In 1981, Dan Nimmo and Keith Sanders chronicled the evolution of political communication over the previous quarter-century for *The Handbook of Political Communication*, itself a milestone and testimony to that evolution. They recounted the extent to which the inchoate, interdisciplinary beginnings solidified into a distinctive scholarly field, but then saw fit to pronounce the field as still in its infancy. It is this assessment that ultimately describes Paletz's attempt to present "innovative and provocative" research. The book succeeds, by and large, in its research purpose; but, the pieces also leave one with the distinct feeling that as footprints in the field, they trail off in too many directions and cry out for a greater sense of unity.

Reviewed by: Akira Ichikawa
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This wide-ranging and informative volume has two purposes, according to its editors, (Intro XI). They are: To familiarize North American communication researchers with European work; and to further the intellectual merger of empirical and critical approaches to communication studies. While these are admirable goals, the volume contributes to the former, but it not as convincing in championing the latter. It seems safer to assume with Steven Chaffee and John Hochheimer that "empirical research findings need to be interpreted in the context of the historical time and place in which the data were gathered," (290), and these social contexts remain vastly different in Canada, the United States and Europe.

The book is divided into three parts: I. The Changing Nature of the Mass Media in Europe and America; II. The New Worlds of the Mass Media; and III. European and American Approaches to Communication Research. Each section contains a variety of articles by an equal number of writers from both sides of the Atlantic. In
itself, this is an unusual enterprise, and the editors deserve congratulations.

In the section comparing the mass media systems of the two areas, valuable articles by Claude-Jean Bertrand/Miguel Urabayen (Paris/Madrid) compare, "European Mass Media in the 1980's" with those in the United States (Bradley Greenberg). These articles are particularly useful because they provide up-to-date statistics and trend tables which otherwise are difficult to find. Contributions by H. Breitrose and F. Baile raise questions about the communications revolution resulting from the new technologies and the implications of "broadcast channel abundance" for audiences and regulatory mechanisms.

Part II, covering the "New Worlds of the Mass Media," contains six articles of varying length and quality. Most interesting are two contributions, including Jacque Ellul's "Preconceived Ideas About Mediated Information." Ellul debunks eight standard assumptions, such as "information is power," and shows that more available technologies per se do not ameliorate information inequalities in society. Rogers/Picot's "Impact of New Communication Technologies" in turn proposes five assessments criteria to substitute for the old non-reflexive models for assuming systems identity, and argues that structural differences such as unequal trade relationships, aid dependence and international power politics skew the ways in which new technologies are embedded in developing countries.

The book's most substantial third section is concerned with the interesting topic of European and American Approaches to Communication Research. Its seven articles, many of which have appeared in earlier form in the Journal of Communication, 1983, "Ferment in the Field" issue, raise questions about the intellectual roots of our discipline, and the European contributions to these roots. It is probably simplistic to argue, as some of the articles imply, that the empirical tradition is primarily found in the United States, and the critical-Marxist one in Europe. Blumler's "European-
American Differences in Communication Research" and Roger's "Empirical and Critical Schools of Communications" suggest other temporal and social differences between the two continent, and notes the influence on critical research of the Frankfurt Institute, which sought shelter in the United States during WWII. Most interesting in this section is the Chaffee/Hochheimer piece which traces the beginnings of political communications research in the U.S. It focuses on the origin of the "limited effects model" in Lazarsfeld's Columbia voting studies in the 1950s and 1960s. This careful historical study documents how assumptions about the political process made in the 1950s were uncritically transferred to later periods, by which time television had transformed political debate.

Three other articles by Osmo Wiio (Finland), Karl Erik Rosengren (Sweden), and Rogers Balle (France), argue that a convergence between the empirical and critical approaches is possible. This reviewer is not so sure whether this is not an illusion, because the terms of reference of the debate are framed differently in North American and European communication research. Rosengren's "Communication Research One Paradigm or Four?" is probably the most methodologically sophisticated argument for convergence made in the volume. His argument, however, hinges on accepting Burrell/Morgan's typology of schools of sociology. Though this typology is possibly a good starting point for theoretical comparisons, its 13 dimensions do not adequately reflect the fundamental epistemological assumptions motivating the various "critical" approaches (Littlejohn, 1983). The other papers argue a less controversial point, e.g. the fact that different research traditions can learn from each other. This is a point which is hopefully embraced by all communications researchers in the course of refining that theoretical and methodological traditions in their own countries. Canadian research, which extended the Innis tradition to illuminate current issues, is a case in points, (Melody, Salter, Heyer, 1981).

To summarize, the Rogers/Balle volume is a very useful collection of essays for senior undergraduate and graduate courses in
international communications and methodology. It furthermore begins to shed light on such issues as the cross-Atlantic transfer and modifications of communications research traditions (Robinson, forthcoming 1987). In defiance of the well-entrenched notions that the United States traditions emerged "full bloom" from the fecund minds of American practitioners, the emerging history of ideas of our field demonstrates that North American communication studies have their beginnings at the turn of the century in Chicago, benefitting from European scholarship. Europeans in turn, residing in Germany, France and Britain, have dispatched scholars to our shores, or corresponded with North Americans, in all periods and incorporated these understandings into their own work. Important names whose influences need to be assessed are Hendrik de Man, Max Weber, Alfred Schutz, Ludwig Wittgensein. And there are others who have been influential in developing the discipline on both sides of the Atlantic (Dance, 1982).


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