

Words in honor of Herbert Schiller

On the occasion of accepting the division's 1999 PF&R Award

ROBERT W. MCCHESENEY, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

The following story reports the remarks of Dr. Robert McChesney to a full room of friends, colleagues and admirers gathered to honor Herbert Schiller. Although sad that Professor Schiller was unable to attend, the audience, responding to Dr. McChesney's tribute, was in a celebratory frame of mind. As the following transcript suggests,



reflecting on and honoring Schiller's contribution to practice-directed scholarship is reason enough to celebrate. Following these comments, audience members shared some of their own stories about personal and/or scholarly interactions with Herbert Schiller and his work. At the conclusion of the session, McChesney accepted the division's Professional Freedom and Responsibility Award on behalf of Schiller.—Eds.

As you know Herb is sick and so he can not be with us this afternoon. I had a chance to speak with Herb recently on the telephone and I know he really wanted to be here. It is a great honor for me to speak about Herb and his work.

HERB SCHILLER IS ONE of the founding fathers of critical communication in the

United States along with people like Dallas Smythe and George Gerbner. Yet his stature in the United States has never really reflected his role in communication studies.

Herb is better known abroad, in places like Malaysia and across Latin America, and this speaks, I think, to the low profile of critical scholars in the United States. In fact, I recall stories from friends who said they saw copies of Herb's books for sale in obscure bookstores all over the Third World.

HERB WAS BORN IN 1919 in New York and he came of age in the 1930s and 1940s, a time of change, when people thought they could change things for the better within their lifetime.

This sense has continued to influence Herb's life and his work. Herb has always been optimistic about the prospects for social change, and has never been a cynic. His work is based on a profound faith in humanity, and a skepticism, even

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Addressing assessment

DON MCCOMB, MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Should we stick with our strengths, or should we focus on our weaknesses? That is the question we face as we plan C&CS activities for the coming year and your participation will be the deciding factor.

It has been a year since I wrote about our need to develop a list of goals for teaching-related activities. Since then, we've had a year to think about these goals and to implement a plan for conference panels, newsletter articles and other activities.

The annual report from the Standing Committee on Teaching Standards (an

(continued on page 3)

Headnote

New name, new opportunities

ANA GARNER, MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

Welcome to the first issue of the Cultural and Critical Studies Division Newsletter! It has been a banner year for our division with our new name being the biggest change. Effective October 1, 1999 we are the Cultural and Critical Studies Division of AEJMC.



I would like to once again thank everyone who helped with this great task—Linda Steiner, Jay Hamilton, Frank Durham—and all of you who exercised your right to vote. A job well done.

AS I ENCOUNTERED MEMBERS at AEJMC in New Orleans this year, I asked what they thought of the name change. Most were very happy about it. A few said something along the lines of “well, since I don’t do critical studies I’m without a home again.”

I would like to reiterate that a name change doesn’t mean you are now homeless!

OUR NAME CHANGE REFLECTS what we are about and what we do as a group in a better way than our old name ever did. Many people thought our division was a group about a research method. Yet,

you know as well as I, that we are a group whose research is influenced by more than methodology. We are a group who is influenced by literary studies, sociology, history, linguistics, semiotics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, Marxism, feminism, political economy, philosophy/ethics, and so on. As such, we are a group that uses a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to study communication, especially journalism and mass communication, within our culture.

Our work does more than reflect what it is we find, it also critiques and challenges what is there and tries to achieve professional and social change.

These values, these theories and these methods are all part of cultural and critical studies scholarship. It is what we have done, what you have done and what we—as a community of scholars and teachers—will continue to do under our new name.

Our challenge now is to further refine and define our scholarship and our division. One way you can help is by contributing to this newsletter and I encourage you to do so.

THE DEBATE ABOUT OUR NAME and our identity is as old as our division. People like Gene Burd, Jim Carey, Cliff Christians, Jack Lule, Ted Glasser, Peter Parisi, Linda Steiner, and Bonnie Brennen—to name just those whose names come to mind as I write this—have throughout the years struggled to ensure that a critical voice is heard in AEJMC.

Our PF&R Awards winners have also served as important reminders that we must maintain a connection with academics and professionals outside of the organization.

THIS YEAR’S AWARD WINNER, Herb Schiller, is one example. As most of

Cultural & Critical Studies Division 1999-2000

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you know, Herb was not able to join us because he was sick. Bob McChesney was kind enough to come and speak about Herb and his work (see our cover story) and the attendance at this session was great.

After Bob's talk, members of the audience shared their thoughts and stories about Herb's work and his impact on their lives. These comments were passed on to Herb, as was the signature covered plaque box which held the PF&R Award.

DURING THE SESSION it was noted that many universities and/or individuals have taped Herb's speeches and a collection of these videos would be a valuable resource for scholars interested in Herb's work. I think it would be a great thing if C&CS could establish this collection and make it available to interested parties.

If you have such a video or want to work on establishing such a collection please contact me.

FINALLY, AS YOU CAN SEE, I am still serving as Head of the division. I was asked to remain as Head for another year and this request was supported at the business meeting.

Since I said yes, you are stuck with me for one more year! As such, would you please join me in thanking last year's board members for a job well done. They all worked hard to make the conference and newsletter work for you. Most agreed to return and volunteered their services for yet another year, and we even got a few new volunteers!

SO, PLEASE, THE NEXT TIME you see Frank Durham (Vice Head) Elli Lester Roushazamir, Carolina Acosta-Alzuru, Jay Hamilton (Newsletter Collective), Gigi Durham (Secretary), Don McComb (Teaching) or Joyce Wolburg, Dane Claussen, Alison Plessinger and Jim Wittebols (PF&R Collective), thank them for their efforts. It's the least you can do! Until next time— ❖

(ASSESSMENT, *cont. from page 1*) AEJMC committee that evaluates divisional activities), noted that we had done a good job of addressing some of our teaching-related objectives (with panels and newsletter articles), but that we still need to develop a specific list of goals.

These goals should address AEJMC's four categories: curriculum, leadership, course content and teaching methods, and assessment.

HERE IS MY VIEW of our strengths and weaknesses in those areas:

Curriculum. In curriculum-related issues, we have done a good job of addressing changes in technology and balancing liberal arts with professional training. Although we have not addressed it directly, I find that both of these areas help to fulfill another important issue: preparing students for life-long learning.

Leadership. We have successfully addressed some aspects of envisioning education for the 21st Century. In New Orleans, teaching panels focused on innovation and on internationalization. However, we have not fully explored issues of multicultural diversity, or developed opportunities for faculty exchanges.

Course content and teaching methods. This is our strongest area. Discussion of interdisciplinary approaches and the relationship between theory and practice is standard fare for both teaching and research panels. Behind the scenes, Jay Hamilton is preparing to launch a syllabus exchange on the division's web page (look for more information in the next newsletter).

Assessment. Assessment is our weakest area. However, we are not alone in this. All divisions are being asked to do develop and implement a plan for more activities that address assessment. These can include planning and assessing course content, developing and assessing student outcomes, and evaluating and rewarding good teaching.

I am not particularly comfortable

with this area. I tend to believe that even the best educational experience lives on only in the form of residue. For education to have an afterlife, it has to be grounded in experience.

By this I don't mean that it has to be hands-on practical experience. Rather, what remains is so thoroughly integrated into one's daily life that you are unable to trace its origins. This is the stuff of beliefs, practices and values that informs what otherwise might be called a worldview.

If this is the case, how can we measure what we cannot see? I approach teaching with one very bold but simple goal. I trust that students will never think about the media in the same way again after taking one of my classes. My intention is not to create a classroom of clones who share my worldview. Rather, it is to challenge students to expand their understanding of the media in ways are both complex and subtle.

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY approaches taken by many of our members influence both our teaching and our research. Critical and Cultural Studies tend to privilege context over facts, or at least see various contexts (social, historical, political) as frameworks that contribute to our understanding of the field. Often, our understanding is the result of balancing the abstract and the particular.

By making theoretical assumptions contingent to particular works at specific historical moments, we can begin to understand how history and theory offer a context in which to locate cultural references. The idea is to interweave the critical with the historical, to try to make clear that theory, like practice, is linked to specific individuals and moments.

By addressing these issues, we could help set the agenda for critical examination of current practices.

I encourage our membership to contribute to the process of creating and fulfilling the teaching-related goals for C&CS. ❖

(SCHILLER, *continued from page 1*) distrust, of those in power who claim to speak in the interest of those without power.

But doing critical communication work has not been an easy task. The field of communication has not always been open to the critique offered by Herb. This was especially true in the 1960s when the field was very mainstream and hostile.

In 1969, for example, he had a hard time getting his first book, *Mass Communications and American Empire*, published. It was finally published by a religious publishing house because the mainstream publishers—commercial and university—would not accept it.

BY THE TIME I ENTERED grad school in the 1980s, I had heard of Herb and he was by then a prominent figure in communication. But he was always a marginal figure in the field in the United States. I had a professor in grad school who dismissed Herb as someone who didn't do "real" research.

At my very first conference, at USC in 1986, a running gag at the conference was all these mainstream quantitative scholars joking about how Herb Schiller made outrageous claims that real scientists like them would never make. His critics, naturally, saw themselves as objective scientists whose worth was greater, and it was scientific, I guess, to assume that this was the best of all possible worlds and proceed from there.

This marginalization of Herb and his work has occurred throughout his career. Yet, in the process he has carved out space for the rest of us; taking the hard shots to the head on behalf of the rest of us who are interested in critical communication.

I will give you one final example of the kind of grief he took from colleagues within mainstream communication research. I was at ICA in 1990 in Dublin. At that time I was a new Ph.D. who had only published a few articles on broadcasting history in obscure journals. I was standing with a colleague from Madison when a

prominent mainstream scholar struck up a conversation with us. This mainstream heavyweight gloated that she was soon to go to IAMCR where she wanted to see how Herb Schiller would explain the collapse of his beloved Eastern European communist systems. (I must point out that I took umbrage at this insult, and, much to their surprise, I informed the mainstream bigshot that she clearly knew nothing of Herb Schiller's politics or work. On that day ended any hope of my ever being a college Dean or the president of AEJMC.)

Before mentioning his research, I should add a bit more about Herb for those who have never had the privilege of getting to know him personally.

Physically, he was and is a striking and handsome man, well over six feet tall. Personally, he is a charming and unpretentious

man. It is impossible not to like him, and like him a great deal. I am one of countless many (at one time) young

scholars who would write to him and then receive a long and gracious reply. At conferences he would have time for any critical scholar, be they assistant professor, grad student, or unemployed. You would never see Herb wasting his time kissing the behind of some mainstream hotshots, though to one and all he was cordial.

He has really set the standard for the rest of us for how to be collegial in the best sense of the term: don't get caught up in academic trappings and the prestige rat race; rather, never forget that you are no more important than the people whose interests you wish to represent.

WHAT CAN I SAY about his research? What is his work like? It is sweeping, original, provocative, radical. He has many books (see bibliography included in the newsletter) and his works are not obscure, nor narrowly focused. They are ill-suited to the academy but

are ideal for the public intellectual.

There are four great themes/emphases to his work:

First, Herb is a pioneer in emphasizing the crucial role of communication and information in both our economy and our political economy.

Nowadays this is seen as axiomatic, but that was hardly the case 20 or 30 years ago. More important, Herb gave this insight a critical twist:

Communication and information were not independent, neutral forces, but, rather, they were part of the power structure and therefore as likely to perpetuate (increases) inequality as to reduce it. In this idea Herb was way ahead of his time.

SECOND, HERB'S WORK REVEALS the important role of communication corporations in the military-industrial

Schiller's work is sweeping, original, provocative, radical.

complex, and the crucial role of the government in creating and cementing this corporate power.

It has been the foundation of subsequent studies in the development of U.S. communication policymaking, most notably by Herb's son, Dan, a tremendous critical communication scholar in his own right.

Third, and related to the above two points, Herb's work documented the important role of communication in U.S. foreign policy, and, specifically, the manner that the corporate-dominated global media system perpetuated informal colonialism and inequality between nations and among social groups within nations.

The high water mark for this work came in the 1970s and early 1980s when Herb was a main figure in the campaign for a New World Information and Communication Order. It was probably during the NWICO campaign that Herb attained

the stature he has to this day, and that episode provides a very important lesson for critical scholars. It was only when there was left wing and democratic political activity outside the academy that space was created inside the academy for critical work.

The NWICO movement collapsed, and with the onslaught of neoliberalism in the 1980s, so did much of the exciting political activity of the 1960s and 1970s. By this time Herb was well into his 60s, and he certainly could have been forgiven for going into retirement and resting on his laurels.

Instead, the late 80s and 1990s produced, arguably, Herb's best work, especially the seminal *Culture, Inc.*, published by Oxford in 1989. Herb turned his attention back to the United States and chronicled the increasing corporate domination and commercialization of every sector of social life, from schools and libraries to parades and museums. His work included some of the sharpest criticism of the antipolitical turn to postmodernism in media studies, and some of the best work yet written on the commercial transformation of the First Amendment. All in all, the work in *Culture, Inc.* is simply mandatory reading for critical communication scholars.

Herb is by no means through. He has just completed another book, *Living in the Number One Society*, which should be published in 2000. It looks to be some of his strongest and most necessary social criticism in his career.

And that is a good way to understand the legacy of Herb Schiller. His work is more important than ever. All four of the dominant themes of his work are more important than ever as well. His personal generosity and his commitment to social change, to democratic values and his optimism are equally important.

As I look out at the many people attending this meeting and see so many of you as critical scholars influenced directly by Herb, I know how proud he would be to stand here and accept this award. ❖

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MARY MURPHY, MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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Public broadcasting and the public interest

University of Maine conference to take place in June, 2000

Abstracts and papers are invited for this conference on June 15-17, 2000. It seeks to draw on the wisdom of communication scholars, public broadcasting practitioners and media activists.

The conference will examine the capacity for public radio and television-including community and public access broadcasting-to help foster the participation of citizens in a healthy public sphere.

"PUBLIC BROADCASTING AND the Public Interest" features three emphases.

1) It will be cross-disciplinary in an academic sense, with participants from communication, journalism, philosophy, history, political science, and other fields.

2) It will be cross-cultural, seeking to find common ground in the experiences of media scholars in the U.S. and Canada.

3) It will balance academic contributions with presentations from people who work in non-commercial radio and television, and those who address these media from the standpoint of constructive activism.

Featured speakers

- Lee Artz, Loyola University
- Ira Basen, CBC/Canada
- William Hoynes, Vassar College
- Douglas Kellner, University of California at Los Angeles
- Robert McChesney, University

of Illinois

- Cathy Melio, WERU-FM (community radio, East Orland, ME)
- Vincent Mosco, Carleton University
- Manjunath Pendakur, University of Western Ontario

Call for papers

Abstracts and papers should focus on the following topics:

- the current state of public broadcasting and how it has changed
- prevailing definitions of public interest broadcasting, and critiques thereof
- changing definitions of the terms public, public interest, and public sphere
- differences in public broadcasting systems in the U.S. and Canada
- the impact of NAFTA on public broadcasters in both countries
- citizen access to democracy in the age of global communication
- impacts of the U.S. Telecommunications Act of 1996
- the role of public broadcasting in the creation of communities and identities
- public broadcasting, the Internet, and democracy
- continued efforts to privatize and commercialize public broadcasting
- changes in access to the media in the coming digital age
- suggestions for grassroots media criticism aimed at the maintenance of

a healthy public sphere.

Abstracts should be no longer than one page, double-spaced.

In addition, please send a one-page CV or biography, with citations to relevant work.

Papers should be no more than 30 pages in length. Final on-site presentations will be limited to 15 minutes.

The best papers will be considered for inclusion in an edited volume. Papers not received by the April 15 deadline will be removed from the program.

Deadline for abstracts is *December 15, 1999*. Deadline for papers (based on accepted abstracts) is *April 15, 2000*.

Send submissions to:
Michael McCauley
Department of Comm. and Journ.
University of Maine
5724 Dunn Hall
Orono, ME 04469-5724

How to register

Registration includes meals and refreshment breaks from Thursday morning through noon Saturday. It does not cover any of the costs of transportation and lodging.

Costs: regular \$100, student/low income \$55, optional tour of WERU-FM (East Orland, ME), and the nearby coastal region \$20. Deadline for advanced registration is *February 15, 2000*.

Many lodging choices are available in a range of prices both on and near campus.

For more information, contact Michael McCauley at (207) 581-1941 or mccauley@maine.edu. See also the web site at <http://www.umaine.edu/pbconference/>. ❖

Calls for proposals and manuscripts

The *Journal of Medical Humanities* is now seeking cultural studies manuscripts that reflect its enlarged focus on multidisciplinary inquiry into medicine and health care.

ARTICLES MAY COME FROM a wide variety of disciplines and interdisciplinary activity — e.g. humanities, disability studies, gender studies, africana studies, gay and lesbian studies, post-colonial studies, science studies, media studies, sociology, anthropology, and interpretive social science — which can be used to examine the practice of healthcare, visual and cultural representations of healthcare, popular and clinical healthcare texts, healthcare education, etc. often with a focus on relations of power/knowledge. This is not a special issue CFP, it is an ongoing change of focus for the journal.

Send inquiries to:

Brad Lewis
Cultural Studies Editor
University of Pittsburgh Cultural
Studies Program
WPIC

1835 Center Ave
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E-mail: lewisbe@msx.upmc.edu

Manuscripts should be typed, double spaced, on one side of the page, and submitted in triplicate (original and two copies) to the editor:

Dr. Delese Wear
Journal of Medical Humanities
Northeastern Ohio Universities
College of Medicine
4209 State Route 44
P.O. Box 95
Rootstown, Ohio 44272

Manuscripts should be 15-20 pages.

An abstract of no more than 100 words should accompany the manuscript. Reference format should be either the American Psychological Association, 4th edition, or the *Chicago Manual of Style* (the author-date system rather than footnotes). ❖

A new book series seeks publishing proposals for the topic “Studies in Consumption and Markets.”

CONSUMPTION HAS BECOME a major focus of research and scholarship in the social sciences and humanities. Increasingly perceived as central to any successful understanding of the modern world, the meaning of the individual and collective consumption of goods is now a crucial issue at the heart of numerous contemporary debates on personal identity, the social and cultural structure of postmodern societies, and the historical development of modern industrial society.

This new interdisciplinary series welcomes proposals from scholars and researchers working on consumption-related topics in the fields of sociology, anthropology, material culture studies, social, economic and cultural history, media and cultural studies, psychology, communication, human geography, marketing, economics, and art and design.

The series will publish the results of empirical research which employ an ethnographic, historical, or case-study approach. Theoretical and conceptual discussions are also welcome, either those which represent original perspectives on the study of consumption or those which constitute critical commentaries on existing theories.

Specifically the editors welcome proposals for work on such topics as:

- Shopping and the retail environment
- Clothing and the fashion system
- Advertising and the representation of products
- Tourism and recreation
- The mass media, the arts and cultural consumption
- Consumption festivals and gift giving
- Food and drink
- Consumption and the body

- IT and consumption

In addition, proposals are welcome addressing such topics as:

- New approaches to the study of consumption
- Critiques of existing theories
- Studies of the nature or development of consumer society
- Studies of consumer culture
- Consumption and the postmodernism debate
- Consumption, lifestyle and problems of identity
- Gender and consumption
- Sexuality and consumption
- Consumption and social stratification
- Consumption, the environment and green issues

Proposals for monographs should take the form of a c. 2000-word document introducing and arguing for the project and a chapter outline of 3-500 words per chapter. Monograph proposals should ideally be accompanied by some draft material, or a selection of related published articles.

Proposals for essay collections should take the form of a c. 2000-word document, as above, plus full details of contributors (titles and affiliations), plus abstracts of c. 500 words for each essay. Edited collections must provide cohesive and full coverage in terms of the collection's aims and scope.

Proposals should be accompanied by the full c.v. of the author/s or editor/s.

For more information, or to discuss an idea, please contact:

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Journal theme issue on audience research

Diegesis: *The Journal of the Association for Research Into Popular Culture* is running a special edition on audience research.

Audience research has played a prominent role in recent critical media analysis, much of it inspired by ethnography. At the same time, much of this work has also been criticised for concentrating on theoretical rather than methodological issues. Certainly a great deal of attention has been paid to outlining the questions that audience research should address, but the matter of how we might provide answers remains vague.

We would therefore welcome papers placing equal weight on theoretical and methodological matters.

Possible topics include:

- The role of theory in determining research methods
- Similarities and differences

between traditional and media ethnographies

- Ways of attracting participants for audience research projects
 - Methods of data collection/recording/analysis
 - The politics of research funding
 - Archival research
 - Unobtrusive research methods
 - The "truth" claims of qualitative audience research
 - The relationship between quantitative and qualitative audience research
 - The history of audience research
- Papers should be maximum of 6000 words long. Send papers by *November 20, 1999* to

Andy Ruddock
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Dean Walters Building
Liverpool John Moores University
James Road
Liverpool L3 7BR ENGLAND. ❖

C&CS News seeks your contributions

We welcome longer contributions and commentary that aren't usually a part of traditional publishing outlets. *We also welcome graduate-student contributions.*

Editors will get in touch with authors before publishing any materials.

Copy deadlines: *December 3* (for Winter issue), *March 10* (for Spring), and *June 9* (for Summer).

Contact any of the following editors with your ideas or suggestions for the newsletter:

- Carolina Acosta-Alzuru, cacosta@arches.uga.edu, (706) 542-5680,
- Jay Hamilton, hamilton@arches.uga.edu, (706) 542-3556, or
- Elli Lester Roushanzamir, elester@arches.uga.edu, (706) 542-5007. ❖

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