera's ability to transmit a "false impression" of an occurrence, specifically that masses of people have assembled despite the insistence of sociologically trained observers that the crowd was sparse, they introduce the term "technological bias." The Langs specifically state they are referring to the technical limitations of the camera: it includes some phenomena in the picture and necessarily excludes others; it frames. But they do not discuss frames as devices for knowing, as do more contemporary researchers (cf. Goffman, 1974; Tuchman, 1978b).[2] Rather, their term "bias" raises the possibility of discovering how "distortion" occurs and how the objective facts may be reassembled. As Fishman (1977) suggests, the use of the term "bias" in the study of news invokes social psychological experiments on rumor: one can trace the progressive distortion of a rumor and the selective perception and retention of those repeating the rumor to derive psychological "laws." But this approach, like the analogy to physics, ignores the possibility of a transformation in kind as opposed to an alteration in the degree of accuracy.[3]

It is unfair to fault Lang and Lang as researchers and theoreticians. Their attempts to break down news into the occurrences it claims to mirror or refract and their refusal to analyze television news as an artful accomplishment are characteristic of research during the 1950s. Similar assumptions about the primacy of everyday reality (frequently called "objective reality") are also found in Daniel Boorstin's The Image (1961), a respected and classic discussion of news. He decries the growing prevalence of the pseudo-event, the occurrence arranged by news promoters (a term offered by Molotch and Lester,

1974) for newsworkers. Again, the social scientific term is metaphoric and confers substance on the everyday world, but not on news. The false, pseudo, or ersatz event is opposed to the real event—the genuine happening existing independently of the news machinery, such as the spontaneous fire. Using reasoning parallel to that of Lang and Lang, Boorstin ignores the possibility that the news media transform the fire by creating it as a "public event" and a "resource for public discourse" (Molotch and Lester, 1975; cf. Chaney, 1977). As a public event, defined by the newspaper or television newscast, the fire is as much a part of the news product and the news process as an occurrence that was specially arranged for the cameras. And the unreported fire is as private an occurrence as the unreported feelings of Biafran mothers who watched their children starve.[4]

During this same period of research, there were promising attempts to reconsider news as organized process accomplished in organized settings, to view the production of news as the creation of a self-contained reality.Walter Gieber's famous article "News Is What Newspapermen Make It" (1964) comes immediately to mind. As implied by the title, Gieber discussed news as the creation of news editors (gatekeepers), working in concert within constraints established by their organizations. Avoiding the psychological reductionism and notion of personal preference implicit in David Manning White's earlier study (1950) of a wire service editor, Gieber claimed that, for example, the closer the newspaper's deadline, the more selective the wire service editor in his choice of materials. Yet although Gieber also stressed that editors at a variety of newspapers made essentially the same decisions about which stories were (or were not) newsworthy, he entitled his article "News Is What Newspapermen Make It," not "News Is What Organizational Constraints Make It" or "News Is the Product of Interacting Institutions." Retaining the notion of bias, seeking to construct models of how occurrences are turned into news (see particularly Gieber and Johnson, 1961), the work is fundamentally ambivalent. On the one hand, news is an organizational construction; on the other, newsworthiness is created out of newsworkers' selectivity, a psychological selectivity collectively shared by newsworkers as a norm of newswork. The emphasis remains upon organized individuals more than upon the organized features of the setting in which news is found and processed. Thus Gieber, too, promulgates the notion of some sort of direct correspondence between the everyday world and the world called news.

PRESENT RESEARCH

Ultimately, Robert Park (reprinted in Park and Burgess, 1967) remarked years ago, news is simply a story. For Park, an ex-journalist ambitious to establish the cultural importance of the media, news was the modern replacement of the short story. Park's comment is important for its claim, if not its historical accuracy. For few would insist that a short story exist as a veridical account of the everyday world. Like a poem or painting, it must "capture" something of the world. But a poem or a painting insistently defines itself as a different order of reality, a frame containing its own form and meaning, revealing aspects of a society but not literally of it. Like children playing at fighting, a poem or painting is to be distinguished from the phenomenon it transforms.

So, too, recent research seems to announce, news is necessarily a different kind of reality from the everyday world. To try to speak of the organized individual biases of reporters and editors, as crudely done by Altheide (1977), or even of organizational bias, as done by the very sophisticated work of the Glasgow University Media Group (1976), is to collapse news back into everyday life, as opposed to appreciating and analyzing its artful construction and mythic appeal.

Goffman (1974), the Glasgow University Media Group (1976), Molotch and Lester (1974, 1975), Fishman (1977), and I (1978b) have all written about news as an artful construction. The theoretical thrust, adopted from interpretive sociologies (including Garfinkel, 1967) and anthropology (Bateson, 1955), analyzes news as a "frame" organizing "strips" of everyday reality and imposing order on it.[5] It asks: (1) How does the news frame transform occurrences in the everyday world into news events (Molotch and Lester, 1975; Fishman, 1977;. the Glasgow University Media Group, 1976; Tuchman, 1978b)? (2) How does the news frame transform news events into news stories (Glasgow University Media Group, 1977; Tuchman, 1978b)? How does the newspaper reader or television viewer perceive the latent structure of news (a term from Katz, 1977) as accounts of the structured social world (Halloran et al., 1970, and Gitlin, 1977, among others)? Implicitly or explicitly, all this research recognizes the essential reflexivity of news stories, the embeddedness of selectively detailed accounts in the methods of their production, and the mundane presence of news in readers' and viewers' lives. News draws from life, transforms life, and reenters life.

Two recent and very different works stand out as prototypes of this approach. One is Mark Fishman's (1977) dissertation on a small-town newspaper; the other, the Glasgow University Media Group's ongoing analysis of British newscasts (1976). Gathering his data through participant observation and interviews, Fishman writes of the methods reporters use to notice occurrences and to define and to glean facts. A student of Molotch (see particularly Molotch and Lester, 1974; Molotch, 1978), Fishman starts with the recognition that newsmaking is an interactional process. He demonstrates that news is a product of negotiated interactions among newsworkers and news sources and that details chosen for inclusion in stories indicate what is newsworthy within the bounds of that relationship as ongoing process. But those negotiations are not the product of individual proclivities and mere professional understandings. Rather, according to Fishman (1977), they are enmeshed in both bureaucratized and routinized interactions between and among workers in legitimated institutions, including newsworkers' interactions with one another.[6] The centralization of information in bureaucracies and the generation of facts

by bureaucracies stand at the center of Fishman's analysis: to meet the prescheduled deadlines of bureaucratic news organizations, newsworkers must rely on centralized legitimated sources.

Take one telling case, the coverage of a fire that destroyed many homes. To estimate the damage by calling every homemaker is a time-consuming and arduous task. Calling individual insurance companies to learn of claims filed with them is equally onerous. Faced with the job of estimating damage,[7] one reporter whom Fishman observed surmised that insurance companies must report claims to a centralized source in order to prevent the possibility of fraud, a family filing claims with two companies, for example. Once the reporter's assumption of a centralized source was confirmed by an insurance company, the task was simplified: call the centralized source for an aggregate estimate of the damage.

Fishman points out that all hard-news reporting reproduces the primacy of such legitimated bureaucratic institutions: facts produced by centralized bureaucratic sources are assumed to be essentially correct and disinterested. Facts promoted by others are "soft," "nonobjective," and interested. Logically, then, what is reported as fact is a product of bureaucratic interaction embedded in instrumental rationality, and it both predigests and hides lived social experience. Crime is defined by the police, not by either the victim or the perpetrator; the impact of inflation is defined by government statisticians, not the taxpayer; the level of noise produced by a supersonic transport is defined by the Federal Aviation Authority, not those whose homes are under the airplane's path.[8]

Additionally, Fishman argues, reliance on centralized sources may blind reporters to occurrences. For instance, when a policy-making group debates administrative matters (in his example, a city council debate on the purchase of heavy machinery), reporters chat throughout the discussion as though "nothing" were happening. Adhering to a bureaucratically derived frame that identifies policymakers with policy and administrators with the implementation of policy, the reporters cannot perceive the city council's extended exchange as a challenge to administrative authority. An organizationally induced trained incapacity (see Tuchman, 1978b) is operating to prevent reporters from getting a handle on the occurrence they are witnessing.

Equally important, reliance on centralized authority and sources may force modes of otherwise unacceptable behavior on groups and individuals trying to promote occurrences as newsworthy events. Take social movements, particularly those in prebureaucratic stages. Not only do they have little access to newsworkers (see Goldenberg, 1975), but, additionally, they seek to promote issues by offering facts contrary to those of centralized sources: they challenge the news frame. Accordingly, to compete with the "logic of the concrete" (Phillips, 1976) embedded in both newswork and centralized sources, social movements must assemble in the wrong place at the wrong time to do the wrong thing—to paraphrase Molotch and Lester (1974). Otherwise, they remain invisible to reporters and editors.

News, then, presents a politically legitimated reality.

And the news frame thrusts that mode of interpreting the world on news consumers. News objectifies and reifies social and economic forces, presenting inflation as though it were a tornado, impossible to control, but necessary to mop up after (Tuchman, 1978b; Dahlgren, 1977). And it counsels that the appropriate officials are doing everything humanly possible to mop up. As myth, news suggests that social and economic forces (never analyzed but detailed through the logic of the concrete) are "primeval forces" akin to the bureaucratized legitimated institutions designed to cope with them. Social and economic forces and legitimated institutions become actors in a postindustrial passion play.[9]

Using content analysis to understand how television news frames its industrial coverage, the Glasgow University Media Group (1976) verifies in detail the mythic transformation of everyday life. Its data indicate not only that news generates accounts of uncontrollable forces but also that social actors are cast as villains and heroes, those who disrupt the consumer society and those who battle to retain social order.

Recognizing that news is embedded in the processes of its production, the Glasgow University Media Group bases its analytic categories on those used in newsrooms. Three findings are particularly interesting. First, although television is more likely to cover occurrences suitable for filming (cf. E. J. Epstein, 1973), the pattern of British television coverage of industrial disputes does not significantly depart from that of newspapers. All news has an essential unity.

Second, industrial coverage draws upon routine bureaucratic sources, such as government agencies, for facts, including facts about strikes and industrial disputes, and covers union activity when unions generate "events" (the Glasgow University Media Group's term for organized actions other than news conferences and releases). Associated with this pattern is the practice of asking official sources for facts about the union's activities and then asking the union to deny or substantiate them (a practice of simultaneously confirming and shaping information also discussed by Fishman).

Third, by comparing patterns of coverage with government records on industrial activity, the content analysis indicates that television news stresses union actions as both disorder and a challenge to consumers. The Glasgow University Media Group explains that those union activities stressed by the media concern "unscheduled interruptions to production processes and consumption patterns" (1976:204):

> The emphasis on transport and communications and public administration reveals . . . a concern for the inconvenienced consumer of goods and services. A strike that grounds aircraft is highly inconvenient to the holidaymakers and businessmen, a railway strike is very troublesome to the commuter . . . and a strike of dustcart drivers is a growing difficulty for the consumer wishing to dispose of his unconsumed leftovers [1976:203].

The Glasgow University Media Group concludes:

> Given this emphasis, it is difficult to structure news in a way that does not implicitly, at least, blame those groups or individuals who precipitate action that, in one way or another, is defined as disruptive.

This structuring often demands a search for the "disruptive" element, which is exacerbated by the lack of historical perspective [cf. Phillips, 1976]—an element of news presentation that often results in a somewhat arbitrary allocation of blame for the disruption. . . . The contours of coverage never deviate from this frame [1976:204].

One may identify these patterns with systematic bias, as done by the 1950s communications researchers, and the Glasgow University Media Group does introduce such terms. In their ongoing contrast of television news with government data,[10] they speak of "skewed coverage." Yet, as indicated by the above quotation, the group is always sensitive to news as the creation of a *consistent* frame, an internally coherent reality. Thus, it suggests that if one accepts reportorial news values and the news frame, one "would be hard put to demonstrate any bias at all" (1976:204). The news frame resonates with the legitimacy of bureaucratic and professional authority.

Furthermore, the Glasgow University Media Group does not suggest that news reflects back on society by reinforcing attitudes about *specific* occurrences, the tack taken by earlier researchers and reviewed by Klapper (1960). Rather, it argues, news encourages the viewer to see the everyday world in terms of the news frame's internally created consistency. It cites the consistency rule developed by conversation analysts: "If some population is being categorized and if the category from some device's collection has been used to categorize the first member of the population, then that category or other caegories from the same collection may be used to categorize further members of the population." The Group offers the following example:

The week had its share of unrest: Trouble in Glasgow with striking dustmen and ambulance controllers, short time in the car industry, no *Sunday Mirror* or *People Today* and a fair amount of general trouble in Fleet Street and a continuing rumbling over the matter of two builders' pickets jailed for conspiracy [1976:23].

It comments:

In this piece of news talk, the category "unrest" is used simultaneously to gloss such diverse phenomena as different strikes, short-time working, and a conspiracy case. The preferred hearing is clearly that we see . . . all of these as merely cases of "unrest." . . . a hearer who uses the consistency rule, and most of us do as a matter of course, will regularly not even notice that there might be an ambiguity in the use of some category among a group [1976:23, 24].

Consistent with Molotch and Lester (1975), Dahlgren (1977), Fishman (1977), and Tuchman (1978b) the Glasgow University Media Group is announcing that the ongoing framing of the everyday world produced by television news shows creates an ideologically integrated consciousness. The mass media, including the news media, "are the cultural arm of the industrial order from which they spring," the Glasgow University Media Group reminds us (1976:15), quoting Gerbner (1972:51).

But ultimately, even while affirming the similarity between newspaper reporting and television news coverage, the first volume of the Glasgow University Media Group's project leaves us somewhat bereft. Like some other sophisticated discussions of television newscasts (e.g., Dahlgren, 1977), it concerns news talk not news film.

News presents itself as an ahistorical unanalytic presentation of the logic of the concrete (cf. Phillips, 1976). So too news film. It claims "actuality" but eschews understanding. Although Sontag (1977) carefully differentiates between photographs and film, one of her comments about still photography seems particularly applicable to news film. She writes, "Photography implies that we know about the world if we accept it as the camera records it. But this is the opposite of understanding, which starts from *not* accepting the world as it looks" (1977:23).[11] Although the Glasgow University Media Group occasionally gives examples of accompanying visuals and is working on a book concerning the visual presentation of industrial news, we still lack data on the key element that distinguishes newscasts from newspapers.

To be sure, there are some data available. The Glasgow University Media Group (Paul Walton, personal communication, July 1977) has isolated a basic vocabulary of 50 camera shots used in news film of industrial stories. Elsewhere I have discussed the camera angles associated with different kinds of stories, suggesting that protests are framed differently from bureaucratic sources (1978b, chap. 6). Sontag's comment on the "normal rhetoric of the photographic portrait" (1977:37, 38) also seems applicable to news film. The newsmakers or newsreader's talking head "facing the camera signifies solemnity, frankness, the disclosure of the subject's essence."[11] But the slim data do not suffice. For we do not know the social meanings of the seemingly consistent visual news frame—their resonance with "unconscious passions and the conscious mind" and their significance in para-social interaction. We do not know how that frame is embedded in the activities of television camera crews and those who process and edit their film without an understanding of the latent structure of news film, akin to our knowledge of the latent structure of news talk. And so we cannot know the impact of news film's style—whether, like news talk, it encodes a particular ideology or industrializes mind.

To understand what we do not know, we must reconsider the sparse literature on the use of film to construct accounts, particularly the question of style.

DEALING WITH FILM

Three recent studies seem promising for an eventual discussion of television news film. Worth and Adair (1970) demonstrate that silent film corresponds to linguistic devices used within a culture to tell stories. Bellman and Jules-Rosette (1977) suggest that film and video techniques chosen by informants mark their cultural understandings of the events recorded. Rosenblum (1978) demonstrates that three styles of photography—news, advertising, and art stills—derive from the division of labor characteristic of their production.

Perhaps the most powerful comment in Worth and Adair's book and article on Navaho filmmakers is a quotation from a Navaho-speaking woman on the work of a bilingual filmmaker: she couldn't understand the film

because it spoke English. Worth and Adair can describe what it means to speak either English or Navaho in a silent film. The Navaho films eschewed close-ups, even after the anthropologists show a cameraperson how to make one in a specific situation. They include the structure of Navaho storytelling. In one film, there are more scenes of walking than footage on the process of making jewelry, the ostensible topic of the film. And the film includes walking to locate metal with which to make jewelry, reproducing oral narrative patterns, even though that activity is not normally the task of the jewelry makers. In Worth and Adair's research reports, Western film practices (and news film practices in particular) emerge in contrast to the Navaho practices. Learning what the Navaho do, one learns what Western news filmmakers do not do, and so one can visualize news film conventions otherwise taken for granted. Even the most astute observer of photography and fiction films might not notice those conventions without the Navaho contrast.[12]

Bellman and Jules-Rosette criticize the work of Worth and Adair for not going sufficiently beyond the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis. Rather than demonstrating a simple correspondence between language and film, Bellman and Jules-Rosette wish to explore film as the simultaneous description, depiction, and definition of realities—film as act and film techniques defined in and definitive of the context of their usage. As Sontag argues of photographs:

> A photograph changes according to the context in which it is seen. . . . Each [situation in which it is viewed] suggests a different use for the photographs but none can secure their meaning. As Wittgenstein argued for words, that the meaning is the use, so for each photograph [1977:106].

So, too, Bellman and Jules-Rosette argue, the meaning of specific techniques foreign to Western documentaries—panning while changing the camera angle analyzed as a cademic marker—is embedded in their African informants' understanding of the ceremonies and daily activities they record. The films speak neither English nor an African dialect (although following Worth and Adair, Bellman and Jules-Rosette employ linguistic analogies, at one point discussing "pidginized" film techniques of informants exposed to Western filmmakers). The films themselves speak, for they are embedded in the filmmakers' understanding of their topic. This interpretation of Bellman and Jules-Rosette's argument is strengthened by a footnoted comparison they provide:

> In a study of Manhattan day care centers, Bellman and Joseph Glick found significant differences between videotapes made by directors with different philosophies and positions regarding day care. The camerapersons who were in more contact with the children tended to follow the activity rather than attempt to describe the center without regard to the children in it. The camerapersons who had only a formal relationship to the center were unable to locate the sense of the children's behavior. They . . . [showed] close-ups of "cute" children and several shots of short duration presenting an inventory of the center's facilities [1977:201].

The interpretation also emerges from extensive comparisons of the cademic markers in films and video tapes made by the Africans with those used by Western students possessing varying degrees of familiarity with the scenes and ceremonies they were recording.

Like the work of Worth and Adair, that of Bellman and Jules-Rosette propels us into an analysis of Western culture by highlighting the distinctions between Western news and documentary film and that of non-Western industrialized people. They note:

> The cademic markers can also be regarded as a means to explore how informant, documentary and commercial media productions are structured. . . . For example, the presumed neutrality of news broadcasts, the attractions of children's programming, and the calculated appeal of commercials might be examined with regard to the use of camera movements across these recording contexts [1977:201, 202].

Such a study would be complex. It might generate data on methods of seeing conducive to structural analysis as done by modern linguists. But it would also have to detail the specific organization of work in each context and analyze each context as producing methods of both seeing and not seeing, of knowing and not knowing (see Smith, 1972). For, analyses of newsworkers' methods indicate they entail methods of not knowing endemic to the bureaucratic production of news (Fishman, 1977; Tuchman, 1978a and 1978b). And Rosenblum (1978) convincingly demonstrates that professional standards of photographic styles appropriate to news, advertising, and art derive from the organized division of labor in complex work settings. Cademic markers may be produced by work processes as methods of organizing understanding.

But such a study would still leave significant questions unanswered. It would remain difficult to discuss such basic dimensions of consciousness as our socially given sense of time. News, like other television shows, appears promptly and regularly. (One can discard clocks and tell time by television, and television sets have replaced clocks as a temporal marker and comforting presence in the family living room.) But news seems changeless: like the lead characters of entertainment programs (Gitlin, 1978), newsmakers do not grow and develop. They drop from view (where has George McGovern gone?). They are announced to be all new and improved, like the "New Nixon" of 1968, the new grown-up and short-haired Marie Osmond, and the new and improved detergent. Moreover, television news film reduces the world to snippets of approximately the same duration: 30 seconds of silent film with voice-over or a minute and 30 seconds or two minutes and 30 seconds of a complex audio-visual package, reassuringly introduced by the anchorperson who will reappear to read another story. People, issues, events—all fade. Bureaucratic rationality portrayed as means-ends schema endure, as do some (but not all) anchorpersons: modern oracles. Perhaps the consumers' experience of viewing snippets lends a constant authority to the frontally framed newsreaders.

Relatively few anchorpersons age. Locally, one fresh young face is replaced by another. Nationally, Walter Cronkite has grown gray. Startled, a viewer who has "grown up with Walter" (as one of Levy's [1977] infor-

mants put it) may notice Walter's grayed hair, much as one suddenly perceives that a favorite uncle no longer walks with the spritely step of his youth. But Walter does not change except in that physical sense. Although his characteristic immutability may reassure and encourage viewers to talk back to their television sets (Levy [1977] tells us some viewers reply "Good night, Walter"), we do not know how Walter's solemnity and occasional smile or tear participate in the production of our sense of our times and our sense of time itself. We need to know about time and our times, for time is an elemental aspect of consciousness.

A FINAL THOUGHT

Recognition that the frame of television news—including its rendition of time and its arrangement of space on film and video—is qualitatively different from that of everyday life and the realization that news cannot be a veridical account free us to look at the production of news as the generation of myth. This is a very great freedom. It sensitizes us to the transformation of legitimated institutions and social and economic factors into preternatural forces. It also invokes past traditions in social sciences and the humanities, for scholars in these fields are quick to consider the essential reflexivity of myth, including the central role of myth in both expression and creation of societal consciousness.

Seeing news as myth, we can begin to view it as the product of the consciousness industry. And we can then seriously discuss the consciousness industry as the industrialization of mind. We become liberated from both the narrow stimulus-response model of the impact of the mass media and the equally restrictive research on the uses and gratification of the mass media.[13] Rather than asking how news about an election campaign influences the public agenda or why people watch television news, we can begin to ask about the concrete social meanings attached to talking to Walter Cronkite when he "enters" our homes. And we can ask about the relationship between television's clocked programming and the clocked industrialization of the body achieved in the early twentieth century (Braverman, 1974).

Hopefully, this freedom will take us beyond Boorstin's contrast between the heroes of the *Iliad* and the celebrities of the gossip column and talk show, his insistence that modern myth is debased and news is ersatz reality. Rather, giving news its due, recognizing it as an artful accomplishment that appeals to both the unconscious passions and the conscious mind, may lead us to a richer analysis of our times and the social creation of meaning. Hopefully, understanding news as myth will help us to explode contemporary myths, for to understand the creation of a myth is to explode it. To understand the construction of television news as myth is to undermine the media as the consciousness industry.

NOTES

[1] Schudson (1978) and Tuchman (1978a) analyze the development of this ideal as part of journalistic professionalism. Schudson traces its association with the growth of industrialism, naive empiricism, and distrust for public opinion.

[2] Following Dorothy E. Smith (1972), Tuchman (1978b) and Fishman (1977) analyze the methods of knowing employed by the news frame as methods of *not* knowing.

[3] Fishman (1977) cites an exception to those modes of analyzing rumor: Shibutani's *Improvised News* (1966).

[4] See Cynthia Fuchs Epstein (1978).

[5] According to Goffman (1974:10, 11), a frame is "the principles of organization which govern [occurrences]—at least social ones—and our subjective involvement in them." A strip is "an arbitrary slice or cut from the stream of on-going activity."

[6] Like Tuchman (1978b), Fishman suggests that those professional interactions are defined within and by the organizational context.

[7] One must wonder why an estimate of damage is relevant. Assigning an economic value to a fire underscores monetary value as a basis of social meaning, as does the use of the term "priceless" to describe an aesthetically powerful painting.

[8] Tuchman (1978b) distinguishes between television news' use of representatives (congressional delegates, mayors, bureaucrats and officials) and symbolic representations, the "common man or woman" whose plight representatives supposedly aim to ameliorate. Symbolic representations offer feelings about and views of their situations, not facts.

[9] The analogy to religious enactments of myths is purposive. Gerbner and Gross (1976) argue that television has replaced religion as a source of unified consciousness. Baumann (1972) makes a similar argument, referring to the Catholic Church as that great broadcasting center of medieval Europe sending out essentially the same information to all social classes at about the same time in a decidedly one-directional flow.

[10] Seeking to undermine the credibility of television news, the Glasgow University Media Group uses government data as an "accurate" indicator to lend political power to its analysis. But, it seems to realize that those data are, themselves, socially produced.

[11] This signification is, of course, empirically verifiable.

[12] A student of photography who has performed numerous social psychological experiments about film and photographs showed me a news clip he had produced for a major study. The newsmaker was framed "incorrectly" in three-quarter view, occupying only the right side of the picture. The film was also cut "incorrectly," leaving several seconds of dead airtime at the beginning of the clip as the newsmaker drew on his pipe, giving the impression of thinking before answering the question.

[13] Uses and gratifications research aims to show how gratifications are associated with effects, but that linkage has yet to be empirically demonstrated. And the uses and gratifications listed in the standard questionnaires tend to be conscious ideas rather than unconscious resonances. Like other functionalist approaches, it tends to accept our society as given, rather than to challenge the society's basic institutional arrangements.

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