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CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION: EXPECTATIONS AND CULTURAL DISSONANCE

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Teaching International Students: Expectations & Cultural Dissonance

As we are increasingly becoming a global village, collaborations between institutions in different parts of the world will be extremely beneficial to today's students. The institutions and educators are recognizing the importance of this and the need for providing students with an international perspective is becoming increasingly relevant. When two or more international academic institutions come together to create a special course/program of study in the host country/institution, an International Academic Joint Venture (IAJV) is the result. IAJVs serve the vital function of internationalizing an institution's curriculum and provide excellent global resources for the students.

Although it offers several advantages, IAJVs can also provide many challenges to the educator. One of them is the cultural dissonance. The teachers expect the visiting students to behave in a manner similar to the resident students of the host country; most of the time these overall views of a "student" remain the same without regard to cultural differences, but at times there are severe communication gaps that hinder the teaching/learning process. It is frequently taken for granted that the same set of values, cultural and otherwise, apply to the participants. The author will provide some insights into several common problems and suggest ways to overcome the challenges of cultural dissonance.

Culture and Contexts

Hofstede (1991) defined culture as "the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a group's response to its environment." Culture is social norms shared by the members of the community and it influences the behavior, attitudes and belief systems of the community. Thus a person who is exposed to a particular culture becomes committed to that culture's value system, attitude and perceptions (Hall, 1976). Scholars who study culture have accepted the definition of "shared meaning" as one that builds bridges between our international counterparts and us. Those of us who focus on international communication should know very well that while we may share problems in our projects, we do not always share the meaning and understanding of what caused the problems or even why what happened is a problem. Using Hofstede's (1991) analysis of symbols, heroes, rituals and values, we know that our symbols carry different meanings, we praise and defame different behaviors, our rituals are regarded differently, and we definitely do not value the same things in the same ways. For

example, equality is valued in the United States and people tend to be informal with each other, while in contrast proper respect and ritual is crucial to Korean society (Ferguson, 2001).

An aspect of culture, that perhaps has the most important relevance to communication, is the concept of high and low context. The use of suggestion and understatement (both in art and literature) seems to be carried to a great length in eastern cultures. For example, while we take a lot of things for granted, Asian cultures have a flair for aesthetics even for the practices and procedures we disregard—the tea making ceremony and the ritual of exchanging business cards at a meeting. There are elaborate rituals attached to almost every social function: for example, it is considered rude to pour one's own drink and it is customary for the host to pour the drink while the guest holds the glass in the right hand (Ferguson, 2001).

This is very much reflected in the students and is noticeable in the way they communicate. Chinese, Japanese and Korean students show great care in how they present papers to their teachers. While Americans do both of these things in a matter-of-fact way and without any ritualistic ceremonies, the Japanese have made these almost an art form. The Japanese take great care in "getting to know the person" before any business is mentioned, whereas Americans want to get to the point almost immediately (Hall & Hall 1976). This difference is because of the culture and could be explained by the application of Low and High contexts in culture. The cultures of the world can be placed on a continuum, based on the amount of communication contained in the nonverbal context compared with the amount in the verbal message (Hall, 1979). In a Low Context culture, the message is explicit; more emphasis is put on the verbal message and less on the context and words carry most of the meaning. Whereas in High Context cultures, the message is internalized; the emphasis is less on the verbal message and more on the context (Hall & Hall, 1976). The framework of communication is different in the two contexts—Low Context Cultures requires spelling out the message; the message is very concrete and ideas are expressed in a rigid manner. High Context Cultures provide the same rules for everyone participating; the rituals have the same meaning for everybody in that culture and the ideas are more abstract. In other words, in Low Context Cultures, the persuasion of a message is achieved by rhetoric, i.e. use of a large number of words. In Low Context Cultures, words represent truth and power, whereas in High Context Cultures, what is unsaid is often more important than what is said; in order to understand the meaning of the message, one has to examine the entire circumstance in which the events are happening. Most of the Western countries like the USA are Low Context Cultures and the Eastern countries like Japan and Korea are High Context Cultures. The Low Context Cultures are individualized societies whereas in High Context Cultures, the society is group-oriented and more collective, thus sacrificing individualism to a certain extent.

This, again, is very much reflected in the students and is noticeable in the way they communicate. For instance, students from the Eastern countries are generally less aggressive and more subtle and understated than their American counterparts. To take the example of a particular situation, let us present the case of the students from Kyung Hee University in Korea. The course work was in Media Criticism and Production and the production part of it was designed as a group activity. Reflecting the group-oriented society of Korean culture, there were almost no problems with the production—typically this is an area where challenges come up when we teach American students. At the same time, trying to extract individual opinions in the criticism part of the course proved to be a challenge—everyone tries to agree with the group as a whole and hence discussions seemed rather skewed and thus problematic. The behavior followed in accordance to the traits of a relatively high-context culture (Korea), where messages are very much indirect and it is considered polite to be indirect and vague.

Cultural norms also dictate that there is a distinct difference between teacher and student. For example, the most salient of Korean social rules for education is respect for the teacher and the teaching profession is one of the most respected professions in a Confucian society (Ferguson, 2001). Eastern philosophies often profusely support the theory that a good student listens to the teacher and questioning the teacher or the teacher's views is not typically encouraged. Questioning the teacher reflects a shortcoming on the part of the teacher because something was not explained in a satisfactory manner. Thus when something is unclear to the student, very rarely will they admit the fact or ask the teacher to repeat it, especially when the rapport between the teacher and the student has not been defined. The reasoning here is when a student admits that something the teacher said is unclear to him/her, it reflects negatively on the teacher and that is embarrassing to the group as a whole. It is also assumed that the teacher knows everything and the students will not question the teachers (Hedges, 1988).

In critique sessions, class participation was very minimal, practically none. This supports Ferguson's (2001) observation that the Korean students expect the teachers to control the classroom and open-ended discussions are met with confusion and blank stares.

"I admired the students' diligence and respect, but bemoaned their lack of creativity and critical thinking skills. If I told them the sky was purple, they would not argue. Students performed superbly on rote memory skills, but were puzzled by any attempt at open ended discussions." (Ferguson, 2001).

When pushed to participate, everyone tries to avoid conflict and the comments generally reflect the positive traits with nothing really said about what is wrong with the product as such. To an extent, this is true of American students too since they are dealing with peers. The Kyung Hee students, however, went to such an extreme to avoid conflict that it seemed that they were accepting a mediocre product as being excellent due to the lack of negative comments. This behavior trait was also reflected in Japanese students where again, their cultural values demand that they not shame another person by causing them embarrassment. To contrast this, when the author teaches traditional American students, the discussions are, by and large, lively, with a variety of points of view expressed. This, according to Robinson (1992), are values of individualism and competition played out in the American classroom where emphasis is on independent learning and responsibility.

To overcome these understated opinions, the author, as a teacher, had to draw them out. Explaining the customs of an American classroom, the author was able to motivate the students to bring out their individualities, at the same time preserving their group's

cohesiveness. It was okay to question; it was okay to voice an opinion and not be considered argumentative. Here, specifically, the language barrier was more of a problem.

Dissimilarities in Language

Although all languages of the world have a fundamental similarity, it is also apparent, as research shows, that the languages of the world are dissimilar (Amritavalli, 1996). Written and spoken languages differ considerably and do not relate cross-culturally. Direct translations of sentences from one language to another rarely work because most of the meanings may depend on the circumstances and the words have different meaning when construed differently. For example, although the international students spoke English, the thought process was formed in their native language. As is with any person having dual language skills, they felt more comfortable in conversing and debating in their own tongue, rather than converting the whole process into another language. When forced to conduct themselves in a different language, however, the students experienced difficulties expressing their critiques in a structurally coherent way. To overcome this problem, we asked them to formulate an outline of their opinions in their native language and then convert the outline into English. Enough time was given for this task so they could organize their thoughts into cohesive units.

Dissimilarities in Visuals

Culture and experiences with visual stimuli play a significant role in a person's ability to read and use pictorial stimuli. People's cultural environments play a major role in how they will perceive pictures, interpret their meanings and determine their preferences (De Lange, 2000). Work, as early as by Bagby (1957), indicates that people have a tendency to more readily identify pictures that are available in their environment. People not only identify images from their own environment better but also prefer pictures and graphics of their own culture (Tzeng & Trung, 1990). The notion that a picture is worth the same thousand words is perhaps not applicable cross-culturally, since all pictures do the not speak the same language (Amritavalli, 1996; Linney, 1995). Picture perception is a learned activity—it has been suggested that images must be read (Monaco, 1981) and all pictures must be read according to a culturally standardized system (Hagen and Jones, 1978). This means that although people of different cultural backgrounds decode the reality of the images seen on television, the meaning the pictures imply varies according to the specific learned language. The following list provides some guiding principles offered by De Lange (2000) useful as generalizations:

- Pictures are not a universal language and are culture-dependent.
- Cultural and environmental factors will influence visual response habits.
- People have affinity towards pictures portraying their own culture.
- The preferences for one's own culture assists a person's cognitive process if culture relevant items are part of these visuals
- Pictures are not always acceptable across cultures without modification.
- Signs common in the western world (for e.g. crosses and check marks) are not universally interpreted in the same way. In Nepal, India the swastika symbolizes the revolving wheel of life, but for westerners it signifies a symbol of Nazi supremacy and intolerance. Another example is a six-pointed star, which to Buddhists is the symbol for wisdom and is often found near schools and temples. For westerners, however, it is a "Star of David" and a Jewish symbol.
- People do not always scan a sequence of pictures from left to right and from top to bottom. Based on this notion, the images that students use may obviously have a very different mode of presentation in different cultural setting, that may very well be a barrier to communication. Education and inquiry into the cultural contexts by both teachers and students will help them communicate more effectively in the teaching/learning process.

Conclusion

International Academic Joint Ventures are indeed helpful to our global community. As more and more international companies are beginning to merge to form a global economy, we are rapidly moving into situations where we are interacting with different cultures of the world. IAJVs provide an excellent experiential component of participating in a different culture while learning the particular component in the course work. Education and inquiry into the cultural contexts by both teachers and students will help them communicate more effectively in the teaching/learning process.

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DIGITAL STORYTELLING!

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"All in favor of the motion signify by saying 'aye.' Motion passes." With that, Ball State University approved the creation of a Master of Arts degree in Digital Storytelling in the Telecommunications Department. To step back a couple of years; early in the summer of 2000 it was announced that the Eli Lilly Foundation of Indianapolis had awarded a $20 million grant for digital media to Ball State for the development of an iCommunication program.

The first reaction was "What's 'iCommunication?'" Scott Olson, Dean of the College of Information, Communication and Media (CCIM), who helped draft the proposal, responded that 'i' stood for imagination, innovation, information, image, and whatever other i-words seemed appropriate. As faculty read through the grant, it became apparent there were several components.

One of the components was the creation of a Master's degree tentatively titled Digital Storytelling. A committee was formed by the Dean of the College of Information, Communication and Media at Ball State to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum with the working title of Digital Storytelling. As a member of the Department of Telecommunications, I, (arichard@bsu.edu) Dan Waechter (dwaechter@bsu.edu) a colleague in Journalism and Beth Messner (bmessner@bsu.edu) in Communication Studies were appointed to develop the degree. We were in agreement that this was not to be a degree in the technology of communication, but in communicating ideas.

Our committee's first task, as we saw it, was to change the title of Digital Storytelling; we didn't like it. We felt it sounded too much like a program that belonged in elementary school. However, as we did our research and corresponded with industry writers, particularly our contacts in Hollywood, we discovered that 'storytelling' is the buzzword du jour. We still made numerous attempts to find some other title, any other title, that sounded more professional but to no avail. So Digital Storytelling has come to Ball State University. However, the committee agreed the emphasis in the title needed to be on storytelling and not on digital.

From the outset, we recognized that we had a marvelous and almost unparalleled opportunity to design a degree program with few constraints. We agreed we wanted as unique and creative a program as we could within the usual parameters of an academic environment. There were obviously some financial constraints. Quite obviously we could not hire twenty tenured faculty and construct a $50 million facility. But we could design a core of new courses, do some limited hiring, and pull from the considerable expertise of our colleagues in the university. We could also 'cherry pick' the most relevant courses from various departments in the institution and assign them as cognates.

As we began looking at curriculum, several decisions were made. One that generated

a significant amount of discussion was whether to make this a one-year or a two-year program. It was decided that with all the information we wanted to convey, this should be a two-year, Master of Arts degree.

While the idea of teaching a creativity course is not new, it is not found in the master's programs we perused in our research. It is the objective of this course to provide a framework that allows students to stretch their imaginations when they inevitably find themselves at a loss for a new idea or direction for their stories. The class provides techniques for achieving creativity, such as the matrix approach and listing. In this class students are encouraged to be risk-takers and learn from the failure of their creative endeavors.

The Intercultural Immersion class is markedly different from any other courses we uncovered. In consultation with the faculty advisor, a student in this class will be required to spend a minimum of four consecutive weeks living in another culture. During this time the student will work and study with people of the indigenous culture to examine their storytelling customs and structures. The environment may be in another country or domestically with a culture group that differs significantly from the student's prior experiences. In keeping with one of the CCIM's missions of promoting cultural opportunities, it is believed that the students will learn the most about another culture and its storytelling mores by experiencing them in person. Upon their return, one of their assignments will be to present a seminar on the rituals and conventions of storytelling in the culture they visited.

The full sequence of the curriculum, which requires 48 credit hours, follows:

Core Courses (21 hours)
- Foundations of Digital Storytelling 1
- Foundations of Digital Storytelling 2
- Topics Seminar in Narrative Theory and Criticism
- Approaches to Creativity
- Story Design & Development
- Intercultural Immersion
- Special Projects (3 @ 1 hr. each)

Research Requirements (9 hours)

Methods: Choose one of the following methods courses (select one, 3 hours)
- Quantitative Research in Communication
- Qualitative Research in Communication
- Studies in Journalism & Communications Research

Research: Choose one of the following research opportunities (select one, 6 hours)
- Thesis
- Creative Project

Design Requirement (select 6 hours from)
- Visual Storytelling
- Interactive Storytelling
- Design of Video-Based Learning Systems

Production & Application (select 12 hours from)
- Digital Production
- Advanced News Seminar
- Telecom Technologies, Standards, and Lab
- Regulatory Context and Probs. in Information Communications
- Human Factors, Needs Assessment, and User-Driven Design
- Contemporary Rhetoric & Public Issues
- Literary Theory
- Language and Culture
- Business Communication & Training
- Journalism Writing Seminar
- Seminar in Literary Journalism
- Writing Literary Journalism
- Investigative Reporting & Writing
- Professional Experience (1-3 hrs)
- Directed Study
- Seminar in Current Topics

At least for the first couple of years students will be permitted to enter the program only during the Fall Semester. Applicants must meet the admission requirements established by the Graduate School and must complete the Graduate Record Examination, though there is no specific score required.

In addition, applicants must demonstrate proficiency in written, verbal, visual communication, and relevant computer skills. To demonstrate proficiency a portfolio must be submitted upon application to the program. In the portfolio we will expect: a cover letter that introduces and explains the contents of the portfolio, an original 1500-word academic, creative, and/or professional writing sample; a transcript indicating a grade of 'B' or better in an undergraduate oral performance course (e.g., public speaking, broadcast performance, dramatic arts) and a syllabus or course description from that course; an original project that emphasizes skill in visual communication (e.g., web design, graphic design, publication design, broadcast design, theatrical design, architectural design); and, finally, a list of computer application programs that the applicant is fluent in. Applicants are free to include other items that are relevant.

In addition to successfully completing their coursework, students must complete several exit requirements: a thesis or creative project, participate in a public exhibition of their thesis or creative project during their final semester, attend and/or participant in ten collateral experiences designed to complement and extend their course work (e.g., training workshops in design and production skills; 'Artist in Residence' events; guest speakers; field trips; and video-conferences), and receive approval of a digitally-based, personal narrative that shares the story of their experiences in the Digital Storytelling program.

Digital Production
ICOM 632

Catalogue Description: *CMD 632 (3) Digital Production.* Techniques of acquisition and manipulation of digitized sights and sounds. Digital audio recording and video recording devices are utilized to capture information and editing hardware and software are used to create productions. Prerequisite; an undergraduate audio and video production course(s).

Course Description: Students learn the essential elements and techniques of acquisition and manipulation of digitized sounds and sights. Digital audio devices are used for recording sounds while video and still cameras are utilized for acquiring images. Computer generated and Internet sources supplement both aural and visual composition. Software programs are applied for sound and image correction and enhancement as well as for editing. Projects are produced for distribution through appropriate media.

Objectives: The first step in working in a digital media environment is to be able to capture sights and sounds for incorporation in audio, video, multimedia and web applications. This course is an introduction to the unique capabilities of the digital media. Upon completion, the student will be able to mic, shoot, and edit a digitally-acquired project.

Rationale: Multimedia and Internet programs must begin with visual and aural elements. Some of these will be created by computers and computer-driven devices, but others will be taken from the sights and sounds of the world. The analog systems of recent years do not readily lend themselves to the process of digitally manipulating the information for distribution via radio, television, and the Internet. This class is necessary to assure that this process is understood by all of the program's graduates.

Topics:
Elements of Production
Microphones
Cameras
Lighting Design
Digital Scanning and Transmitting
Picture Composition
Audio Composition
Audio and Video Design
Graphics Production
Computerized Editing

Assignments: Individual assignments will be left to the discretion of the instructor. Among the possible assignments are:

Production of a short creative audio & video program
A lighting design for a field production
The design and creation of a creative graphic presentation
The execution of a digitally edited project for Internet distribution

Texts: Several textbooks are available; the selection of the most appropriate text will be left to the discretion of the instructor. Among the texts that may be considered are:

Ohanian, Thomas A. Digital Nonlinear Editing. Focal Press
Solomons, Tony, The Avid Digital Editing Room Handbook, Silman James Press
Watkinson, John, The Art of Digital Video, 2nd Ed. Focal Press
Zettl, Herbert, Sight-Sound-Motion, 3rd Ed., Wadsworth
Zettl, Herbert, Television Production Handbook, 6th Ed., Wadsworth

Lab Fee: A lab fee of $35 per student per semester will be assessed to cover maintenance for and repair of the microphones, cameras, and editors used in this course.

Required Purchases: Two Digital Video Tapes and a 100MB ZIP™ Disk

Interactive Storytelling
ICOM 634

Catalogue Description: CMD 634 Interactive Storytelling (3) Writing non-linear, interactive stories for both entertainment and instructional applications. Authoring software will be utilized to bring ideas to fruition. Prerequisites; an approved undergraduate multimedia course and CDM 632.

Course Description: This is an advanced investigation of interactive multimedia design based on known human-computer interaction principles. This class will examine, from the perspective of both the author and the audience, the art of writing for interactive and non-linear applications. Interactivity design is analyzed on many levels: interface layout, input control, messaging behavior, metaphor selection, etc. Software designed to allow the instructor to write and develop an interactive program and software that facilitates the audience member's control will be examined.

Objectives: The structure of most stories is linear; a beginning, middle and end. A non-linear, interactive story requires input from the audience member. To construct a story that is at once interactive and appealing is quite different from that of a linear story. The purpose of this class is to get students to think about the authoring process from a non-linear perspective.

Rationale: This course will be an advanced multimedia class for all Center for Media Design majors. This is one of those courses that, in time, may need to be expanded to a two- or even three-course sequence. As the society becomes more comfortable with non-linear story lines, there will be enhanced sophistication of writing and of software for both author and audience. The class is designed to cultivate the skills necessary to create and communicate through interactive multimedia. Interactivity (i.e., the inclusion of a multimedia 'user' within a created experience) will be investigated on many levels—from the choosing of metaphors to the picking of colors. In terms of professional applications, this may be the area that generates the greatest number of job opportunities for our graduates in years to come.

Through readings and production experiences, students are expected to acquire an advanced knowledge of human-computer interaction principles and their application to interactive multimedia interface design. The following areas will be addressed:

A. Theoretical principles of human-computer interface design:
- Accessibility (accommodation for different users: skill levels, element sizing, etc.)
- Aesthetic Integrity (visual/aural completeness, seemlessness)

- Audience Knowledge (awareness of the target audience)
- Consistency (zero surprises or omissions)
- Direct Manipulation (on-screen control of interactive parameters)
- Feedback and Dialog (reinforcement/guidance)
- Forgiveness (recoverability from any situation)
- Metaphors (drawing from parallel examples in life)
- Modelessness (eliminating compartments within interfaces)
- Perceived Stability (maintaining a resilient environment)
- See-and-Point (visual controls)
- User Control (protecting the user while giving them power)
- WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get)

B. Group development of an interactive multimedia project
- Construction of an multi-level artificial world
- Advanced understanding of multimedia object interaction
- Application of HCI principles to design

Course Assignments: This course includes the creation of a group CD-ROM project incorporating interactive objects as design elements.

Texts: While the choice of specific texts and readings to be used in the course is left to the instructor, the following would be appropriate for the course:

Iuppa, N.V. (1998). Designing Interactive Digital Media w/CD-ROM. Focal Press. ISBN: 0-240-80287-X

Director 6 and Lingo Authorized w/CD-ROM. (1997). Macromedia Press. ISBN: 0-201-69629-0

Required Purchase: One 100MB ZIP™ Disk

Lab Fee: A lab fee of $35 per student per semester will be assessed to cover maintenance for and repair of the computer lab used in this course.

Intercultural Immersion
ICOM 660

Catalog Description: *CMD 660 Intercultural Immersion* (3) Directed residential immersion in another culture for the purpose of investigating the storytelling forms and traditions of that society. Permission required.

Course Description: In consultation with the faculty advisor, the student is required to spend a minimum of four consecutive weeks living in another culture. During this time the student is to work and/or study with the people of the indigenous culture examining their storytelling customs and structures. Latitude will be given in defining the environment; it may be in another country or domestically with a culture group that differs significantly from the student's prior experiences. A log of the student's daily activities is to be maintained for the duration of the experience and submitted to the faculty advisor upon completion.

Rationale: In accord with the mission of the College of Communication, Information and Media, this class meets the goal of providing an intercultural experience. It is believed that students will learn the most about another culture and its storytelling mores by experiencing it in person. Students originally from other cultures attending Ball State will likewise be required to experience a culture with which they are not familiar.

Topics: These will vary based on the culture where the individual student is located.

Assignments: The two assignments that will be common for all students are the creation and maintenance of a log of the students' daily activities and the offering of a 1-2 hour workshop/presentation of the storytelling of the culture studied. The specifics of the log content will be identified with the supervising instructor. Other assignments may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Texts: It is unlikely that any text will be assigned for this course since every student's experience will be unique. However, various reference works will be assigned depending on the students' assigned cultural experience.

CLASSROOM

THE MYSTERY SHOW: NOTES ON RUNNING A CRISIS NEWS SIMULATION IN THE CLASSROOM

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Abstract
This article outlines the planning, development, and execution of a crisis news simulation activity for the classroom: the "Mystery Show". Although developed for a radio production course, the simulation can be adapted for video or online journalism courses. Based on the experience and observations of the author, notes and advice are included ranging from choosing a crisis news scenario, pre-production, and technical considerations.

The ability to deal with a crisis news situation as a broadcaster is a skill that is difficult to teach in school. Courses that deconstruct important news events and look at how the story was covered by the media do go some way toward equipping students to handle similar situations, but in those cases, there is the luxury of hindsight as well as time for thoughtful reflection and analysis. How can educators give students opportunities not only to analyse crisis news coverage, but also to actually participate in it as the crisis unfolds? I can think of no better way to do this than with a simulation exercise, wherein the crisis happens in the classroom.

I have been running crisis news simulations in my Radio Production class for several years, allowing students the opportunity to experience what it's like to be part of a broadcasting team during a news crisis. Students must put all of the skills they've acquired in class to work under pressure: decision-making, writing, recording and editing, hosting, and teamwork are all put to the test. This article outlines the planning and execution of a successful crisis news simulation. I am confident in calling this method successful because of the positive feedback I get from students, many of whom say it was the best assignment they've had all year.

The idea was conceived and first executed by colleagues of mine at Ryerson University, including Dr. Michael Murphy, Professor Marion Coomey, and Mark Banbury. Their work and creativity paved a smooth surface for me to bring crisis news simulation to my classes and credit is due to them.

Let me begin with a warning: this simulation exercise is very labour intensive, requiring a great deal of preparation, and is therefore not for the faint-of-heart (or for the drowning-in-marking). Several full days of planning, writing, and production should be expected, and should be done well in advance. You'll need to have two teaching assistants and/or some volunteers available to help execute the simulation. Having said that, let me also tell you that the reward for the hard work and planning is big—you and your students will have a good time. Students will appreciate the opportunity to do something so exciting in class, and there will be plenty of bloopers and gaffes that arise on air that make for good laughs. And of course, aside from all the fun, the educational and experiential value is very high.

Our class calls this assignment "the Mystery Show". The students know only that they are to broadcast a live, music-oriented, commercial radio show, and that "something may happen" during the course of the show. (Several students usually assume that this means I am going to sabotage the studio equipment, then see how they deal with the technical problems…but I assure them I am not that mean-spirited! Besides, our aging equipment usually provides students with opportunities to deal with unexpected technical breakdowns without my intervention anyway.) As the show gets underway, I begin to feed fake news stories into the classroom wire service about a major catastrophe. Prepared audio clips of police reports and traffic reports are given to the students at intervals as if they were coming from an audio wire service. Opportunities for the student reporters to attend 'press conferences' and to interview 'witnesses' are provided. An actor (usually me) is available at a particular phone number, able to connect the students to whatever emergency service (me), government agency (me), or private business (yes, me again!) they may need to speak with to get information. The students must decide if and when to dispense with regular music programming, and how to cover the breaking news story.

To this point in the course, the students have produced live, one-hour radio shows reflecting different formats such as Adult Contemporary, Contemporary Hits, All News, and Talk. They are already quite competent with the studio and equipment, which is an important factor for this exercise. For the Mystery Show, the students know that, unlike for other shows they produce, they do not have to do any preparation ahead of time. I provide them with a program log, all the program elements such as music, commercials, stingers, station IDs, as well as material for the hosts (scripted banter and material from which to ad-lib). Even the news team is provided with prepared scripts for the first news cast of the show. The students have been assigned roles ahead of time: hosts, technical operators, news director, program director, reporters, news anchors, etc. All the students need to do is show up and begin broadcasting.

To add a little more fun into the mix, I divide the class into two groups who broadcast separate shows from separate studios at the same time. (The class size is usually 18 to 22 students in total.) Thus the two groups act as competing stations, trying to be the timeliest, the most accurate, and the most informative in a bid to quash the 'competition'.

Planning the Show

The crisis scenario must be chosen carefully: it must be important enough and disruptive enough to the local 'audience' to warrant dispensing with regular programming to cover the story. It must also, however, be sufficiently contained so that it's possible for the student news team to get a handle on it; otherwise, they may come to feel overwhelmed and unable to cope. And of course, it's important to be

sensitive about the scenario in light of the current insecure political climate around the world—avoid frightening the students with scenarios that may seem too real.

The scenarios that have been used in the past for the Mystery Show include:

- A collision of a passenger train and freight train near downtown Toronto's busy Union Station. The freight train is carrying a poisonous liquid or gas that causes explosions and a need to evacuate several city blocks downtown.
- The Prime Minister of Canada is at the Skydome to throw the first ceremonial pitch at a Blue Jays' baseball game when a rebel group announces that they have rigged the Skydome with explosives and are holding everyone in it hostage.
- There is a fire at the Pickering nuclear generating station.
- A small earthquake causes a rift in the Toronto subway system. Massive quantities of oil bubble up through the rift, flooding some subway stations.

The scenario can be very serious, or can be lightened up by including somewhat improbable outcomes (like oil being struck in the subway system) or giving the central characters humorous names.

Once a suitable scenario is selected, a timeline of events should be sketched out. The timeline should include the exact time that the wire stories, audio clips, news releases, etc. should appear to the students and a brief description of what each of them contains.

Table 1 shows an example of a timeline for the train collision scenario mentioned above.

Table 1: Crisis news timeline

Time	Item	Details
00:10		Hand out logs, students get organized & begin broadcasting
00:20	Phone tip to newsroom	Motorist sees many 'flashing lights' just east of Union Station
00:21	Wire story 1	Unconfirmed report of train accident
00:28	Wire story 2	Confirmation of train wreck, word of injuries & deaths
00:31	Envelope 1	Directs reporters to scene to get audio from eyewitnesses (scripts for witnesses included)
00:33	Wire Story 3	Details of where train was heading, word of freight train possibly carrying chemical substance
00:37	Wire Story 4	Word of area being evacuated due to leak of poison gas
00:39	Envelope 1A	Directs reporters to hospital to get audio of eyewitness accounts (scripts for witnesses included)
	Envelope 2	Police bulletin (audio CD with accompanying info): evacuation
00:41	Wire Story 5	Report of more injuries, deaths, how many on board, rescue official's comment
00:42	Envelope 3	Traffic report (audio CD with accompanying info)
00:45	Wire Story 6	Info on second train
00:47	Envelope 4	Backgrounders: VIA Rail info, info on poison gas
00:50	Wire Story 7	Updates of death toll, evacuation of Air Canada Centre
00:53	Wire Story 8	Explosion at rescue site, no word of cause
00:55	Wire Story 9	Firefighter hurt in explosion, believed to be fuel of passenger train, not gas
00:57	Wire Story 10	News release: VIA Rail press conference to be held at 1:15
00:59	Envelope 5	Traffic report #2 (audio CD with accompanying info)
01:01	Wire Story 11	Hospital turns away injured people due to overflow
01:03	Wire Story 12	Rescue crews say they have contained the gas leak
01:07	Wire Story 13	Updates of deaths and injuries
	Wire Story 14	May have been a VIA Rail switching error
01:10	Envelope 6	Police bulletin #2 (audio CD with accompanying info)
01:13	Wire Story 15	Via Rail press conference will be delayed until 1:20
01:17	Wire Story 16	Mayor Mel Lastman calls in the army to help
01:20		Hosts of news conference announce they will begin in two minutes.
01:22		News conference begins
01:26	Envelope 7	Press release: notice of news conference to be held at 1:40 by the Canadian Order of Nostradamus
01:35	Envelope 8	Script for an interview with Dr. Mo Knowledge, expert on coping with trauma
01:37	Wire Story 17	Freight train company spokesperson makes comment
01:40		Second news conference (C.O.N.) begins
01:44	Envelope 9	Release from Premier of Ontario
01:47	Wire Story 18	Wrap up, clean up, etc.

And now, let the writing begin! As indicated in the timeline above, nearly 20 wire stories need to be written, as well as information (including in cues and out cues) to accompany the pre-produced audio clips such as police statements, traffic reports, etc. Scripts for press conferences and eyewitness accounts, the content of press releases, backgrounder information, and scripts for interviews with experts also need to be prepared.

Executing the show

In order to run a successful Mystery Show, it is necessary to ensure that the following are in place:

- Programming elements need to be ready. This includes a programming log, music, commercials, stingers, station IDs, and news sounders.
- Have the text of the wire stories ready on floppy disc or CD-ROM to be slotted into the wire service at the designated times. If this is not possible, or as a backup, have printouts of the stories ready to hand out.
- Have the audio clips ready on cart or CD. Put these in numbered envelopes and indicate on the timeline when each envelope should be handed out.
- Have press releases, such as notification of press conferences and statements from government agencies, printed and ready to hand out in numbered envelopes.
- Background information regarding people, places, or poisonous gases involved in the situation should also be prepared and ready to hand out in envelopes.
- Have scripts for the press conferences ready, and recruit a volunteer actor or two to host the press conference. Students who have already taken my course and have already done the Mystery Show are usually keen to assist in this capacity.
- The press conferences should be set up in a separate room with microphones and a mixer whose output can be patched directly into the broadcast studio(s) if possible. This allows the students the option of sending the press conferences live to air.
- Have scripts for 'eyewitness accounts' ready to be handed out at the designated times. Include instructions at the top that tells the reporter to find a person in the hallway or outside and have him or her act out the script while the reporter records it.
- Portable recording equipment should be available to the student reporters so that

they can record press conferences and eyewitness accounts. A digital editing station or tape editing station should also be available to reporters so they can edit their clips for air.

- The students should know the phone number for the "operator", and have access to a phone. You or someone else can act as the operator, connecting the students to whatever person or service they want to talk to, then act as that person. This job can have a big influence on the development of the story, depending on whom the students ask to speak to and what that person chooses to tell them.
- Be sure to record the show to tape. I usually listen to the shows live and take notes about what the students were reporting and when.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the Mystery Show is the "gotcha" factor: the occasional red herring added into the mix of information that is sent to the students to see how they'll handle it. For example, I plan a press conference to be put on by a fringe group of wacky people, such as "the Canadian Order of Nostradamus" (or CON for short), who claim they knew from ancient prophecies that the disaster would occur. Sometimes the news team is so anxious to cover absolutely everything that they go live with this news conference, forgetting to turn on their credibility filter. (Later in the show, I throw in a press release from the office of the Premier of Ontario stating that he intends to work closely with CON on future economic development plans. It's a great opportunity that I can't seem to pass up to poke fun at politicians and political policies.)

Other red herrings include false leads: after reminding students ahead of time that they need to check the accuracy of the information that is provided to them, I'll call the newsroom during the show and identify myself as the Press Officer for the Toronto Police and give some false information. Sometimes students will take the information and put it on air right away, necessitating a retraction later when they realize it was a false lead. Other times they keep their cool, call the "operator", and ask to speak to the Press Officer for the Toronto Police for confirmation. Music and commercials can provide tricky situations as well—I always include the song "It's the End of the World as We Know It" by R.E.M. on the music log to see whether the program director will think to drop the song from the line-up in light of developing events. I try to include commercials for services or businesses that may be involved in the crisis, such as VIA Rail, to see if the students are paying attention to commercial content and how it may relate to or conflict with the news content.

Because my course is Radio Production—and not News Production—I conduct the Mystery Show only once, and I don't assign a grade to the students for it. Students in this first-year class do not yet have enough grounding in news and journalism to warrant grading the outcome; the exercise is more about experience than performance assessment. I do conduct a 'post mortem' in the class following, playing back highlights from the tape and allowing the students to hear what their show sounded like.

The Mystery Show is a very large undertaking, but extremely worthwhile. I'd be happy to share advice and resources, including the complete breakdown of scripts, wire stories, and so on, to any educators who might want to try it with their own class.

"GETTIN' JIGGY?" CNN'S "HIP-HOP" HEADLINE NEWS IDEA AND HOW ONE COLLEGE JOURNALISM CLASS DEALT WITH IT

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On October 5, 2002, the Associated Press ran a story about CNN Headline News' potential plan to enhance its reportage (and perhaps its ratings) by writing news in a contemporary, hip-hop argot. The news network may have been encouraged to do so because some of the other cosmetic touches it recently added—a busy, computer-like screen, high-tech set, etc.—were thought the keys that brought them a younger audience, and "younger" to CNN Headline News is anyone 50 or under. I was intrigued by the idea of writing news in the vernacular, and decided to assign my MTSU Advanced Television Writing and Reporting class to do just that. The exercise netted some very unusual "news" copy, samples of which I'll share with you at the end of this piece.

Impressed with the success of the class, I called education writer Bill Cass at The Tennessean in Nashville, explained the concept, faxed him some student-written copy, and he was kind enough to do a story on the class' effort. The next thing I know, my little college writing exercise broke as a national news item. It was carried on the AP wire, reported by NPR, and even had newspaper editorials written about it. Things were going better than I expected, when I received a call from Lauren Hammann at CNN Headline News.

I was prepared for a good scolding, but she was really quite gracious, stressing "it's the journalism" that is of central concern to CNN management. Hammann explained that if this idiosyncratic style of newswriting would be used on Headline News at all, it would only be seen on tickers and dekkos, and not in readers, packages or banter among anchors or reporters. I explained that I saw nothing wrong with the CNN headline service writing copy any way it wanted, and that the class exercise was just a critical thinking and writing activity to help students reflect upon how news is socially constructed. I also mentioned to Ms. Hammann that the media coverage of our class project was flattering, but a bit overwhelming. I'm still not convinced it warranted all the attention it received, but it was a fascinating educational experience for the students to witness how big time news media covers itself, and the way it uses its most basic of journalistic tools—words.

Before the class tried its hand at writing "jiggy news" (with "jiggy" itself being a dated, un-cool reference), we first discussed if it was a good idea for a major media outlet like CNN Headline News to do such a thing. After all, media tycoons have

been targeting audiences by changing writing style and refocusing news content since the birth of the Penny Press in 1833, so why not "fly" news? We all agreed it is "a way" of journalistic expression, albeit probably not the most purposeful way. Newswriting, after all, is an art; there is not a "wrong" or "right" way to craft it. Paradoxically, news is also genre writing that employs a specific formula. That's why TV newscasts all over the country have a sort of standardized tone, rhythm and pace. So, since newswriting is more about style and taste, how does one judge "good" work from "bad?" By its efficacy. There is always a more effective and less effective way to tell a story, and, in college at least, we shoot for the more effective.

Next the class and I created a 30 to 40 word "jiggy news" glossary, that we then discussed. Why not rename business and stock market stories "bling-bling reports"? Why not call prostitutes "hos"? Rather than saying: "Here are this hour's top news stories," have anchors utter, "Yo, blood! Check it out!" The impression I got from the class is that writing in the hip-hop idiom is impossible if you wish to be taken seriously as a mainstream news operation. But what if you're not writing for the mainstream? What if you're writing news for a very specific under-served demo? Isn't that what business—especially the TV news business—is about: finding and serving (i.e., exploiting) the niche? On that question we agreed that "jiggy" could become a boutique news format, but had a harder time determining if such newswriting is ethical. To be sure, journalism done in the parlance of the street appears to veer far from customary news conventions followed for nearly 170-years. But if the facts of the story aren't changed, and no key information altered when composing in "jiggy," why not? Is this kind of writing really that "bad?' The working ideal, as you know, is to write in an "objective" manner, choosing words precisely, making certain such words are not loaded or carry specific or obvious bias. Then again, a postmodernist might argue all words carry bias, and there is really is no way to write without a certain ideological slant. Since meaning is made at the intersection of text and reader, and writing itself cannot escape the taint of subjectivity, I asked the class why we should be so hesitant about writing 'jiggy news?' Could it be because, as (mostly) white middle-class journalism students we feel uncomfortable using words that come from what many see as a threatening black subculture? Is this really a latent class/race issue? As noted, we came to no clear conclusions on those intriguing questions, but my class decided it was simply impossible to chose words that are not already infused with meaning and a specific 'political' (if you will) point of view when writing 'jiggy.' Besides 'jiggy news' is not rooted in a literate tradition but comes from an attitude-driven spoken subculture—making it perfect for radio and television! Perhaps that's why more print columnists seemed particularly livid about CNN Headline's notion of 'street talk' news.

The class unanimously agreed that, by necessity, 'jiggy news' is exclusive, evanescent black speech, and to 'get it' one must be part of an in-group—whether one is black, white, or Hispanic. For that reason alone it would not work as accepted mainstream fare. Hip-hop lingo is also considered to be misogynistic and vulgar—at least by white middle-class standards—and using it would undoubtedly repel conservative news viewers, but may attract a newer, younger audience that advertisers can't seem to reach. With the news pie sliced razor thin already, why not carve a niche with 'jiggy news?' "But," asked the class, "isn't this another example of the dominant white culture co-opting and pandering the black subculture only for corporate commercial gain?" "Bingo!" I said. "Think of it as part of the grand American business tradition!"

Sadly, the above ideas have been absent in any national dialogue prompted by our "jiggy news" experiment. The news reports of my class exercise concentrated only on how weird and distasteful the CNN Headline News idea was. The press sniffed, "that's not how real news is written." So our 'jiggy news' story was treated as a kicker, played for laughs and targeted to the water cooler crowd. There were so many important ideas that went begging. That's why I thought it important to write this essay and, if possible, keep the discussion going.

My purpose for the class exercise was not to ridicule vernacular writing, but to demonstrate that all news is socially constructed. 'Jiggy' is not 'bad' newswriting, just different; just another way of expressing ideas to reach disenfranchised news consumers. It's what editors mean when they say "write to your audience" or "be relevant." (Marketing departments label it 'demographic targeting.') Is it politically correct? No way. Is it politically biased? Most assuredly. But technically what news isn't? You and I no longer see or hear the bias in our mainstream reportage because we live in a culture where the dominant and accepted news bias is essentially a white middle-class one. We swim in ideology like fish in water, and both are invisible to those doing the swimming!

So, I gave my class the assignment to choose a legitimate AP story, but to write it in the vernacular of the street. "Give it to me in hip-hop," I told them, "do me some 'jiggy news.'" I required all the facts to be accurate, only the presentation had to change to fit the new style of CNN Headline News, as we then understood it. Below are some examples. All of the efforts were amusing, if not a bit disturbing. And after you read them, stop. Ask yourself why these stories made you laugh, or feel angry, or despair over the state of American journalism. Your answers may tell you much about what you think news is, or is supposed to be.

Jiggy News Assignments

By Candace Crain, (MTSU senior)

A true playa has lost his right to toot it up. Today a Wisconsin court threw down a harsh judgement on David Oakley. They say he can't be fertilizing' no mo hos until he has the chedda to support the nine that he already had. The man done owes 25-thousand to his baby's mommas for child support. Oakley then appealed to the dawgs on the Supreme Court and they done shot his ass down. Fo shiza!

By Beverly Baskette (MTSU Junior)

A 13-year-old dude is in critical condition this morning after being capped outside his school in suburban Maryland. Police are keepin' it real, but on the DL as to whether the shooting in Maryland and Washington are togetha, my brotha. Six out of the seven peeps that got dey ass capped have died.

By Angela Gardenhire (MTSU Senior)

Check it! Senator Phil Gramm's not kickin' it with Congress no mo! Gram say he gone to be a banker after he throws up the duces to the senate. He be gone to tell

corporate clients how to manage they chedda betta, too. He say his new deal will be off da hook cause it be natural fo him, baby.

By Brad Lang (MTSU Junior)

According to our homeys in Iran's foreign ministry, Iraq has upped its diplomatic efforts to avert a possible U.S. military attack on that trick, Saddam. Iran be sayin' dey have "got his back" on any U.N.-led action. If inspectors confirm that them Iraqi bi-otches are developing weapons of mass destruction, they dead.

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S CONVERGENCE TRIANGLE: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO MAJOR CONVERGED LOCAL TELEVISION NEWS OPERATIONS

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Introduction

Communication technologies as represented by the Internet have set off fear in the corporate media world that audiences will become more and more fragmented due to the fact that the old idea of the mass media has reached its limit (Roberts, 2001). As a result, television stations, radio stations, and local newspapers are no longer working as independent providers of information. Today media giants, once competitors, are working together, promoting each other, and very often sharing resources. However, many critics argue that these corporate mergers affect and often "dominate newsroom decisions" (Hollifield, Kosicki, Lee and Becker, 2001, p.92). Basically, these critics argue that news executives are responding to corporate pressures by moving away from producing high-quality news content that benefits the public interest to concentrate on competition that can maximize profits (Killebrew, 2001). Given these changes, questions are begging to be asked: Are decision makers attempting to foster each medium, or is one medium being sacrificed for another? What is the effect of convergence on a television newscast and what possible influence can this change have on the viewer?

Background and Purpose

Central Florida has become the "primary laboratory for media convergence" (Training, 2001, p.17). Here, several media giants have joined forces to compete and dominate their news markets. For example, in Orlando the News Sentinel shares content with the Time Warner-owned cable news channel Central Florida News 13, while in Sarasota the Sarasota Herald-Tribune teamed with Comcast Cable to create the cable news channel Six News. In Tampa, Time Warner's 24-hour news cable channel, Bay News 9, has converged with no less than four local newspapers. The newspapers include: *The Bradenton Herald* in Manatee County, *The Ledger* in Polk County, and the *Business Journal*, serving the greater Tampa Bay area, and the *Citrus County Chronicle*.(1) Tampa is also home to Media General's News Center.

The News Center houses the *Tampa Tribune*, NBC affiliate WFLA-TV, and

TBO.com. Since it began operations two years ago, the 120,000-square foot, $40 million dollar News Center has attracted both national and international attention as a "model for media convergence, where print, broadcast and online media combine the depth of newspapers, the drama of television and the power of the Internet to better serve customers." Located in a single building, the News Center is the only converged media operation of its kind in the world. According to J. Stewart Bryan III, Media General's chairman and chief executive, The News Center had in just one year of operation "…learned to provide unsurpassed news coverage and unprecedented advertising opportunities" (Financial, 2001). What makes Media General unique, according to Gil Thelen, the Tribune's executive editor and vice president, "is that this is the only place in the country where you have a newspaper, television station and online division under one roof." Here the assignment desk, or superdesk, "…is the nerve center of the converged operation. Staffers from WFLA, TBO.com and the *Tampa Tribune* sit next to one another, keeping tabs on what each is doing" (Gabettas, 2000, p.26).

Less than a year after Media General began operation, and in an attempt to compete with the giant News Center, the St. Petersburg Times and Gannett-owned CBS affiliate, WTSP-Channel 10, agreed to showcase each other's news and features (two rivals working together). "Under the agreement Times reporters and columnists will appear on the air to discuss stories," and they will also "look for joint sponsorship opportunities for community events and will explore other promotional possibilities such as connections between websites" (Huntley, 2001).

The difference between WFLA, the "converged" stations in Tampa, and WTSP, the "converged" operations in St. Petersburg, however, is that WFLA is completely owned and operated by the same company and is located in one building while WTSP has two different owners. Additionally, the St. Petersburg Times is located in one part of the city while the television station WTSP is located in another. Nevertheless, these three Tampa-St Petersburg operations all compete in the same media market providing news and information to the viewer. In this study we investigate and discuss the characteristics of convergence, how the local television news affiliates in the Tampa/St Petersburg market use convergence in a newscast, and whether convergence is of benefit to the viewer.

Literature Review

Convergence

Like it or not, convergence is the way of the future. Scholars define convergence as the "coming together and blurring of lines between various forms of communication" (Head, et al.,2001). Convergence takes place in journalism when a company "owns or has negotiated a partnership with more than one media platform in a national or local market. For many media practitioners, these partnerships are referred to in many different ways. The primary words used to describe convergence are "synergy," "mixed-media-transfer," "branding," "brand-extension," and "multimedia job shifting." Regardless of the words used to describe it, convergence is a way to leverage the strengths of print, broadcast and the Internet to gather and distribute information. In this way, broadcast, online, and print products are no longer seen as competitors but as a continuous reporting process.

Convergence also, theoretically, "saves money on the newsgathering side because you no longer need separate reporters for your newspaper, TV station and website; a story is covered only once. Additionally, convergence makes money on the advertising side because the content is "distributed more than once, reaching separate audiences in print, broadcast and online media" (Anzur, 2001).

There are some studies examining the impact of convergence on local television news as it pertains to web content (Chan-Olmsted and Park, 2000; Anzur, 2001) and there are many studies looking at the newspaper industry's relationship to convergence or at the content of web sites for television news. There are also a few studies that focus on how new technologies affect traditional journalism practices. For example, Zavoina and Reichert (2000) argue that as newspapers embrace new media, photo editors will be called on to conceive news strategies that can serve many media platforms. Other scholars advocate the development of a new kind of journalism, A journalism that breaks away from previous practices while retaining a traditional set of news values (Fredin 1997; Lule, 1998; Pavlik, 1998). These types of arguments give credence to the concept of 'job shifting' or the need for new journalists to have a strong set of news values and to be skilled in both print and broadcast news practices. Here it could be argued that those news values begin with a strong sense of news content, more commonly referred to as 'newsworthiness' or 'gatekeeping'.

When discussing gatekeeping in relation to convergence and television news, however, a distinction between 'news gathering' or content and 'news processing' or producing (the function of putting together the product for presentation) must be made. Nearly forty years ago Gieber (1964) argued that news people function according to institutional demands. Assignment editors and managing editors drive the content, while producers decide what the content will look like on the air. More simply, "news is what news people make it" within the context of their function. (as cited in Wickham, 1989).

From a practical perspective, a recent study examined why newspaper publishers place their newspapers' content on the Internet. The authors concluded that the primary reason for putting newspapers on the World Wide Web was to gain more readers (Peng, Naphtali, and Xiaoming, 1999). Herein lies the primary reason for media Convergence—that is, to make money. Reid Ashe, CEO for Media General, spoke before the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) in August, 2001. He said "We've got to pay the bills" and convergence "allows us to increase our ad sales."

When looking at television news and its relationship to the Internet, University of Florida researchers studied 300 local TV news websites and found these sites unlikely to excite Internet users. These broadcast news websites were "heavy on text, short on interactive features," and the researchers concluded that TV stations were "repackaging material from their newscasts instead of generating original web content." Anzur (2001) agrees and posits that there is "plenty of evidence to suggest that most TV stations have neither ignored nor embraced the challenge of delivering meaningful local news coverage on their websites." While we were able to find numerous studies investigating Internet content in relation to newspapers (Chan-Olmsted and Park, 2000) or web content in relation to television in general (Ferguson and Perse, 2000), at the time this study was under investigation, no studies could be found specifically

looking at how convergence might affect local news.

Medium Theory

Medium theory, as described by Deibert (1998), Flayhan (2001), Gladney (1996), Grosswiler (1998), Meyrowitz (1985), posits that the medium used by the communicator is the determining variable in the communication process; that the medium creates an environment that will have an impact on society and our thought processes, and that the effects of the medium selected can be analyzed on both the macro level and the micro level. On the macro level, medium theorists are building on the research of a diverse group of scholars such as economist Harold A. Innis (1951), who studied how changes in the form of communication change the monopolies of knowledge and political power based on the medium's emphasis on time. They looked at the space and the literary philosopher Ong (1981), who studied how moving from an oral culture to a literary one resulted in changes in thought processes and consciousness as well as the historian Eisenstein's (1979) study of the effects of the printing press that allowed for both the enlightenment and the rise of nation states. The most profligate promoter and developer of the theory was Marshall McLuhan with his "medium is the message" aphorism. McLuhan (1965) could also be considered a medium theorist on the micro level as he discussed which senses are highlighted by which medium, concluding that radio is a hot medium while television is cool.

Flayhan (2001) positions medium theory as a counter to the transmission theory of communication, where the focus is on the product or content. Rather, the medium theory approach to communication is interested in the process of meaning-making and clearly falls under the North American tradition of cultural studies. Deibert (1997) relates medium theory to Darwinism; just as the environment influences which species survive and reproduce, the communication environment influences which social forces and ideas will flourish or flounder; technological innovation produces unintended consequences and marginal forces can become central forces. Gladney (1996) points out critics have considered medium theory another name for technological determinism, but the intent of the theory is to highlight the biases and potential effects of a medium that then could be manipulated for useful purposes.

Print with its use of a the highly abstract symbol-making system of language, has been found to highlight the analytical thought processes, favoring clarity, sequence, and reason, while television's reliance on images, requiring "instantaneous pattern-recognition," favors perception (Postman,1982, p.78). Electronic media's presentational messages offer us "experiences, while print offers arguments," (Meyrowitz, 1998 p. 98-9). These scholars argue that the Internet allows for the merging of both print and visual symbol system, using both analogic and digital forms of communication, and could be seen to favor both reasoning and experience. But as Strate, Jacobson and Gibson (1996) explain, the Internet's reliance on electronic media will alter our relationships with others and ourselves, and Meyrowitz (1998) finds that we have no sense of place. For Diebert (1997) hypermedia are also altering political boundaries.

The current tendency of media industries to converge and to use a variety of media offers an opportunity to study how three different forms—print, electronic television, and the Internet—adapt to each other and enhance or detract from each other. Schaefer (2001) has used the medium theory approach to discuss the possible effects of convergence. He describes convergence as allowing for a medium continuum similar to an intellectual growth continuum, with a layering of forms. He concludes that some prior uses of media will prevail, such as print on paper: we read print on paper more efficiently than on the screen. But the promises of convergence yield an ecological diversity of modes of production, distribution and reception.

Medium theory lends itself more readily to the macro level of study (Diebert, 1997; Meyrowitz, 1998), and there are very few attempts to follow McLuhan's leads and his probes to discover what is happening at the micro level and what the unintended consequences of changes in our media might be. More than forty years ago, McLuhan (1965) predicted that the electronic media would lead us into the global village, returning us to the tribal community. However, a recent study of the effects of newspapers (the print media), going online and becoming hypermedia found that the local media outlets concentrated on the local news, and left the world news alone. Singer (2001) concluded that convergence offers very few changes resulting in online content having the appearance of what the author calls "shovelware" (p.67).

We have conducted a micro study, studying how television stations news programs are converging with the Internet and with newspapers. Medium theory is useful to discern how the communicators in each medium use that medium, and how they use one platform to refer to another. Meyrowitz (1998) identified a number of variables for analyzing the "relatively fixed features" of a medium, numbered here for ease of reference: 1.) type of sensory information conveyed: unisensory or multisensory; 2.) the form of information within each sense; 3.) the degree of definition, resolution, fidelity; 4.) unidirectional vs. bi-directional vs. multidirectional; 5.) simultaneous vs. sequential bidirectionality; 6.) speed and degree of immediacy in encoding and decoding; 7.) relative ease/difficulty of learning to encode and decode and the number and types of stages of mastery; 8.) the ratio of encoding difficulty to decoding difficulty; 9.) physical requirements for engaging the medium; 10.) degree and type of potential human manipulation; and, 11.) scope and nature of dissemination. Gatekeeping theory helps to determine how the decision-makers confronted the convergence, determining which aspects of the medium they would highlight.

Gatekeeping

Using communication standards, gatekeeping is one of the oldest and best known constructs. According to Watson and Hill (1997), the term refers to the manner in which messages are selected, created, and controlled. A news story is the result of a number of choices by a variety of gatekeepers. The three primary kinds of gatekeepers in a television newsroom are the news directors, assignment editors, and producers. Newsrooms run by news directors who have moved up through the ranks via the assignment desk typically have strong assignment editors, and practitioners refer to the product generated in those newsrooms as desk-driven newscasts. These newscasts, generally, provide considerably more information but are low on production (far less use of graphics, color or music, and typically an older and more experienced staff). Other newsrooms have news directors and managers who move into management from the producer ranks—these operations are called producer-driven and generally feature more color, music, graphics, and more physically attractive talent.

Shoemaker (1991) argues that it is important to study gatekeeping because

gatekeeping provides an integrated view of social reality. She adds that gatekeeping studies "have most often looked at the selection of news items within the mass media, however, gatekeeping can involve more than just selection…it can also involve withholding or shaping the transmission." Using this idea of how the product or newscast is shaped was the basis for this study. We also asked whether the function and professional experience of the gatekeeper will affect how the convergence element appears in the newscast.

Method

There is no single way to conduct a study using content analysis as the primary method because the definitions of content analysis vary (Vande Berg and Wenner,1991; Stacks and Hocking, 1992). Scholars who prefer more holistic, meaning-centered methods have looked to qualitative or cultural methods of analysis (Anderson and Meyer,1988; Fink & Gantz, 1996; Berg, 1995) and often refer to content analysis as textual analysis. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

With textual analysis, the investigator examines data as they arrive (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Altheide, 1996) and begins to code, categorize, conceptualize, and to write the first few thoughts concerning the research report almost from the beginning of the study. Sampling or data collection uses neither probability sampling nor convenience sampling. Qualitative researchers use what is referred to as "purposeful sampling" (Patton, 1990, p. 169) or what LeCompte and Preissle (1993, p.69) call criterion-based selection. Strauss and Corbin (1994) refer to this process as theoretical sampling. This study emerged from this qualitative perspective. Qualitative rather than quantitative methods are used because we take as a starting point the position that understanding reality cannot be an unmediated process.

Study Questions

Since this area of study has recently emerged, we are hypothesizing about what could help identify areas for future research. As a starting point we asked, "What are the characteristics of convergence in local television news and how could they affect the viewer?" Given that we could find no studies specifically examining this issue, and that the local television news affiliates in the Tampa/St Petersburg market are centers for media convergence, it seemed appropriate to allow our hypothesis to emerge using WFLA and WTSP. Specific research questions included:

1. Where does the convergence element appear in the newscast?
2. Does the element send the viewer to a newspaper or the Internet?
3. How much of the newscast time does the convergence element take?
4. Is the production or production element a major consideration when evaluating the convergence element?
5. To what extent does the convergence element contribute to content.
6. Is the convergence element in the newscast asking the viewer to use other senses than the visual one?
    a. Is it asking the viewer to use only the visual sense?
    b. Are they relying on the aural sense also?
7. What is the form of the information/directive within each sense?
    a. Is there a visual logo that appears when asking the viewer to go to the Internet?
    b. Is there an audio refrain, such as a whoosh, or click sound?
    c. Is it thru text?
    d. Is it thru voice/over?
    e. Is it thru on-camera talent?
8. How does the convergence element appear in the newscast?
    a. Does the appearance contribute to the production or to the content?
9. How many different stories containing a convergence element appear on WFLA versus WTSP?
10. How well defined or 'in your face' is the directive?
11. Are newscasters asking the viewer to take this opportunity to provide feedback thru the Internet?
12. Are they asking the viewer to go to an online conference, where there will be simultaneous feedback, such as a chat room?
13. How easy does it appear for the viewer to follow the directive?
    a. Would a kindergartner be able to take advantage of this proceedure?
    b. Or would one need at least a high school education?
14. Is there a substantive difference in relation to content and/or production between WFLA and WTSP?
15. Is one platform/medium being sacrificed for another?

Study objective

The objective of this study was to understand how local broadcast news uses convergence and whether there is any benefit for the viewer when watching a station that has both a newspaper and an Internet medium available to present and develop information within its newscast. This study also generated hypotheses for future research.

Unit of Analysis

The basic unit for this study is the individual news story. A news story is defined through criteria developed by Larson and Hardy (1977).(2) Additionally, the weather and news segments of the newscasts were examined as single units within the entire newscast.(3)

Data Collection

Data collection for this study began by videotaping all the 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. newscasts for both WFLA and WTSP. We chose to analyze the 6 and 11 p.m. newscasts because these newscasts are traditionally the profit center for local television news. The tapes collected included newscasts from August 1 through August 31, 2001. The month of August was selected because August is one of the few months of the year where no ratings are taken. We wanted to ensure that hyping (4) would not impact the results.

In an effort to be consistent, only data from the NBC and CBS news affiliates are included in this study. (5) Also, in an effort to be consistent, we opted to study only the Monday through Friday newscasts, given that gatekeepers usually change for the weekend. (6)

In order to allow the categories to emerge, we collected all the newscasts, then previewed, selected and transcribed all of the relevant tapes. Both a graduate student and an undergraduate student checked the transcriptions several times to ensure accuracy.

Data Analysis

The analysis process began by reviewing two newscasts from each of the two television stations. This was completed so that a preliminary list of codes could produce a template or instrument that could be used consistently from story to story. This preliminary round established a list of thirty-nine different potentially broad codes. The broad codes included such items as: type of story—crime, health, local-federal-state government, length of story, in which segment story appeared, graphic or video used, delivered by anchor/ reporter, and such obvious codes as date, time and 6 or 11 o'clock show. As each script was re-read and analyzed, handwritten potential categories or memos were placed on each page. Glaser and Strauss (1967) explain that memoing is "The theorizing write up of ideas about the codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding" (p.83).

Once all of the stories were collected, transcribed, and coded, a series of several different outlines were developed to try and put parameters around central ideas or concepts. In the end, a total of eight broad categories was identified. They included: total number of stories in newscast, verbal/non verbal message, promotional spot inside/outside of news segment, which platform promoted, lead-in or tag, delivered by anchor/reporter, production element, symbol.

Analysis of Visuals

Altheide (1996) directs attention to the wide variety of techniques available to qualitative content analysts, and it is his view that such techniques produce richer and more reliable interpretations of media presentations than mere studies of verbal content and their meaning. This study is based on video analysis procedures outlined by Altheide (1996). The outline entails simply describing the visuals by 'what was shown,' 'who was shown,' and 'what they were doing' (p.22). This sort of descriptive study will provide useful data about the content of television output as a complete message system.

Verification

Guba and Lincoln (1981) explain that with qualitative research, the term 'reliability' is something of a 'misfit' and suggest that the scholar think about reliability in terms of 'dependability,' 'consistency,' or 'trustworthiness' of the results obtained from the data. That is, rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, one wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense—they are consistent and dependable. To promote agreement with our conclusions, we have provided a detailed accounting of our methods in order to provide a clear and accurate picture of how the data was collected and analyzed.

Findings

General Description

A total of 88 newscasts make up the total number of news programs under investigation; 46 for WFLA and 42 for WTSP. The broadcast dates include all Monday through Friday stories in the 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. newscasts dating from August 1 through August 31, 2001. Within these newscasts there are a total of 1,226 stories.

The breakdown is as follows: 585 stories for WFLA, and 641 for WSTP news. In all there are 201 packages, or stories, presented or covered by reporters for WFLA, and 260 packages for WSTP. The rest of the stories are voice-overs using either video or graphics as visual support and presented by the news anchor.

Excluding the weather segment, there are 39 references to TBO.com, WFLA's Internet partner, in the newscasts. The reference usually involves a graphic of a computer and is used as a tag to a story. The reference lasts anywhere from about twenty to thirty seconds in length. There is one instance when one such reference lasted 55 seconds.

If the weather segment for WFLA is included then the numbers jump up dramatically to 95 because every single newscast examined contained one full minute of a non-verbal visual graphic referring to the Internet partner. The average length of a weather segment for WFLA is approximately three minutes. In the six o'clock newscast, the weather typically appears in the second or third segment. In the eleven o'clock newscast it always appears in the second. Contained in that three-minute presentation are two different non-verbal references to TBO.com. The first reference appears approximately thirty seconds into the presentation with the weather anchor delivering the current temperatures. Immediately above the full screen 'Current Temperature' display, in the upper extreme right hand corner, the words TBO.com appears. The same graphic reappears two minutes into the weather segment and is held up for about sixty seconds while the weather anchor presents the Evening, Morning, and Afternoon Forecast, the Marine Forecast, Tidal information, and the Five Day Forecast. Each and every weather page contains the same non-verbal visual display for TBO.com. This visual stays on the screen for approximately one-third of the entire weather segment in every newscast. The graphic display is simple, consisting of nothing more than a simple title, in black lettering over the station's colors. WTSP displays only a few Internet references during its weather segment. Clearly, this is a major distinction between WFLA and WSTP.

The same non-verbal title (TBO.com) is used by WFLA to close every single newscast. It appears immediately below the copyright and is held for approximately four seconds. Including this non-verbal message in the total number of mentions in a newscast for TBO.com moves the total number of convergence references to 141.

There are also 15 different references to the *Tampa Tribune*, the newspaper partner. Here, the references rarely include graphic support and last about five to eight seconds; generally, these too are nothing more than tags.

Another key difference between WFLA and WTSP is that WFLA includes 30 second promotional material inside of their commercial breaks within the newscast. There are 14 separate thirty-second promotional spots inside the commercial breaks for WFLA, none for WTSP. These promotional spots all promote the overall newscasts and their relationship with the convergence partners. The dominant platform here again is the Internet partner.

When looking at the newscasts there seem to be little consistency about where the convergence element appears in a WFLA newscast. The significant element is that the 6 p.m. newscast is made up of five segments, the 11 p.m. of four, and EVERY segment contains either a verbal or non-verbal reference to one or both convergence partners.

For WSTP the information is radically different. In total there are 18 references to the *St. Petersburg Times*, the station's newspaper partner, and every reference appears only in the 11 p.m. newscast. Every one of these references is part of a short twenty-to thirty-second anchor reader with an-over-the-shoulder graphic using the words St. Petersburg Times in the title. The verbal message is nothing more than a three-to-four second request for the viewer to "…pick up tomorrow morning's *St. Petersburg Times*." While WSTP and the *St. Petersburg Times* do share a website, TampaBay.com, there are no references to it in any of the newscasts examined. There are, however, a total of nine references to their own website, WTSP.com in their 6 p.m. newscast. Like WFLA, the references are nothing more than tags to a story. The difference between the WFLA story tag, however, is that it runs anywhere between twenty and fifty five seconds while WTSP's runs about four seconds.

WTSP also uses a convergence element in their weather segment but it is not used consistently and lasts a total of about ten seconds. The convergence element is called Weather Watcher and in all 'Weather Watcher' appears only 31 times, in less than half of the overall newscasts examined.

The significance of Weather Watcher is that it is the only effort either operation makes to be interactive. Here, the station relies on the viewer to email weather temperatures in their various communities in the market. A picture of the viewer appears and the weather talent says (for example) "Joe Smith in Sarasota reports that it's cool and balmy." Beneath the picture, the title WTSP.com appears below the viewer's name. When this convergence element is used, two different viewers are included.

While WTSP also has a copyright visual for the end of their newscast, it too, is not used consistently, appearing only twenty-two times in this data.

Visuals

What Was Shown

To answer the question 'What was shown?' the overwhelming response for WFLA is a computer. Without question the computer is the dominant visual when news stories involve convergence. More specifically, any computer. Among them weather computers, personal computers, graphically designed computers, effex generated computers, and rooms where computers are kept. Here, it could be argued that the computer itself is a symbol for convergence. WFLA uses the computer visual repeatedly in every single newscast examined. No single newscast for WFLA is without a computer visual. For emphasis—every story contained in this data visually depicts convergence as a computer.

The second most frequent visual is the banner or title 'TBO.com.' It appears in all the weather segments for WFLA. It also appears at the end of every newscast immediately below the copyright and it appears as part of every graphic designed to send viewers to the Internet platform. ALL banners assume the same format, shape, and color. When the content of the story is not able to clearly establish a convergence element, then the graphic displays do. Clearly, graphic displays illustrate and maintain the dominant belief that WFLA is the converged operation. Conversely, WSTP uses few computers as a visual and the image displayed when they do use this reference is a black arrow pointing to a simple full screen display reading WTSP.com. Here, there is no color, no movement, no well-developed graphic or picture.

Who Was Shown

Anchors are the image pattern on which rests not only the newscasts' but also the entire station's identity. As a result, anchors have traditionally been known as the "cash cows" (Yoakam and Cremer, 1989, p.83). In this data, with the exception of a handful of stories, the anchor delivers all of the references to convergence for both stations. This is not surprising given that long-standing belief that the viewers' relationship with the talent is a social encounter that includes some type of interaction (Koenig and Leesan, 1985; Xiaoming, 1991) and that anchors contribute to the profitability of a news operation more than non-anchors (Allen, 1993).

For WFLA, when the platform referred to is the Internet and the element is a tag to a story, the anchor and very often the co-anchor appear next to each other taking turns delivering the information. There is teamwork. As each anchor delivers a line the visual clicking of a computer mouse presents a start/stop pattern that breaks the continuity of the verbal message and allows for the new computer screen image to appear and then change on the screen. When the platform referred to is the newspaper, only a single anchor appears on-screen with an over-the-shoulder graphic reinforcing the verbal message. As mentioned, when dealing with weather information, here too it is the weather anchor that verbally makes the delivery of the message. At no time in either station is the sports anchor used to reference any convergence element.

What They Were Doing

In every instance for both stations, convergence means the anchors are reading and delivering. This pattern establishes and reinforces the idea that the anchors are the leading providers of information in the market. Furthermore, in virtually every instance the convergence reference is used as a promotional or cross-promotional tool reinforcing the idea that the convergence platform and the stations are the market leader for information.

Discussion and Conclusion

We will begin by answering the specific questions set forth in this study: The first question:

Q: **Where does the convergence element appear in the newscast?**

A: With the exception of weather and the copyright at the end of the newscast, there is no logical plan for when a convergence reference is used, nor how long it will last.

Q: **Does the element send the viewer to a newspaper or the Internet?**

A: In every case the answer is yes, with the Internet being the dominant source suggested.

Q: **How much of the newscast time does the convergence element take?**

A: This question must be answered by examining the ownership of the news operation. If all the platforms fall under the same corporate owner, the

convergence element dominates the newscast, often at the expense of other news content.

Q: Is the production or production element a major consideration when evaluating the convergence element?

A: Without question! WFLA uses the computer repeatedly, to such a point that it is possible to argue that the computer is a symbol for convergence. By definition, symbols convey meaning. Murray Edelman (1971) writes, "Every symbol stands for something other than itself…and it also evokes an attitude, a set of impressions, or a pattern of events associated through time, through space, through logic, or through imagination" (p.6). Edelman (1971) argues that visual symbols are never neutral. When looking at this data, Edelman's observations are profound. Hence, it could be argued that for most viewers the computer is a definition for convergence. It is symbolic of a modern, more informed public. It is, therefore, difficult for the viewer to think of WFLA in any other term. As a result, the notion of WFLA having more information is not only evident but effective. Additionally, WFLA routinely promotes itself as being 'On Your Side.' Every story, every franchise (sports, weather, investigative report) is introduced using this message. By using their promotional message and by associating the content of the newscast repeatedly with the use of computers as a source of information, they in fact are saying that they provide more information than anyone else in the market. For WFLA, the computer visual is now and forever a symbol of 'convergence,' and using the visual repeatedly in covering news events achieves what a narrative might not. This production method also serves to reinforce for the viewer the idea that the operation is providing information using every means available to them.

Q: To what extent does the convergence element contribute to content?

A: Only when both WTSP and WFLA broadcast a story that will appear in the next morning's newspaper does the convergence element contribute to content. In WFLA's case, however, the story is generally introduced as a television news story that tags, or sends the viewer to the paper for more information.

Q: Is the convergence element in the newscast asking the viewer to use other senses than the visual one?

A: In most cases the elements include the use of both the visual and aural senses. However, the visual sense does play a dominant role in parts of the newscast that traditionally do not include news, i.e. weather.

Q: What is the form of the information/directive within each sense?

A: There is always a visual logo appearing on the screen when the anchors ask the viewer to go to the Internet and that logo for WFLA clearly is a computer

Q: Is there an audio refrain, such as a whoosh, or click sound?

A: No, only the verbal or non-verbal element is part of the message driving the viewer to the convergence partner.

Q: How does the convergence element appear in the newscast? And does the appearance contribute to the production or to the content?

A: Here the two stations are dramatically different. For WFLA there is often text, and the text tends to mirror that which appears on a computer screen. The image always follows the verbal message and the verbal message never contributes to content; it simply promotes, in a tag, the convergence tool. The tag is always about twenty and as long as fifty-five seconds in length. Visually, WFLA consistently uses bright colors, music, graphics, and moving computer screens to present the convergence element, while WTSP does not. More often, WTSP simply has a red, black, and white over-the-shoulder graphic to present their newspaper partner and a full screen black-on-gray graphic with a small black arrow pointing to a black dot (to represent a computer icon) on the screen to reference their website. However, as with their newspaper partner the content (or information) is paramount and the tag referencing the *St. Petersburg Times* is never more than four seconds in length. Given that the information is news (information not yet presented) and the convergence element is short, it could be argued that for WTSP the convergence element contributes to content. (Example)

Q: How many different stories appear on WFLA versus WTSP.

A: Here-in lies the crux of this study. As stated, there are, in total 585 stories for WFLA and 631 for WSTP news. However, our methods dictated that every single individual story or element of a story be accounted for. This is a particularly important point because when the production elements and the promotional messages for convergence are removed WFLA consistently has far fewer stories than WTSP. For example, a typical WFLA 6 p.m. newscast:

6pm	Show open 20 seconds/promo sets up newscast
6:00:20	Lead-in to Team coverage/8 on you side hype
1.6:00:40	Sick Building Syndrome Live package-reporter live.
6:02:17	Question and answer talent/reporter
6:02:39	Anchor tag
2.6:02:49	Anchor/voice over graphic: Symptoms to look for with the illnesses, etc.
3.6:03:49	Sends viewer to Internet partner as tag.

Now we have a lot more information about the illness online. To access that information go to TBO.com click on links we mentioned then choose Sick Building Syndrome.

6:03:58 out (August 20, WFLA).

Here, using our method of analysis, there are 3 different and separate news stories, taking up nearly four minutes of the newscast. However in relation to content, there is, in actuality only one individual story being covered. Additionally, given the length and content of the information there seems to be little reason to send the viewer to the Internet. Nonetheless, the production of the newscast dictates the content be provided to the viewer. Again, this is a typical WFLA newscast. When this information is taken together with the actual total number of 'different' news stories aired, WTSP provides more information.

Q: How well defined or 'in your face' is the directive? It is always immediate and direct. For example:

"Be sure to stay with us and our news partners for continuing coverage of the U.S. Olympic tour visit. You can also go to our home page on TBO.com for links to a close up look at the 2012 plan. And you can pick up a copy of the *Tampa Tribune* for more on today's event and what the USOC has planned for the rest of the weekend" (WFLA, August 3-6pm).

A: This twenty second tag follows extensive coverage of the visit that includes not only a live shot with a reporter insert and a second reporter package. Note, there is no information present: it is simply a promotional tool.

Q: Are they asking the viewer to take this opportunity to give them feedback thru the Internet?

A: There is only one single story that contains a feedback element. Here too it is a tag following a fairly long package about obscenity on the radio. The ten second tag delivered by the anchor states:

"You can also voice your opinion online. Just head to TBO.com and under message board, click to FCC Regulations. We may read some of your thoughts in some of our future broadcasts" (WFLA, August 1-11p).

Q: Are they asking the viewer to go to an online conference, where there will be simultaneous feedback, such as a chat room?

A: At no point in this data does this occur.

Q: How quickly and how immediate is the communication process?

A: This element cannot be followed without a subsequent study using focus group methods.

Q: How easy does it appear for the viewer to take the directive and would a kindergarten or high school student be able to take advantage of this?

A: Without some knowledge of a computer it would be virtually impossible for anyone to follow the Internet element given that the non-user may not understand such terminology as log on, click on, links, and mouse.

Q: Is there a substantive difference in the use of production in relation to content between WFLA and WTSP?

A: WFLA consistently uses a highly produced 4-second opening to introduce the weather segment, the sports segment, and various special franchises (investigative, consumer and environmental reports). Taken together, the various production elements use up nearly 30 seconds of news time with every newscast—WTSP far fewer and with less consistency. Every story in WFLA's 6 p.m. newscast has a live shot, either in the studio, newsroom or in the field. The live shot always concludes with an extensive question and answer segment between the reporter and the anchor—some lasting more than 60 seconds. Additionally, the lead-in to all the stories lasts about 20 to 30 seconds. Again, this takes away from the overall content or amount of actual information being provided to the viewer. A typical WFLA 6 p.m. newscast rarely contains more than 8 to 11 different news stories while WTSP contain between 11 to 15. There are many who argue that convergence is yet another information tool that cannot only provide more information, but can also provide that information on demand. However, with regard to the data set forth in this study, convergence does not allow for more but rather for less news. Clearly, WFLA is a producer-driven show whose gatekeepers are using production and convergence to dominate the market. For WFLA gatekeepers, content is secondary to production and promotion. As the above mentioned data indicates, in most cases convergence is a tag added to the end of the story, thereby lengthening the story by at least 20 and as much as 55 seconds. As the examples here also indicate, the tags add no information whatsoever. The tags are promotional tools used to promote or 'hype' the news partner. This is an interesting phenomenon given that recently the Pew Research Center found that only 56 percent of Americans watch local news today compared with 77 percent in 1993 although Stempel, Hargove and Bent (2000) and others have found that it's not the Internet that's the cause for the decrease in local television viewing. Seamans (2001) argues that one of those reasons is because the viewer is turned off by 'hype' (p.31). When watching WFLA, it is impossible to ignore the fact that it is a converged operation and that the producers are taking full advantage of the medium, using visual effects and symbolic imagery. Clearly, the gatekeepers at WFLA promote and market the news better and more effectively than their primary competitor, WTSP. However, a WTSP newscast generally contains more news. When comparing WTSP's 11pm newscast to WFLA's and identifying individual stories, typically WTSP has an average of four more stories and these stories contain national or international information. For WFLA, any national or international news in the 11pm newscast is typically only national and people-oriented.

Q: Is one medium being sacrificed for another?

A: In the case of WFLA, the partner being sacrificed is the newspaper. This data shows that the overwhelming majority of references are for the Internet partner. Although WSTP and the St. Petersburg Times consider themselves partners, they are at a major disadvantage in reinforcing their convergence message because cross ownership does not allow for total control of the product. When gatekeepers have dual loyalties, it is easily understood that the product that will get the most attention is the one the gatekeeper must answer to.

In relation to WTSP's partnership with the St. Petersburg Times, Schaeffer's (1998) arguments best apply; If news is approached as a continuous reporting process with the timeliest information always appearing as breaking news on television or the Internet, it stands to reason that the newspaper edition will always be less timely.

In March of 2001 the Radio Television News Directors Foundation (RTNDF) held a web summit attended by more than 100 journalists and news managers. The message of the day was simply that "there's no right model or answer for broadcasters on the web." Despite "the lack of a one-size-fits-all model for web news, many agreed that stations should apply the same principles to the web that have made them successful on the air" (Graham, 2001, p.10) meaning good writing, use of strong video images, timeliness, proximity, fairness, objectivity, and dramatic production. These television news 'values' and routines fall within the standard and well-established definition for broadcast news (Tuchman, 1973; Shoemaker and Reese, 1991; Bennett,

1996). When referring to 'the web,' however, these journalists were talking about practicing convergence. Conversely, these same practitioners did not discuss the effect of the web on the overall newscast.

In this study we investigated the characteristics of convergence and how two local television news affiliates in the Tampa/St Petersburg market use convergence in a newscast, and whether convergence is of benefit to the viewer. What this study has found is that the principals of convergence have less to do with content and the production of news stories within a newscast and more to do with how the information may get to the viewer. Medium theory is helpful in dissecting how the grammar of television is used to direct the viewer to another medium. It also suggests that the medium most referred to would be one that heightens the use of more senses, or that incorporates itself within another, i.e. a website rather than a newspaper. And the way most likely to direct would be by use of the visual.

Here, convergence means to promote or market, cross promote, promote internally, promote externally and to do so without a clear rational plan for doing so. There is little doubt, particularly as it pertains to WFLA, that convergence, as evidenced in this study, includes marketing the news product with every possible opportunity and with little regard for the viewers or for the impact of the information.

What is most distressing is the blurring of the lines between news copy and advertising. The WFLA news anchors clearly recognize when they are being asked to deliver an advertisement rather than a news story, they still are not able to understand that marketing their own product falls into the same broad category of advertising or marketing. For example, on August 3 during the 6 p.m. newscast the primary male anchor delivered a thirty-second, voice-over kicker. A kicker is usually the last story in the show, designed to be upbeat and interesting. The story was about Sea World, one of Florida's many theme parks. In essence the park will now be selling consumer passes over the Internet and local residents can take advantage of discounted rates. The last sentence of the story reads "To find out more about how the procedure works, go to TBO.com, click on the links we mentioned, and click on Sea World E Tickets."

While the anchor was reading, the viewer was looking at pictures of dolphins swimming on a computer screen. When the camera went back to the news set, we saw all four anchors getting ready for a wrap-up or good night. The prime anchor quickly said, "I think I just did a commercial!" the second anchor said "Yes you did." And the sports and weather talent concurred. While all this took place the station copyright logo TBO.com appeared in a graphic on the bottom of the screen. Here, with both the verbal message of sending the viewer to TBO.com for more information about Sea World, plus the visual message contained in the copyright, it could be argued that the advertising message also included marketing their own Internet platform. The anchors seemed oblivious to the facts and the irony right in front of them.

For all its claims that convergence is the wave of the future, and that thousands of broadcast stations now have an Internet presence, "…not a single site has attracted more than 200,000 unique visitors per month." This is a particularly important point given that views for major newpaper sites average more than four million hits per month (as cited in Anzur 2001). Nonetheless, this study found that the major thrust for WFLA is to get people to the web. Nearly all of the references in the stories carrying a convergence element led the viewer to TBO.com and not to the *Tampa Tribune* newspaper.

Not everyone believes that this new media trend is beneficial. President Emeritus of the Poynter Institute, Robert Haiman, posits that the challenge for journalists is their ability to recognize that convergence can erode the prime objective of journalism—that is to "inform the public about the public's business, creating a society that is equipped with the knowledge it needs to make the right civic decisions…"(Poynter, 2001). Haiman is not optimistic. He explains that many news gatekeepers now equate better journalism with 'marketing' and that 'world-class reporters and writers with big noses, bad hairlines, speech impediments, or acne scars need not apply' for jobs with any newspaper outlet that has converged with television. Here again, this study would agree. While there have been newspaper practitioners reporting their work on other newscasts on both WFLA and WSTP, and news executives involved in convergence stress that they are recruiting good reporters regardless of the platform, or medium, because the story belongs to the user/viewer, not to the platform (Bradley, 2001) in this study, they are virtually non-existent in the two primary newscasts of the day—the 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. news. This data includes only one single instance, one involving a major newspaper investigative report, where a newspaper reporter appears on a broadcast. With Haiman (Poynter, 2001) this study concludes, "convergence may end up being good, maybe even very good, for media companies. We fear, however, "that it is going to be bad, and maybe even very bad, for journalism."7

Limitations and Future Research

Future Research

This study offers a preliminary interpretation of the role played by gatekeepers in determining how to use the medium in a converged television news operation. Building on the findings set forth in this study, future research should examine a larger data base. Findings may reveal an even more specific relationship between the content of a news broadcast and information actually provided to the viewer. Also, whether the viewer is asked to go to another medium because that medium can better inform the viewer/user. Future research should combine this information with the result of long interviews with television journalists, as well as with focus group studies.

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Endnotes

1. The cable news operation's most recent merger is with the Citrus County Chronicle. As part of the deal, Bay News 9 will establish a news bureau in the newspaper's newsroom and the Chronicle's reporting staff will join a Bay News 9 reporter on the air.

2. Larson and Hardy (1977) use the following criteria: A dateline or headline-type statement followed by copy read by the announcer is a story. (2). A dateline or headline-type statement followed by a string of filmed or taped presentations on the same subject, with copy read by the announcer interspersed, is a story. (3). A dateline or headline-type statement followed by a correspondent's report, together with a lead-in and lead-out by the announcer is a single story. (4) A string of correspondents' reports under a single heading but from different locations and different slants are considered different stories. The lead-in by the announcer is considered part of the first story and the lead-out is considered part of the last. (5) Headlines that refer to stories later in the newscast are not considered stories (p.255).

3. While sports and weather segments traditionally contain several different elements within their time allotments we chose to examine the segment as a single news source referring to them as sports segment and weather segment. We chose to examine only those elements found in the news segments or that appear in the news portions of the newscasts as individual stories. However, very often a news story did appear just prior to or leading into these segments and that story did become part of the analysis. Generally, the sports and weather segments ran approximately between two and half minutes and three minutes in length for each of the two stations.

4. Hyping or hypoing is the "deliberate attempts by stations or networks to influence ratings by scheduling special programs and promotional efforts during rating sweeps (Head, Sterling, and Schofield, 1994, p. 407).

5. While it could be argued that the cable news operation, Bay News 9, could be considered a player in the convergence news game, it is a 24-hour news service and it does not operate in the same manner as the local affiliates.

6. It must be mentioned that due to technical problems with the video recorder we lost 2 days of both a 6 and 11 p.m. newscast for WTSP. Additionally, on August 23 a football game overrun for WTSP caused the loss of about half or 18 minutes of another 11 p.m. newscast.

7. On a final note, convergence does have a price. Media General, corporate giant and leading advocate for media convergence has "In order to help finance convergence,

canceled its Christmas bonuses for employees for the first time in 30 years. To the 3,200 workers at the firm's 26 TV stations, 50 online enterprises and more than two dozen publications, convergence must seem like the Grinch" (Anzur, 2001).

BACK TO THE BASICS: THE BROADCAST JOURNALISM BEAT COURSE

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Abstract
Broadcast news reporting has been criticized in recent years because of sensationalized and graphic reporting and an alleged disconnect between reporters and the communities they cover. One way some television news operations have responded to this criticism is through a return to beat reporting. This article proposes a model for instruction in broadcast beat reporting for journalism and mass communication programs, in light of a renewed interest by the profession.

Table 1
Five stages of the beat reporting class

Stage	Activity	Purpose
One	Interest survey	Matching strengths
	Beats assigned	Ensuring good fit
	Full disclosure	Avoidance of conflicts
Two	Prelim beat reports	Acclimation to beats
	Mapping beats	Know people & places
	Beat resource books	Maintaining contacts
Three	Story meetings	Strategies for coverage
	Weekly portfolios	Progress on beat
	Deep Critiques	Feedback on reporting
Four	Portfolio Evaluation	Overall beat assessment
	Accuracy checks	Reporter accountability
	Deadline reporting	Enterprise reporting
Five	Exit beat summary	Lessons learned

Note: Stages three and four run concurrently

The September 11, 2001 terrorists' attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon have focused attention on American journalists' ability to report objectively, accurately and in great detail about subjects on which they have some expertise. The network and local reporters who had cultivated sources through specialized reporting on the Middle East, terrorism, religion and the military, clearly had the upper hand in how they reported the story and the credibility of the reports. For those reporters, the subject expertise that comes with beat reporting made the difference.

Journalism has certainly come a long way since James Gordon Bennett organized the first beat system in the 1830s. Bennett, editor of The New York Herald, was looking for a competitive edge. By assigning his reporters to routinely cover topics such as the police and courts, Gordon would establish a news reporting tradition that survives today.

Brooks, Kennedy, Moen and Ranly (1996) define beats as assigned areas of responsibility. The topics for these assignments range from the environment, religion or a geographic area. Mayeux (1996) contends that any time reporters contact any sources on a regular basis they have established beats. Interestingly, even when reporters do the expected enterprise work to get exclusives, the stories themselves can be called beats. Since beat reporting traces its development to the early days of newspapers, it is not surprising that print news organizations have continued the practice. In fact, the beat system has flourished in newspapers where 90 percent of all local content is derived from regularly assigned beats (Leiter, Harris, Johnson, 2000).

Conversely, broadcast news operations, particularly television, have relied on general assignment reporting to fill the majority of the news hole (Potter, 1999). There are many reasons why television stations have shied away from the practice of beat reporting, most of them dealing with resources. Limited staff size, logistics problems, dependence on high story counts and a lack of flexibility keep some stations committed to general assignment reporting (Cohen, 1999). Some broadcast managers argue that news is only a small percentage of what is actually produced or viewed at most stations, while newspapers devote almost exclusive attention to the business of journalism (White, 1996).

Recently, however, some broadcast news operations have extolled the benefits of organized beat coverage as a way to distinguish themselves from their print and broadcast competitors (Potter, 1999). This may be, in part, because more stations than ever are running local news content in an attempt to regain audience identification. A survey by the Radio Television News Director's Association and Ball State University (2000) found that local news has increased by about 50 percent in the past five years. Television news organizations also appear to be relying less on network content as numerous national surveys report that audiences are demanding stories from their own communities.

Beat reporting may actually relieve a station's dependence on network feeds and the overuse of national stories or features that viewers may have already seen (Cohen, 2000, Reisner, 1995). Some news directors also hold that beat coverage provide stories with better perspective and context as reporters develop expertise in one content area. In addition, television news directors report there is no better way to orientate new reporters to a community than through assigned beats (Potter, 1999).

Although the idea of teaching beat reporting in the journalism curriculum is not unique, a fresh pedagogical method may expand ways that broadcast educators approach the subject. Therefore, the purposes of this article are to propose such a method and to contribute to the ongoing discussion regarding beat reporting in the broadcast profession and in the academy.

Broadcast News Instruction

Patrow, Youngblood, Madden, Hamburger & Johnson (2000); Rostad, (1997); Kass (1994); Neeilsen & Sassi (1994) found that broadcast journalism instruction is now part of the curriculum of many of the country's public schools as students obtain hands on experience in writing and videography. Numerous research studies on broadcast journalism have also focused on the positive benefits of combining classroom instruction with practical experience (Marks, 1999; Koch, Kang, Jong & Allen, 1999; Reppert, 1998; Pesha, 1997; Reppert, 1997). But Burkhart (1990) argued that as broadcast news programs have gradually placed more emphasis on entertainment, journalism professors should teach students to take the professional more seriously.

Educators suggest that recent technological developments like digital videography, in some cases may have disproportionately placed emphasis on the hardware associated with journalism rather than reporting (Rucker, 1991). While broadcast journalism educators should certainly strive to expose students to state of the art technology in the field when possible, nothing should supersede instruction in the basic fundamentals (Reppert, 1992). Accuracy, objectivity, completeness, conciseness, attribution, conversational style, and writing to visuals, all represent the primary fundamentals included in the ideal beat reporting class.

Instruction in beat reporting should also encourage students to focus on news content as well as presentation techniques (Simon & Pickel, 2000; Marks, 1999; Kozak, 1997; Reppert, 1992). Additionally, a well-organized beat reporting class should provide critical hands-on opportunities for enterprise reporting as well as experience in cooperative learning (Boldoc, 1998; Duhe & Zukowski, 1997). It is also posited that beat reporting should assist emerging broadcast professionals in gaining credibility, valuable interviewing and writing experience. For these reasons, students practicing broadcast journalism should be taught how to develop better stories through cultivating and keeping sources. This can be accomplished by encouraging students to think of sources as people first, not simply a means to an end.

Beat reporting, in this view, is the process of keeping reporters in positive conversations with the communities they serve. However, that is not to say that broadcast reporters should be encouraged to tell only the positive stories from those communities. Most of television journalism continues to respond to indictments of sensationalism, insensitivity, and lack of depth. Beat instruction may begin to abate certain criticism by instilling in young reporters a desire to abandon some conventional television news customs to replace them with other established methods.

Organizing the Broadcast Beat Class

The broadcast beat reporting class theoretically develops in several stages (See Table 1). In stage one, reporters are surveyed to determine appropriate beat assignments. Stage two begins when reporters are asked to map assigned areas both literally and figuratively, through a series of preliminary reports and to develop a beat resource book. Stages three and four of the beat course run concurrently. In stage three reporting teams brainstorm during news meetings to develop relevant story ideas, examine reporting methods, develop strategies to connect with sources, and analyze problems associated with their beats through a sequence of comprehensive portfolio assignments. Next, reporters engage in traditional deadline reporting, but with an emphasis on enterprise. Stories undergo deep critiques during stage four to indoctrinate students to adherence to the fundamentals discussed earlier in this article.

During the final stage, reporters are asked to evaluate their experiences in the context of exit reports designed to assist other students who are assigned the same beat in future classes.

Matching Reporters with Beats

In stage one, students are surveyed to determine the best fit prior to assigning beats. Finnegan (1987) described this pairing as one of the most significant aspects of beat reporting. Therefore, careful attention is given to match expertise and interest with specific beat assignments. At the same time, reporters are required to pledge full disclosure to avoid even the appearance of conflicts of interest. In this early phase of the course, professional television reporters easily identified with specific beats are invited to address the class about the challenges of this kind of reporting.

Students from previous classes may also be invited to discuss the pitfalls and rewards of beat coverage. In other reporting courses, I have also required students to investigate cases in print or broadcast journalism where reporters received recognition because of outstanding beat coverage or have faced the consequences of conflicts of interests, which were not disclosed. Time is taken at the front end of the class to ensure that students have an understanding of the responsibilities associated with beat reporting.

The actual beat assignments are made only after students have completed the questionnaires and have been immersed in depth discussions about this aspect of the profession. This process should be effective whether students are assigned on-campus or off-campus beats.

Preliminary Beat Reports

Many years of teaching broadcast beat reporting have allowed strategies to emerge that are the most effective in the first stages of the course. None has been more valuable to the developing reporter than the preliminary portfolio exercises after the initial beat assignments are made. In part one of the preliminary report, students are asked to identify newsmakers, key sources, as well as important past, present, and future stories on their beats. This research requires that students pound the pavement to personally meet the people who live or work on their beats and to record their first impressions. As Spadoni (1990) suggests linking personal contact to the final grade early in the class is one way to ensure accountability. Students are required to provide detailed accounts of discussions with key sources identified as important and other interesting personalities met during this first survey of the beat territory.

During this first encounter, students ask sources to distinguish significant issues and events on the beat that reporters might be expected to cover. It is also during this phase that students develop the primary source list where individuals are identified by title and other essential information necessary for comprehensive reporting. Following an evaluation for accuracy and completeness, this preliminary material is then compared to information provided by reporters assigned to the same beat in previous semesters. This comparison may be useful in evaluating the changes that have occurred on the beat and their possible impact on coverage. Information gathered in this first portfolio report is the foundation for the beat resource book and story tickler file that all students are required to maintain throughout the course.

In phase two of the preliminary report, students are requested to diagram the territory associated with their beat. Although these sketches are often crudely rendered, students are expected to clearly identify landmarks and other attractions in such a way that an individual not familiar with the area or building would be able to use the diagram to navigate the beat. This exercise is particularly beneficial in that it forces students to intimately know their beat sites in order to produce the illustration. The diagrams must also be included in the beat resource books. I have found that this exercise not only increases reporter confidence early in the course, but saves time later when stories break and must be covered by students not assigned to the beats.

Beat Coverage

Beat coverage is a dynamic enterprise. An important aspect of the journalistic development for reporters learning beat coverage takes place during news meetings. Consequently, in stage three, at least one portion of the course should be set-aside on a regular basis for story planning or news meetings. Sessions are modeled in the same fashion utilized by professional broadcast news organizations. Discussions are conducted in a round robin fashion where all students are required to present story ideas and a clear rationalization for why they should be covered. Story ideas, source contacts and future beat events are not only articulated during the news meeting, but are reinforced through weekly written beat portfolio reports. During the discussion portion of the news meeting, students in the course are strongly encouraged to challenge all ideas for criteria such as: relevance to the audience, timeliness, and diversity of sources.

Following this evaluation of relevant beat ideas, reporters are then assigned to do the necessary fieldwork to produce broadcast news stories. My beat courses are designed from the perspective that students already have the necessary videography, editing and basic broadcast writing skills before undertaking the class, as prescribed by our curriculum. At this stage, fundamentals such as interviewing techniques, appropriate story formats, solid writing and reporting, are reinforced and in some cases established during class. As students complete their assignments, they are required to account for balance, visual choices, reporting, and accuracy during the critique sessions that are also a regular part of the beat reporting class. These sessions are viewed as invaluable because students have an opportunity to learn from their peers; to receive commendations on good work and to become skilled in accepting criticism on reporting that needs improvement. A written critique by the instructor is also included as part of the written weekly portfolio evaluation. Edwards (1991) found audiotape summaries are also useful for critiquing and a time saver over written evaluations.

An established routine of beat fieldwork, supplemented by written and oral portfolios, plus critiques are carried out during the academic semester. Beat reports are also subjected to random accuracy checks by the instructor through either written correspondence or telephone calls. Figure 1 presents an illustrative summary of the beat reporting process.

Students who engage in the fabrication of any aspect of the portfolio assignment during any stage of the class may be referred to the university's judicial affairs office for disciplinary action. This swift but significant consequence is designed to provide an important early lesson to aspiring journalists regarding what the broadcast profession values most, honesty. It is my belief that introductory beat classes should include a

minimum of at least ten portfolio assignments to ensure that students gain the maximum reporting experience from this somewhat fluid course structure.

Exit Beat Summary and Report

In the final stage of the class, students are held accountable for how they covered their assigned beats. They are required to evaluate and explain their coverage by analyzing stories missed and stories where they scooped other reporters. Students are also asked to provide a detailed assessment of the primary sources and issues that will likely be encountered by the next reporter assigned to the beat. The exit beat summary report is also part of the final round robin story meeting for the course and must be given in an oral as well as written format. In a method adopted from Killenberg and Dardeene (1997), the final class session is also used as an opportunity for students to discuss what they have learned about beat reporting. As part of this discussion students are required to provide an anonymous written personal statement about what they learned most from the broadcast beat reporting course. While not all students reacted positively to the experience, listed below are some of the comments taken from the last time I taught the broadcast beat reporting course:

"As incredible as it seems, I was scared stiff when I thought of the prospect of actually having to go out on a beat and talk to real people in person. This experience has been awesome."

"What an opportunity. I was able to take my natural interests in computers and new technology and use them as the basis to learn even more through beat reporting. This has not only convinced me that this should be my reporting specialty, I actually believe that I've become somewhat of an expert."

"I thought I knew what it meant to be a TV news reporter because I knew how to shoot and edit. Working a beat has shown me how much I still need to learn about reporting and writing. Believe me, that's saying a lot because I believe I've already learned quite a lot this semester."

Why a Broadcast Beat Class?

Broadcast journalism education often comes under frequent criticism for the academy's perceived shortcomings in preparing reporters for the field (Potter,1999; Barner, D. L., 1996; Tomorrow's broadcast journalists,1994; Parcells, F. E. 1985). The primary goals of a course in broadcast beat reporting are to encourage students to learn about the communities they report on and to build a solid reporting foundation based on the standards of the profession.

The proposed model for teaching broadcast beat reporting does not purport to be the definitive way to design such a course. On the other hand, the previous discussion was undertaken to energize the thinking about other appropriate methods to teach such a class. Broadcast journalism educators can play an important role in revitalizing the profession. In light of the current negative state of broadcast journalism, as articulated by the public, a return to basics may be in order. This process may ensure that current discourse about television news is inclusive of attempts in the academy to transform journalism in ways that reflect core values of the profession.

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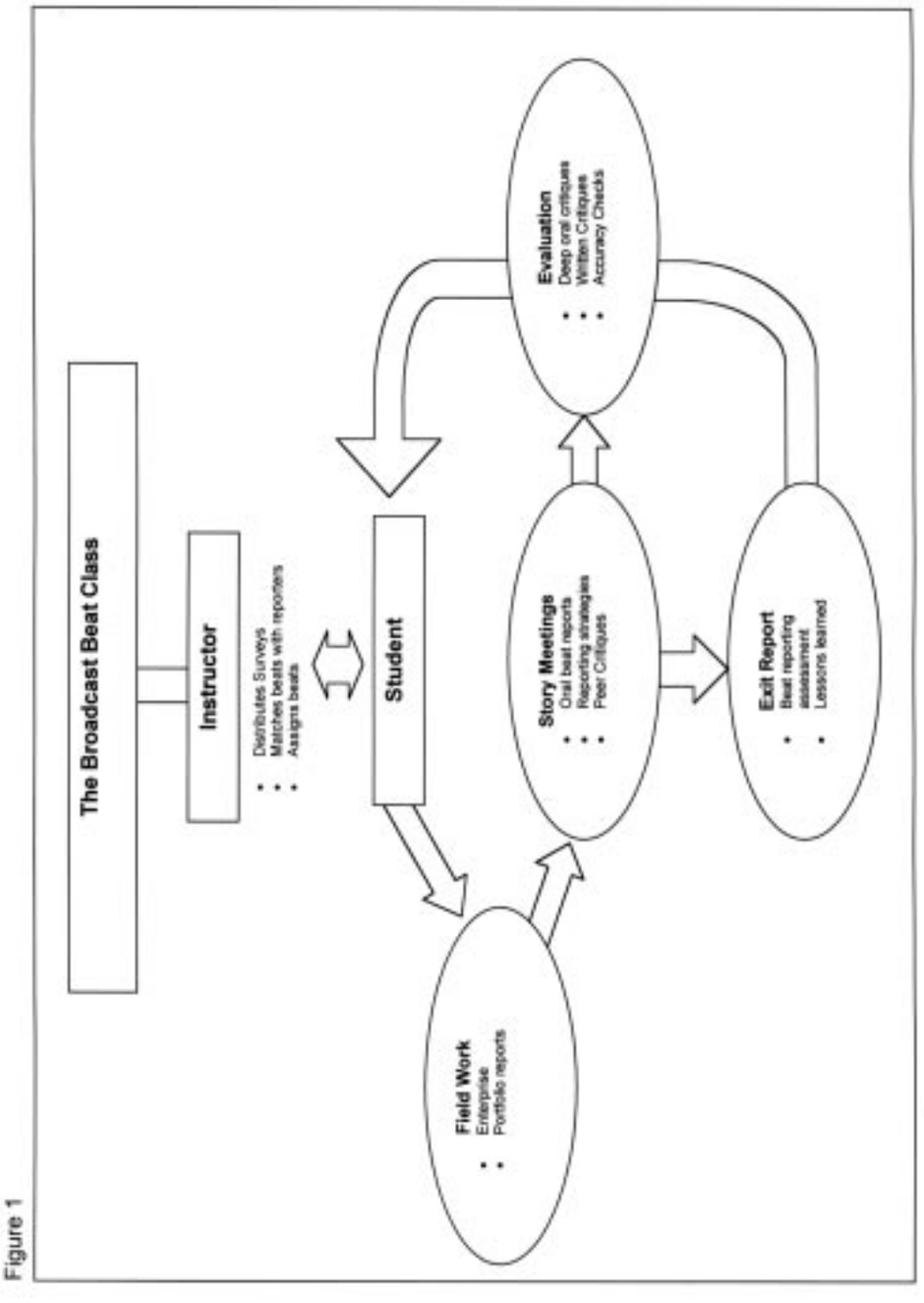

Figure 1

ESSAY

FULBRIGHT REFLECTIONS

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My 8-year-old daughter Cecylia looked out from the Polish train just south of Gdansk. I had tried to explain to her why World War II started in the northern port city, known as Danzig to Germans. I hadn't succeeded so far. Then I asked her to look to the East, and I asked her what she saw.

"It's flat," she replied.

Then I asked her to look to the West.

"It's flat that way, too," she answered.

To the East is Russia across the plains. To the West is Germany across similarly flat plains. The port at Gdansk allowed the Germans to move into Poland, Russia, and the Baltic states. She understood.

The lesson on geography, history, and war occurred when my family traveled in the spring semester of 2001 to Poland, where I taught as a Fulbright fellow at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan.

Many educators interested in the Fulbright program often wonder how their families will fare during the time abroad. During the five months my family and I stayed in Poland, the Fulbright experience provided an opportunity to spend far more time with my family than during a normal academic year.

My wife, Elizabeth, has an extensive network of cousins throughout Poland, and she speaks the language. That certainly made the time even more enjoyable. Still, the three of us visited Rome, St. Petersburg, Cracow, Gdansk, and a host of other towns and cities throughout Poland.

It took some planning. First, I had to teach my courses at the university. That was the primary reason I was there. Secondly, we decided to home school Cecylia during our stay. That way she could travel with us when we had time.

What did she learn? We are Roman Catholics, and Cecylia attends a Catholic school, where she is now in fifth grade. Therefore, we stopped in Rome.

At the Vatican Museums, she saw the original paintings of Merlozzo da Forli—a print of which hangs in her bedroom. She also saw Pope John Paul II during a church service.

In Poland, she traveled the same streets in Cracow, where the future Pope studied and taught. She learned about Copernicus and his discoveries during a visit to his home of Torun. She saw the castles of the Teutonic knights and tried on some of their old armor.

My wife and I had always wanted to visit the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Russia. We didn't know how Cecylia would react. She wanted to visit the Hermitage so often that we spent three days there.

In Poznan, a business center in western Poland, Cecylia attended a series of concerts of boys' choirs. The festival is held once every eight years—the last time occurred when she was born.

Also, Cecylia and I are brown belts in karate. We found a local karate club and trained there. The common language centered on the Japanese terms used in karate and a few hand motions by the Polish instructor.

Certainly, there were hardships. My wife had to put her decorative painting business on hold. My intended research project gave way to travel.

Nevertheless, it was an experience none of us will forget, including the time we spent with my wife's relatives throughout the country. Cecylia met her aunt who serves as a judge, two cousins involved in computer technology, an uncle with whom she had corresponded for several years, and a host of other relatives she didn't even know she had.

We made sure we would not forget the experience. I tried out a new digital video camera, and Cecylia kept a diary of her adventures. When we returned home, I had her use the diary for voice-overs, then I put the results on the Web.

You can view our travel videos at www.ithaca.edu/harper. I hope you enjoy our adventure and consider the Fulbright program that can be found at www.cies.org.

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DIGITAL

REVIEW OF THE HIPIX DIGITAL TELEVISION COMPUTER CARD

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The author is grateful to Bruce Garrison for his feedback on a previous draft of this manuscript.

When introduced to the U.S. market in August 1998, the first consumer high-definition television (HDTV) sets cost about $7,000, including the necessary external decoder to receive digital signals (Dupagne, 2002). HDTV presents television images in substantially higher resolution (1080 Interlaced or 720 Progressive) than the current analog National Television System Committee (NTSC) standard and in widescreen format (16:9 aspect ratio). On the other hand, standard-definition television (SDTV), another terrestrial digital television (DTV) technology, does not offer significant higher resolution (480P or 480I) than NTSC and can use either the current 4:3 aspect ratio or the wider 16:9 aspect ratio. From 1998 to 2002, prices of DTV sets and displays, that include direct-view and projection DTVs with integrated (built-in) decoders and stand-alone DTV displays, declined by nearly 50% (Consumer Electronics Association [CEA], 2002a; for a recent review of these economic issues, see Seel & Dupagne, 2002). In March 2002, DTV receivers retailed anywhere from less than $1,000 to more than $20,000, depending on screen size, aspect ratio, display type, and availability of an integrated HDTV decoder (CEA, 2002b). In 2002, most DTV models were "HDTV-capable" and were sold without an HDTV tuner/decoder. In March 2002, the cheapest integrated HDTV receiver cost $1,795. In June, the number of DTV products sold since 1998 exceeded the three million unit mark (CEA, 2002c).

The genesis of DTV PC card technology began in January 1998 when WETA-TV in Washington, DC, successfully transmitted 480I SDTV programming to a computer located four miles away and equipped with an Intel-built prototype receiver card and a 'rabbit ears' antenna (Jessell, 1998). The card decoded the DTV signal and displayed it on the computer monitor. Between late 1999 and early 2001, several hardware manufacturers began offering an alternative to expensive DTV receivers by introducing consumer HDTV PC cards, that allowed viewers to watch terrestrial HDTV broadcasts on their PCs (e.g., Careless, 1999; Lassiter, 2001). As of September 2002, the four most frequently used HDTV decoding cards were: Hauppauge's WinTV-HD (www.hauppauge.com), Global Telemann Systems' HiPix DTV-200 (www.telemann.com), accessDTV (www.accessdtv.com), and Macro Image Technology's MyHD MDP-100 (www.mitinc.co.kr/e_index.htm). All but the WinTV-HD card were available for purchase through the Digital Connection site (www.digitalconnection.com) for about $400 each. By September 2002, Digital Connection had sold about 3,000 of such PC cards.

This paper could be easily retitled: "Can I Watch HDTV Programming with a $400 Digital Television Card?" To alleviate the suspense, the answer to this question is 'yes'. But this review goes beyond a simple description of the installation procedures and mechanics of the Telemann HiPix DTV-200 card. As a technical case study, it also reports the results of reception tests conducted with the card in the multimedia lab of the School of Communication at the University of Miami in September 2002. It seeks to answer a question that has significant implications for consumers and the broadcast television industry: Does the HiPix card decode and receive HDTV signals satisfactorily with outdoor and indoor antennas? This computer card was selected because of its extensive features, including an expansion card with audio and video inputs and outputs. Before describing the testing procedures and results for DTV reception, the paper will highlight the features of the card.

Features of the Card

Introduced in November 2000 on the U.S. market, the $400 Telemann HiPix DTV-200 card is able to convert any of the 18 terrestrial ATSC (Advanced Television Systems Committee) DTV transmission formats up to 720P and 1080I and display them onto an HDTV-ready television screen or a PC monitor. It also provides Dolby Digital 5.1 (AC-3) audio if you have a six-channel computer card or audio receiver (and 5.1 speakers). In addition, you can record, store, and replay HDTV programming on your hard drive. Finally, the HiPix card can also receive over-the-air NTSC signals as well as display analog video signals from external sources (e.g., VCRs and DVD players).

The HiPix DTV-200 package contains three major components:

- The main PCI board (Figure 1), that includes (from left to right) 1.) an NTSC Radio Frequency (RF) input from antenna/cable (CABLE); 2.) an ATSC RF input from antenna (VSB ANT); 3.) a VGA input from the VGA card (VGA IN); and, 4.) an HD video output to an HDTV-ready TV or PC monitor (VGA/HD OUT).
- A small expansion (daughter) card (Figure 2), that includes (from left to right) 1.0 an S-video input from an external device such as a VCR or a DVD player (S-VIDEO IN); 2.) a composite video input from an external device such as a VCR or a DVD player (VIDEO IN); 3.) a stereo audio input from an external device such as a VCR or a DVD player (AUDIO IN); 4.) a composite video output to NTSC TV or a capture card (VIDEO OUT); 5.) a stereo audio output to NTSC TV or a capture card (AUDIO OUT); and, 6.) a Dolby Digital 5.1 output to a Dolby Digital 5.1 receiver or amplifier (AC3 OUT). The expansion card is only required if you use external devices, such as a VCR, a DVD player, or a camcorder, with the main PCI card.
- A remote control device and the associated infrared (IR) remote control receiver module that plugs into a serial port.

The system requirements include:

- Pentium II 333 Mhz or higher
- Microsoft Windows 98 SE, Me, 2000, or XP
- 64 MB available memory
- 2 GB available disc space
- available PCI slot for the main card and available blank bracket space for the expansion card

Testing Procedures and Results

Installation Procedures

The HiPix card was first installed in a Dell Precision Workstation 530 (see Table 1 for specifications). The process was simple and consisted of four main steps: 1.) install the card into an available PCI slot; 2.) install the driver for Windows 2000; 3.) install the (2.3) DTV-200 application; and, 4.) install DirectX 8.0 or higher. Because the main tests dealt with broadcast reception, the expansion card was not installed on this machine. I then connected the cables: the loop back cable from the NVIDIA GeForce graphics card to the VGA input of the HiPix card, the computer monitor cable to the VGA output of the card, and a 50-foot coaxial cable from the antenna to the ATSC RF input of the card.

All versions of the application software offer basic tuning and recording functions as well as more advanced features. In version 2.3, the control panel window includes a Menu button with six set-up tabs (General, HDTV Setup, VGA Setup, Input Setup, Program, and Volume), a Source button with four options (LINE-IN, S-video, FILE, and TUNER), and a Full Screen button. In version 3.0, AVS developers renamed the Menu button the Setup button, replaced the Source button with Tuner, Line-in, S-Video, and File buttons, and added new features such as hotkeys, an ATSC antenna aim, and optional channel information in full-screen display (see Figure 3). In August 2002, they released version 3.1 beta, that offered a preview window for HDTV programs as well as tuning and source functions while watching HDTV in full screen.

The configuration of the set-up dialog box in version 2.3 was straightforward. In the General tab/window, be sure to check the "Using Loopback Cable" box if you use a single PC monitor, the "Decode Audio" box so that the card can decode Dolby Digital 5.1 audio, and the "Show Signal Strength" box. The HDTV Setup window allows you to select one of five resolutions (1920 x 1080; 1280 x 720; 720 x 480; 1440 x 108; and 1024 x 768). The last three resolutions are to be used with 4:3 aspect ratio displays. In addition, the resolutions can display HDTV images according to different formats: Normal, Letter Box, Cropped and Letter Box, Cropped, and Fill. To see a 16:9 image on a 4:3 VGA monitor, you would select the Letter Box format. The VGA Setup window is only useful if you want to set up a picture-in-picture window. The Input Setup window allows you to select the antenna input source for your NTSC and ATSC signals. If you have a single antenna, set both the ATSC and NTSC inputs to Input 1. The Program window enables you to compile an automatic list of DTV channels available in your area. Using the ATSC PSIP (Program and System Information Protocol) standard, the HiPix card is able to associate the digital channels with their analog channel assignments, identify multiple services within a digital channel (e.g., multicasting), and receive Electronic Program Guide (EPG) data. In other words, the card can map the physical digital channels (e.g., 22 for WFOR-DT) to the logical analog channels (e.g., 4 for WFOR). Finally, in the Volume window, users can determine whether changes in the volume control will affect the card only, the PC's sound card only, or both. I selected both.

Reception Tests

The first reception tests were carried out with the 2.3 and 3.0 software applications on the Dell Precision 530, but quickly ran into a false start. Although the HDTV images were adequately received, the card did not operate in a stable way. Among the uncovered problems was considerable audio stuttering. The control panel window often crashed when I tried to power it off, producing a non-responding error and requiring me to restart the machine. Upon the advice of an AVS Forum member who suggested that the HiPix card may not work reliably with dual-processor computers (www.avsforum.com), I installed the card on a Dell Precision 340 with a single processor.

With the new hardware set-up, the audio stuttering and crashing problems almost disappeared. As noted below, there was still some occasional audio stuttering, popping, or crackling, but much less so than it was before. Therefore, given the relative stability of the hardware and software configuration, the reported reception tests were conducted with the Dell Precision 340 and version 3.0 of the HiPix application software.

Over-the-air reception of ATSC/HDTV programs was tested using three types of antennas. First, the $50 Winegard WS-1771 (www.winegard.com) was an outside antenna specific to the Miami area to maximize reception of local television stations. It was erected on the rooftop of the School of Communication building. The height from the top of the antenna to the ground was about 50 feet. Second, the indoor/outdoor amplified Terk TV55 antenna (www.terk.com) was "specifically engineered to provide superior reception of high-definition (HDTV), digital television (DTV), and VHF/UHF TV channels," according to the manual. The amplifier's gain was 10 dB. I bought the antenna through bestbuy.com for $100. Finally, the $30 Radio Shack ATV-1000 VHF-UHF-FM indoor amplified antenna (www.radioshack.com) was used to test reception of HDTV signals with a typical, inexpensive "rabbit ears" type of antenna. The amplifier's high gain was 20 dB. This antenna also featured a 12-position fine tuning control designed to "eliminate ghosting and graininess in the picture," according to the manual. Both the Terk TV55 and the Radio Shack ATV-1000 antennas had their built-in amplifier (gain) turned on during the tests.

Reception tests were assessed using the ATSC Antenna Aim displaying the signal strength peak values for CBS-owned WFOR-DT in Coral Gables, Florida. These values ranged from 0 to 100. At the time of the tests, WFOR was the only local television station in Miami simulcasting a significant portion of its prime-time schedule in HDTV. Two types of programs were used at different times of the day: a college football game between the University of Florida and the University of Tennessee, that aired Saturday, September 21, 2002 at 3:30 p.m., and a James Bond movie, Tomorrow Never Dies, that aired Sunday, September 22, 2002 at 8:30 p.m.

Reception Results

Not surprisingly, the best reception results were obtained with the outside 50-foot Winegard antenna, followed by the indoor Terk antenna and the indoor Radio Shack antenna (see Table 2). The location of the indoor antenna also mattered. The closer to the window the antenna was located, the stronger the signal was. In addition, considerable signal strength variation was observed with the indoor antennas, affecting the reception quality of the HDTV signal. The peak values for the Radio Shack antenna when positioned near the window were relatively high, but this antenna also had the most fluctuations causing image break-ups and audio stuttering. The poor

reception quality from the Radio Shack antenna on top of the monitor reminded me of Thomas Watson's anticlimactic experience with the first telephone in 1875 when he "could unmistakably hear the tones of his [Alexander Graham Bell's] voice and almost catch a word now and then" (Brooks, 1976, p. 45). Results were consistent across the two programs except when the indoor antennas were placed on top of the computer monitor, suggesting possible atmospheric or weather-related problems. The minimum signal strength value for adequate HDTV reception seemed to hover around 35; values below 35 led to image break-ups. Without the gain, the signal strength level for the indoor antennas positioned on top of the monitor hovered around 5, producing a black picture.

Recording Results

Like other HDTV PCI cards, the HiPix allows users to record HDTV programs on their hard drive and play them back. In version 2.3 of the software, click on the Record button. A Record dialog box will appear. Click on the Create File button to create an output folder in which the HD stream files with the same name will reside. Then click on Open, confirm the creation of a new folder, and click on Apply to begin recording. The recording procedure in version 3.0 is slightly different. Click on the Timer button first (see Figure 3). The Record dialog window will open. Click on the Create File button, enter a desired filename for the folder and files, click on Open, and click on Apply to start the recording process. Note that a separate file is created for each minute of recording (e.g., if you record 10 minutes of content, you will get 10 files). Each minute of a recorded HDTV program takes 137 MB of space on the hard drive. In version 2.3, you can play back recorded HDTV programs by first clicking on the Source button and then selecting File (in 3.0, you just click on the File button). Then, you identify the desired folder and double click on the first HD stream file (e.g., test.0000.ts). Thanks to the .pid file in your folder, all 1-minute HD stream files will play black seamlessly and sequentially on your computer monitor (e.g., test.0000.ts, test.0001.ts, test.0002.ts). The playback will loop until you stop it.

Problems

Several technical problems were observed during the reported tests, although they did not seriously impede on the basic functionality of the card.

- Some audio stuttering/popping was still present.
- Occasionally, the channel went to black and did not display audio and video when the full-screen button was pressed.
- The Letter Box format was sometimes not remembered by the software and went back to the Normal format.
- There was no uninstaller for the 3.0 application software, although it was a final version. The HiPix Cleaner (hipixCleaner.exe) in the program directory removed the Windows registry entries for the application and the driver, but it did not uninstall the software.
- The remote control device and the associated infrared (IR) remote control receiver module did not work.

Technical Support

Although the User's Manual of the HiPix card was informative, technical support was disappointing, if not outright unsatisfactory. The e-mail address to contact the company about the card was not working and other ways to contact Telemann did not come to fruition. The reseller, Digital Connection, provided support for the HiPix with the 2.3 application software. But for version 3.0 and higher, users were referred to the AVS Forum, a discussion board for home theater PC (HTPC) and HDTV enthusiasts (www.avsforum.com). Some AVS Forum participants were members of the AVS Hipix Development Team and were willing to offer some assistance and reply to posts.

Discussion and Conclusions

Consistent with the results of Federal Communications Communication (FCC) and industry reports (see Federal Communications Commission [FCC], 2001a, 2001b), this case study confirms that over-the-air HDTV reception fares significantly better with an outdoor antenna than with an indoor antenna, especially a rabbit ears type. For years, broadcasters have expressed concerns that indoor DTV reception might pose a substantial challenge, especially in urban settings with high multipath environments (e.g., inside buildings) (Dickson, 1999; Seel & Dupagne, 2002). Kutzner (2001) identified four factors that negatively affect indoor or outdoor reception of a DTV RF signal: low receiver carrier-to-noise (C/N) ratio, interference from other channels, multipath propagation (i.e., reflections or echoes), and impulse noise (e.g., motor vehicle ignition, electrical appliances). Of these four sources, multipath, that occurs when "a signal reaches a receiver by more than one propagation path from the transmitter" (Blair, 1999, p. 32), appears the most worrisome for DTV indoor reception. Testing by the Advanced Television Technology Center has indicated that even with adequate receiver signal levels, multipath seriously affects DTV reception—let alone when these levels are near-threshold (Kutzner, 2001). Depending on the severity of multipath and the ability of a DTV receiver to handle it, multipath could eventually lock up the receiver, causing the picture to go black (P. DeGonia, Advanced Television Technology Center, personal communication, October 1, 2002).

Another matter of concern is the importance of antenna pointing. Describing his experience of climbing on the roof and conversing with his wife on his cell phone as he rotated the outside antenna, New York Times technology columnist Eric Taub (2001) went so far as to state: "If you are the kind of person who would have loved owning a car in 1910, believing that the new worlds a vehicle would open outweighed the need to change a tire every 10 miles or crank the engine by hand, then HDTV is for you" (p. G7). Unlike the NTSC signal, that may show degraded but viewable pictures in non-optimal conditions, the DTV signal may fail completely when the reception performance drops below a certain threshold (i.e., the cliff effect). During this evaluation, I was not able to receive ABC affiliate WPLG-DT with the 50-foot outside antenna, although I had no such problems with the other digital stations or with the analog WPLG channel. Eventually, I was able to watch WPLG-DT after considerable antenna pointing and tweaking with the Terk TV55 indoor antenna near the window, but then I lost the digital signals of PBS-affiliated WPBT-DT and CBS-owned WFOR-DT.

Despite these challenges, this reviewer remains optimistic about DTV reception for

the following reasons. First, although the evaluation took place in a less than ideal environment for indoor reception (i.e., a room with exterior concrete and steel walls in a building surrounded by other buildings), DTV reception with the Terk TV55 indoor antenna worked surprisingly well. This finding suggests that an amplified indoor antenna designed for DTV reception can perform adequately even inside buildings. Second, there are encouraging signs that newer ATSC (8-VSB) receivers with improved channel equalizers will increase the necessary signal-to-noise ratio to produce a DTV picture and offer better DTV coverage (FCC, 2001b). Third, the Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC) is evaluating two new ways to enhance the transmission of DTV signals: the robust-stream method, that would allow DTV reception at a lower carrier-to-noise threshold, and the modified training signal method, that would reduce multipath interference (Kerschbaumer, 2002b). Fourth, by one estimate, nearly 30% of the DTV stations operate at low power to save on electricity bills, making it difficult for viewers to receive a DTV signal in some areas ("Call it LPDTV," 2002; Kerschbaumer, 2002a). Eventually, all DTV stations will be expected to operate at full power by the 2006 full-conversion target date or possibly earlier (McConnell, 2002). In 2001, the ATSC RF Task Force called on TV stations to boost the power of their DTV transmitters to reach viewers in the fringes of their coverage areas (Grotticelli, 2001). Finally, in the long term, over-the-air indoor DTV reception problems might become a moot point if nearly all TV households subscribe to multichannel video programming distribution (MVPD) services by 2006 and watch local DTV stations via cable, direct broadcast satellite, or another MVPD service.

Overall, the HiPix DTV card performed adequately. It allowed me to watch a variety of HDTV programming from local DTV stations for a mere $400 and demonstrate it to students and colleagues. Note that installing a PCI card in a computer is not for everybody and requires some level of computer familiarity. Only an estimated 4% of owners ever open their computer ("Adventures in Datacasting," 2001). Yet, assuming that you have some patience and the motivation to become an early adopter of digital television, the HiPix card will give you more than one opportunity to enjoy stunning television pictures.

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Table 1
Technical Specifications of the Test Machines

Feature	**Test machine 1**	**Test machine 2**
Brand	Dell Precision 530	Dell Precision 340
Processor	Dual Xeon 2 Ghz	Pentium 4 2 Ghz
Memory	1 GB	512 MB
Graphic card	GeForce 2 GTS, 32 MB	Radeon VE, 32 MB
First hard drive	18 GB SCSI, 10K rpm	40 GB IDE, 7.2K rpm
Second hard drive	36 GB SCSI, 10K rpm	None
CD-RW/DVD	16X/10X/40X CD-RW	40X CD-RW and 16X DVD
Zip drive	Internal Iomega 250 MB	Internal Iomega 250 MB
Sound card	Turtle Beach Santa Cruz	SoundMAX Integrated
Monitor	21-inch NEC MultiSync	21-inch NEC MultiSync
Operating system	Windows 2000 SP3	Windows XP Pro SP1

Table 2
Signal Strength Peak Values for DTV Reception of CBS-Owned WFOR's HDTV Programs in Coral Gables, Florida

Type of antenna Antenna location	Winegard (outdoor)	Terk (indoor)	Radio Shack (indoor)
Top of monitor	85/85	44/54	7/37
Near window		73/75	60/57

Note: These signal strength peak values originated from the ATSC Antenna Aim tool in the 3.0 application software of the HiPix card. They ranged from 0 to 100. The first value (e.g., 44) represented the reception signal strength for the college football game between the University of Florida and the University of Tennessee and the second value (e.g., 54) represented the reception signal strength for the movie, *Tomorrow Never Dies.*

Figure 1. Side view of the main HiPix DTV-200 card. *Photo by Michel Dupagne.*

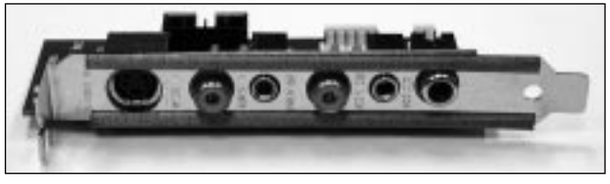

Figure 2. Side view of the expansion card. *Photo by Michel Dupagne.*

Figure 3. Control panel window of the 3.0 HiPix DTV-200 application software. *Screenshot by Michel Dupagne.*

SYLLABUS

JMC 318 Writing for the Media
(Writing Intensive)

Fall 2002

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00– 10:50 a.m. THMH #113

Assistant Professor of Broadcasting/KLPR Advisor – Laura F. Sherwood
Mitchell Telecommunications Center – 102D

Required Text: Stovall, J.G. (2002). Writing for the Mass Media (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon

Portfolio Materials: Three ring binder and clear plastic pages for holding assignments.

Course Objectives: The purposes of this course are to: familiarize the student with a variety of writing styles used in print, broadcast, and cable; allow the student the opportunity to learn to select a medium most appropriate for specific messages; select an effective message style for tailoring written materials for specific situations; afford the student the opportunity to improve writing skills; and allow the student to quickly produce acceptable copy under time constraints.

Course Description: The student will complete writing assignments of varying styles, formats, and difficulty in the Journalism and Mass Communication computer laboratory. Emphasis will be placed on quality and accuracy (i.e., spelling, grammar, sentence structure, execution), the selection of an appropriate message style (i.e., create awareness, change perceptions, reinforce perceptions), the improvement of the student's current writing ability, the completion of assignments under time constraints and writing for media with boundaries (i.e., time and space). The course is designed for any student whose career objectives may require them to prepare written material for the media and as such the class will explore several different applications of writing in various fields.

Assignments: Several writing projects will be assigned. Due to the number of assignments planned, no examinations will be administered. Assignments may include items such as press releases, advertising copy, newsletter copy, copy for a brochure, feature stories, news stories, an opinion/editorial, and web writing. All assignments must be typed and double-spaced on plain, white, unlined typing paper. Handwritten papers are not acceptable—except as noted. 0Each writing sample that students are assigned to bring to class will be worth three additional points on the next writing assignment. Samples selected from the pages of The Antelope will not be acceptable.

Grading: Ten points will be deducted for each spelling error. Spelling errors include the following (i.e. receive, seperate, definately). Grammatical errors also result in ten points reductions (i.e., "he should have went" or "he could of joined the club"). Content will be judged in terms of the actual execution of the assignment (i.e., Does the paper logically flow? Does the material read easily? Are the thoughts clear? Has the student met the objective of the assignment?). Each content problem will result in a point reductions.

Cheating and Plagiarism: I maintain a "one strike and you are out" policy. I will fail you in the class on the spot and then I will make every effort to see that you are expelled from this university immediately. Students should examine the University of Nebraska at Kearney Academic Dishonesty Policy under Academic Information, Undergraduate Catalog. Plagiarism is defined as "the intentional appropriation of the work, be it ideas or words, of another without crediting the source" and/or the submission of work "when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person (a student's name on a paper certifies it is his/her work . . .).

Writing for the Media
Tentative Course Schedule

August/September

M	26	Course introduction and syllabus/Assignment Chap. 2
W	28	Discuss Chap 2, Grammar test.
F	30	Distribute Obit. assignment, bring copy of an obituary to discuss in class (3 points.)
M	02	Labor Day—No Class
W	04	Discuss Obits (300+ words), Obit. draft due
F	06	Discuss marketing, features (regular & contest—1-2,000 words), Return Obits.
M	09	Final draft Obit due. Present in class.
W	11	Discuss Letters to the Editor/Editorials, bring sample editorial (3 points) Assign. Letter to the Hub (300 words—Possible topic 9-11, the difference a year makes.), Chap. 3
F	13	Letter draft due, discuss letters & Chap 3—Basics of Journalistic writing.
M	16	Ch. 5 discussion, students bring a copy of a news release from a newspaper (3 points), distribute newspaper press release assignment.
W	18	First draft newspaper press release due, free writing exercise.
F	20	Return first draft of newspaper press release, discuss chapter 4 - what makes a good news story. Letter/Editorial due, present in class.
M	23	Newspaper press release due, distribute radio press release assignment, discuss radio formats.
W	25	Radio press release due, present in class.
F	27	Times press release (THMS 102), due at the end of class.
M	30	Ch. 8 discussion, students bring a "good" magazine ad to class and present (3 points), distribute magazine ad assignment.

October/November

W	02	First draft of magazine ad assignment due, team magazine ad development exercise in class.
F	04	Return first draft of magazine assignment, distribute sample radio ad script, listen to sample radio ads & distribute radio ad assignment.
M	07	Magazine ad due, present in class.
W	09	Radio ad due, present in class.
F	11	Guest Speaker Mike Sumpter, Public Relations - What it is. Write PR for Great Platte River Road Archway.
M	14	Discuss Chapter 9, the difference between a news story & press release.
W	16	PR drafts due. Distribute sample television ad script and assignment. View Coca-Cola and Clydesdale videos. Review pp. 311 - 319.
F	18	Television ad due, present in class.
M	21/22	Fall Break
W	23	PR final draft due. Read Chapter 6.
F	25	Students find a "good" product website and present (3 points), sample websites. Distribute wine and cheese website assignment, discuss organization and flowcharting. Discuss Chapter 6.
M	28	First draft of wine and cheese shop website copy due.
W	30	Return first draft of wine and cheese shop website copy, discussion.
F	01	Completed wine and cheese shop website copy due, present in class.
M	04	Draft of contest feature due.
W	06	Bring a sample brochure (3 points). Discuss brochures & distribute brochure assignment. Review pp. 354-355.
F	08	Final Draft brochure due, present in class
M	11	Students bring a feature story from a magazine and present in class (3 points). Distribute feature article assignment and discuss cover letters. Return draft of contest feature.
W	13	Cover letter due - present in class. Draft of feature story due.
F	15	Press release class assignment.
M	18	Final Draft of feature story due - present in class
W	20	Final Draft of Contest feature due (whole package)
F	22	Final Draft of Contest feature continued
M	25	Final Draft continued/voting
W	27	Thanksgiving Vacation
F	29	Thanksgiving Vacation

December

M	02	Resume writing
W	04	Rough draft of resume due
F	06	Guest speaker

M 09 Final draft of resume due
W 11 Discuss Portfolios
F 13 Portfolios Due
December 16 - 19 FINALS WEEK

Syllabus prepared by: Laura Sherwood, sherwoodlf@unk.edu

SYLLABUS

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
College of Communication and Fine Arts

BCA 503 — CRITIQUING MASS MEDIA 3(3-0)

Bulletin Description: Critical appraisal of mass communications systems and their content. Special attention to the electronic media's aesthetic properties and societal effects.

Prerequisites: BCA 210 with a minimum grade of "C".

Rationale for Course Level: This is an advanced seminar in criticism that exposes the student to a variety of critical methodologies and sophisticated literature on a range of theoretical perspectives. It demands a prior familiarity with media issues and structures.

Textbooks and Other Required Student-Furnished Materials:
Orlik, Peter. Electronic Media Criticism: Applied Perspectives. Second Edition. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbarum Associates, 2001) Access to word processor or typewriter.

Special Requirements: This class is part of the BCA "core". Therefore, BCA majors and minors are required to earn a minimum grade of C (2.0) for successful course completion.

General Methodology Used in Teaching the Course: As an upper level seminar, this class uses discussion as a key device for the interpretation and clarification of ideas. The student should think of each class as a daily oral quiz and prepare accordingly. The quality of the student's discussion contribution is a significant component of the final grade as noted later in the Evaluation section. Associated important characteristics of the class include the following:

1. Reading assignments are designed to correlate with in-class material to be presented in immediately following class sessions. It is vital that these assignments are completed in time for the next meeting.

2. Several audio and video presentations are screened in class. Students must remember that these are being auditioned as analytical rather than entertainment experiences.

3. All papers are to be typed. Correct spelling is a basic expectation of professional mass communicators. Grades on papers will drop substantially as misspellings increase.

4. As in the media industries, deadlines must be met. The grade for late papers will drop two levels (such as from a "B" to a "C+") for each intervening week day. For full credit, assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. An assignment turned in after class is already one day late. If assignments are turned in to the departmental office, they must be time/date certified by a BCA secretarial assistant.

5. This course assumes and assigns approximately two hours of outside work for every one hour spent in class.

Course Objectives: Upon course completion, the student should be able to:

1. Define "criticism" and its essential ingredients.
2. Identify a variety of methods of mass media criticism and analysis including aesthetic, sociological, economic, structural, psychoanalytical and ethical perspectives.
3. Demonstrate familiarity with key literature in mass media criticism and analysis.
4. Analyze the mass media depiction of gender, ethnic, age-group, and occupational populations.
5. Compare the content and structure of U.S. mass media with that of other countries.
6. Isolate key contemporary issues in mass media criticism.
7. Describe the roles and interrelationships of media professionals, consumers, regulators and financial interests.
8. Establish defensible criteria for evaluation of media performance.

General Course Outline

(NOTE: Specific daily assignments will be given as the term progresses. Some modification in time devoted to each subject may occur to compensate for unforseen circumstances or media critical issues that surface in the industry during the term.)

Week 1 — Key elements of criticism; the critical process; why media criticism is needed; media literacy defined; eras of mass media criticism.
Week 2 — Critic responsibilities; what critics value; the triangular systems model.
Week 3 — Criticism and the communication process; knowledge processing: scientific approaches.
Week 4 — Knowledge processing continued: mystical, rhetorical and critical approaches; application of knowledge processing approaches to a single media product.
Week 5 — Media depiction; cultivation analysis; finding depictive lessons in media messages.
Week 6 — Ingredients of the mass media message: music, creators and performers, transition devices, light and shadow, visual planes.
Week 7 — Reconciling art and business; bottom-line considerations; measuring audience reach; layout, schedule and flow analysis.
Week 8 — Mid-term examination; defining ethics, values, and morality; the media as values suppliers; media access and freedom of expression.
Week 9 — Predominating values systems; decoding programmatic values messages.

Week 10 — Uses and gratifications analysis; the many sides of catharsis.
Week 11 — Defining aesthetics; five philosophies of aesthetics; defining art and its tasks; fine, folk and popular art compared; "pop" vs. public art.
Week 12 — The Logic of Aesthetic Form; applying the Logic to media communications.
Week 13 — Symbols and archetypes; ancient Greek comedic archetypes; ritual, mystique and myth; mythic media structures.
Week 14 — Thesis, antithesis, and synthesis in message design; elements of semiotics.
Week 15 — Reality program definition and critical issues; the four elements of Composite Criticism (criticism and the communication process revisited).
Week 16 — Final examination.

Evaluation:

20% — In-class discussion (Note that this is of equal importance to the written exams. Daily class preparation and participation is essential.)
20% — Mid-term examination
20% — Final examination
40% — Composite of all assigned papers and related written exercises. (Certain papers may be weighted more than others as will be announced when each assignment is issued.)

Regardless of the percentage distribution listed above, a grade of "E" on both examinations will result in an "E" for the course.

No Incomplete (I) grades are given unless:
a] at least 80% of the course has been completed
b] the Incomplete results from a documented medical or family emergency
c] the student is not failing the course at the time the Incomplete is requested.

Graduate Student Requirements: Graduate students will be assigned to read two additional books on critical theory and will be required to prepare written summary evaluations of each.

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Syllabus prepared by: Peter B. Orlik,
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A NEW MODEL FOR TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

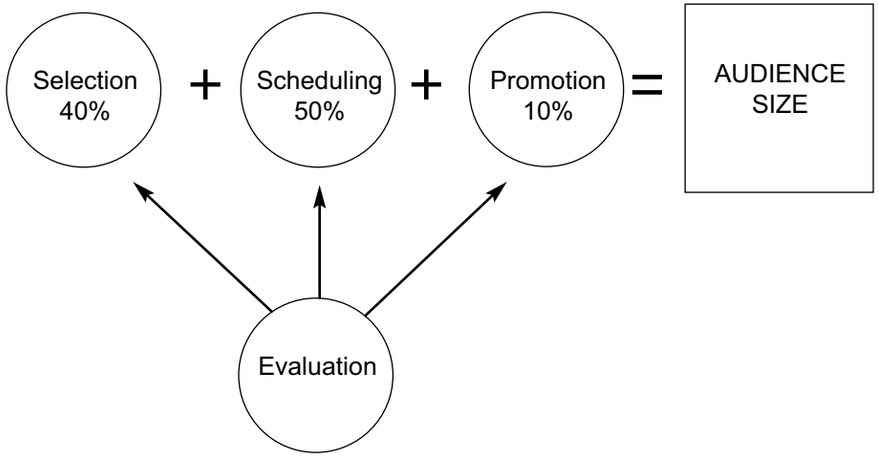
Susan Tyler Eastman, Indiana University
eastman@indiana.edu

Panel presentation for the Communication and Technology Division of the Broadcast Education Association in Las Vegas, NV in April 2002

At the last Broadcast Education Association meeting, Jerry Condra of Oswego State University asked whether the traditional entertainment programming paradigm was about to become extinct. Paraphrased for programming teachers and scholars, the questions are: (1) What is the traditional programming paradigm or model? (2) How far will it stretch? Will the traditional model accommodate the content and audience behaviors that grow out of new digital technologies? (3) What key differences in programming lie ahead? In other words, what kind of programming model will be required by the arrival of the foreseeable media technologies?

From my perspective, the classic entertainment programming paradigm consists of four major parts, as shown in Figure 1: the selection of content, the evaluation of content and audiences, the scheduling of content, and the promotion of viewing/listening/using that content (see Eastman & Ferguson, 2002). Indeed, to the degree that news has morphed into entertainment, the same processes apply. For decades, the only new element in this model was the rise of program promotion from minor to major status.

Figure 1: Today's Basic Programming Model



Change is coming, however, but probably not in the first part of the model—the selection strategies. Although the mechanics of selection may differ in detail as media technologies change, the factors influencing program selection processes are likely to remain much the same across old and new platforms. As the means of audience evaluation change, however, scheduling and promotion will converge, altering the programming paradigm. This essay explains why and how the strategies of promotion will engulf scheduling as a result of the coming media technologies and proposes a foreshortened model of programming.

Figure 2 lists the major developments in media technology that have already changed programming strategies and some that will change them again in the future. For a quick reprise of media history, as has long been recognized, while drastically altering radio programming, the introduction of satellite distribution also birthed cable television, forever transforming television's competitive array. Remote controls then led to cold starts, seamless program transitions, and increased promotion of programs. Home videocassette recorders threatened to disrupt program flow strategies with time-shifting, although little materialized after the novelty effect wore off. Although not yet in many homes, high-definition technology rapidly changed Hollywood's program production processes, which has especially affected the attributes of intimacy and presence in camera shots. Personal video recorders (PVRs, also called more broadly, digital video recorders or DVRs) may do what VCRs couldn't because of technical differences in picture quality, random access, and such other features as the ability to skip commercial breaks. Much more effectively than VCRs, TiVo and its PVR kin give viewers the ability to fit programs to their own time schedules, changing how people watch television. Now, portable personal media meters (PPM) are on the near horizon; personal metering will change how the industry measures that consumption. As the Internet moves inevitably toward convergence with terrestrial and satellite television, a channel-less entertainment and information medium will emerge. When fully digitalized from source to viewers, portable meters combined with the personalization of viewing and the "Internetization" of television will make the biggest changes yet in programming strategies.

Figure 2. Technologies Impacting Programming Strategies

satellite transmission
remote control devices (RCDs)
videocassette recorders (VCRs)
digitalization
high-definition television (HDTV)
personal video recorders (PVRs)
Internetization
portable personal meters (PPMs)

Selection

In programming jargon, selection refers to the complex of factors influencing the buying and production of programs (or other content) for domestic and perhaps international entertainment viewing or listening. Decisions about buying or renewing (or canceling) programs—the selection process—are influenced by such factors as relative program cost, a show's novelty or trendiness, presumptions about audience viewing habits, compatibility of a show with the existing schedule, the availability of talent, and the ability of a program to differentiate or brand the channel. Other considerations influencing the making of new programs include the reputation of the producers and writers, the appeal of the talent, the longevity of the concept, and the availability of cofinancing and coproduction. The degree of appeal to and size and economic condition of the international syndication market are other crucial factors. Generally, the programmer's goal is to maximize novelty while minimizing risk.

In addition, economic factors plainly affect the selection of syndicated content, such as payment method (cash, barter, or cash-plus-barter), payout installments, amortization of per-episode costs, and whether a step deal is possible. In addition, audience factors enter the decision process, such as a show's track record on comparable outlets, whether the audience is aging, whether the ratings are holding, increasing, or slipping, and so on. And the newest economic factors affecting live and taped programs have the goal of extending audiences: To what extent can the content be reused via simulcasting and repurposing on other co-owned platforms? None of these factors, naturally, have to do with that elusive element called "quality." All have to do with revenue and profit.

The strength and salience of these individual factors will vary somewhat for different situations (such as the concept and the script stages for new programs) and for different media-for terrestrial and satellite radio, for cable and broadcast networks, for local stations in different competitive and financial situations, and for an Internet radio or video service that supplies entertainment. Even in the new digital era, the programmers of online entertainment channels still have to concern themselves with who provides the money, who the target audience is, and whether available content can appeal strongly enough to that target audience to interest backers, advertisers, and program distributors. The same factors will affect the selection of entertainment programs whether those shows appear on terrestrial television, satellite television, the Internet, or the coming converged medium (we need a name for it!), irrespective of the means of audience and program evaluation.

Evaluation

Evaluation in any medium usually means figuring how many and who demographically or psychographically is viewing, listening, or using a program service. Evaluation can be short term and focused on audience size—or long term and concerned with content trends such as style and genre popularity. Although evaluation also occurs in relation to external factors, such as price of a company's stock and industry policies of diversification or consolidation, it is those audience shares that media executives want to know first. Different services supply different kinds of numbers, but increasingly,

those numbers are looking much like the demographically-subdivided ratings provided via peoplemeters for traditional broadcast media. Server-side audits and online panels, for example, now report cumulative audiences, just like radio and public broadcasting.

But advertisers want more: They want to know how many, for how long, and what kind of users each medium, each channel, and each unit of content has. They want to know how the various media interact as vehicles for their messages. Programmers and producers also want to know these same things in order to produce or purchase the best possible (most precisely targeted?) programs for their situations. The remarkable new portable and personal metering systems that are now being tested will ultimately measure all media consumption in the same general ways and, so the industry promises, provide data directly comparable to traditional metered data of broadcast audiences. As I understand the technology, personal meters will record an inaudible frequency emitted by all programs—whether in original run, replay, or repurposed replay on the air, satellite, or online. At BEA, this signal was referred to as an "electronic dog whistle," a sound people cannot hear. The personal meter has the great advantages of recording from any electronic medium in any location (if one carries it around) and of being totally passive, unlike current peoplemeters that are fixed and necessitate active button-pushing by multiple viewers.

Eventually, personal meters will be super-miniaturized, and their capabilities are likely to be expanded "read" auditory barcodes or other signals from print media, billboards, and maybe even email advertising. Indeed, it is the value of such cross-platform information that will convince the big media conglomerates to swallow the enormous cost of a new audience evaluation system.

The best programmers and producers have always tried to predict the implications of new user technologies for content. What will portable personal metering do? It will track all media exposure via a transmitted source-code, wherever and whenever it takes place. Having consolidated and comparative numbers will profoundly affect advertising and program packaging. Eventually, the movement of even small segments of content will be tracked by their own coded signals across many platforms and over time.

What will be really new isn't only that the industry will soon track everything viewers consume via personal meter: The other side of the coin is that viewers will demand some benefit for carrying around the industry's new toy! One likely reward will be the ability to store information on what you—the viewer—consume and what you want to consume, and this information will be with you wherever you are (not at home locked into a TiVo). Portability matters. Once the metering technology becomes the size of Dick Tracy's wrist radio and the so-called benefits multiple, as they have for calculators and cell phones, and PPMs merge with personal data assistants (PDAs), lots of people will wear the devices. Even right now, it is easy to imagine a little subroutine in each person's meter that will reveal what movies and series episodes have already been seen and, for new-to-you and newly-made programs, such things as content and popularity ratings or predictions, date of availability (and even what the day's horoscope recommends or whatever...) Viewers can have a click-icon that identifies episodes already seen by the PPM's user, that I predict has to be on the wrist to be successful because that location suits (and is familiar to) both women and men and people of almost any age. (Sci fi predicts that the images will be holographically projected out in front of us; thus they can be complex if need be and of any size the user wants.)

In the not too distant future, PPMs will combine functions that were once associated with VCRs, PVRs, PDAs, and RCDs (video and digital recorders, data assistants, and remote controls, for those who don't like alphabet letters). At that time, personal meters will fully merge with computers to become life-long possessions, retaining stored content for a lifetime, irrespective of changing hardware and software. Having knowledge of the personal consumption history and preferences for each person, wedded to basic demographic data, will, without a doubt, profoundly change programming strategies. At the same time, each person's constantly available knowledge of their own consumption history and preferences will impact the effectiveness of programming strategies. As the industry changes, the audience changes, too.

Scheduling

It is probably the area of scheduling that most disturbs those considering the impact of the newest technologies. It is television programming's most unique characteristic as well as the part of the programming paradigm most affected by technological change. Conventional television focuses on the flow of audience throughout a time period and is very much concerned with inherited viewing, measured as lead-in ratings or duplicated viewing. Specifically, the preceding program is presumed to be the source of about half the viewers of the second program in a sequence. A long-recognized series of strategies, such as blocking, hammocking, and seamlessness, have the purpose of encouraging strong flow from program to program. (In contrast, the strategy of counterprogramming goes after unserved audience subgroups.) The strategy of stunting seeks to lure the other channels' viewers and those precious "appointment viewers" to a channel. Will we see much more stunting as TiVo and other PVRs become commonplace? In the emerging future, I see the end of linear flow strategies, more stunting, narrower target demographics, and increased power for program suppliers who control the menu options.

TiVo and its kin makes the subtleties of linear sequencing on the originating channels irrelevant. However, viewers haven't rushed to adopt PVRs for a variety of reasons. Currently, more than two-thirds of households get their television via cable, and cable-compatible TiVos are not here yet. It also depends on how many people of the current generations want to be bothered to do their own scheduling. Study after study has shown that the bulk of the television audience is lazy or, at the least, passive. Other commitments take so much energy that little is left to devote to fiddling with one's TV set (except for such early adopters as teachers of programming and technology!).

Any Internet programmer today must recognize that only a fraction of people receive their television-like entertainment from the web as yet, and thus the audience for any entertainment shown must target a very narrow demographic or psychographic group. As colleague Doug Ferguson has pointed out (2002), the strategies of compatibility in audiences, habit formation via bookmarks and long-term selection, the promotional value of spinoffs and tie-ins, and the goal of conservation of program resources via repurposing will endure across media.

The long-awaited merger of television and computers has to occur on the big livingroom screen, but most benefits of digitalization have yet to pass through most cable systems. The typical family household has between three and seven tv sets and probably only a couple of computers. Despite the hopes of many new tech buffs, most people don't want to "watch tv" on a computer, although studies show that considerable listening to music as a background to studying takes place among high-school and college students. (That listening tends to be blocked and flowing much like over-the-air radio.) When the full digitalization of television occurs (and thus the implied merger), traditional flow scheduling organized by the source will immediately give way menu-style consumer-controlled programming. Such menu-systems have been tested for some years now in homes with digital satellite television. The media scheduling battle is already shifting to how and how often a program service gets listed on those menus, and the visual and auditory salience and repetition of that menu listing.

Promotion

Which brings us to the fourth area of concern, promotion. Promos now appear everywhere—before programs, within program breaks, in end-credits, as virtual messages plastered across arena walls, on stadium floors, in on-screen bugs and bumpers, and in sponsored scoreboards that only television viewers see. Program suppliers pay two ways to achieve maximal prominence for their messages: in the space or time they buy and in the design of the message. Design and environmental factors that have been shown to influence the effectiveness of network on-air promos include structural factors like where the promos are placed, their order, their surroundings, their distance from the promoted program, and so on. Altogether, my colleagues and I have identified 14 structural and content factors impacting the effectiveness of on-air promotion: lead-in, reach, frequency, clutter, design, construction, compatibility, distance, length, location, position, distribution, familiarity, and genre (see Eastman, 2000). Most of these factors will be reborn as design elements in user menus and click-through promos.

In what ways will the industry's investment in program promotion change as a result of new media technologies? Right now, a significant proportion of television on-air time is devoted to promotional messages to encourage viewers to watch other programs or episodes of series. Currently, the major networks collectively air as many as 30,000 promos yearly (Ferguson, 2002), foregoing as much as $4 billion in advertising revenue to make time for those precious promos (Eastman, 1998). When online and on-air merge—a time that the recent recession has pushed somewhat further away—scheduling and promotion will become virtually the same thing. Viewers will use interactive, menu-driven, and digitally preprogrammed systems for choosing what they will view, but the industry's goal will remain the same: to get viewers to include specific content in their consumption patterns. Program suppliers will still have to capture viewers' attention with advance touting of new and cross-platformed program content, just as they do today.

One major factor in deal-making for cable channels and radio stations has become their value as a means of cross-promoting co-owned channels and platforms. Cross-promotion—publicizing one channel's programs inside another channel—has greatly increased as a result of industry consolidation. Purchase decisions about stations and networks weigh what a channel will add incrementally to an overall audience and an advertising package.

Determining what elements of color, size, sound, movement, and so on will capture attention yet fit within a 15-second spot or in an easy-to-read menu—or pop up or click-through as subroutines showcasing plots and talent—are the design aspects of promotional messages. Herein lies the merger of scheduling and promotion: The framing of messages about programs and episodes of series in menus will be the essence of the new scheduling, the new promotion. Although program suppliers will certainly continue to attempt to manipulate viewing choices, instead of orchestrating programs' temporal line-up, those manipulations will occur in the menus, icons, and associated displays. In the coming digital era, those companies willing to pay to get more salience for their messages in viewer menus will most influence viewer choice. So that same $4 billion will find another way to spend itself!

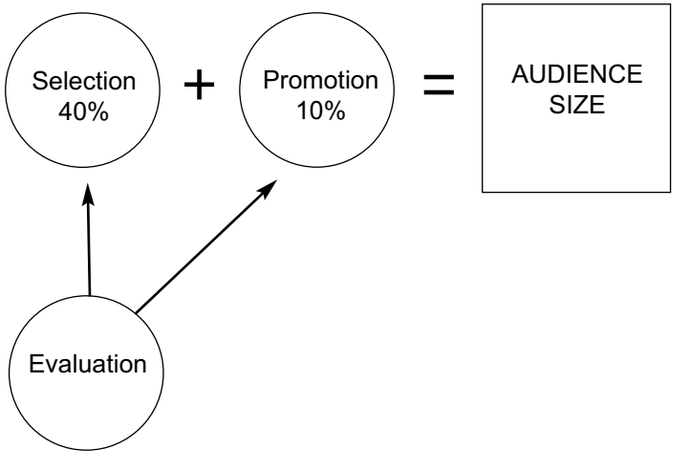
Other changes in promotion are coming. Hit reality programs have already boosted the amount of appointment viewing in prime time, a pattern that will accelerate. The movie studios now promote their blockbuster films a year or more in advance. In the new multi-platform universe, that kind of long-term strategy will be essential to build "buzz" for new television series and specials. It will involve a far larger proportion of paid or co-owned external media than is presently utilized to lure new viewers. Moreover, viewers will eventually demand some kind of reward, I think, for devoting their time to watching self-promotion, as they will also demand for watching advertising messages. Such "rewards" may come in the form of rebates on program costs, access to limited-participation contests and games, discounts on products, and whatever promotion people think up. We may even see the end of within-program promos. In the short run, use of those annoying bumpers overlaying the bottom of currently viewed programs will increase. Over the longer term, on-screen per-episode promotion of ongoing series will largely recede, I think, to very brief informational messages, but click-throughs will provide access to the equivalent of traditional promos. Programmers, however, will have to be prepared to reward viewers somehow for clicking on them. These rewards might come in the form of rebates on program fees, access to limited participation contests, discounts on products, or whatever promotion people can imagine.

For new programs, more cross-media promotion will be needed to attract attention. Much of that will be in the form of purchased prominence on menus and repetition within multiple levels of menus. A far greater proportion of new programs will be self-promoting spinoffs and tie-ins than at present.

The New Programming Paradigm

In the new era, which program appears before, after, or against which program won't be an issue. Linear scheduling strategies will disappear because they are artifacts of single continuous channel technology. The new model for programming will be reduced to the three parts of selection, evaluation, and promotion shown in Figure 3 because they will be the major determinants of audience size and composition.

Figure 3: The New Programming Model



Although the economics of television programming will certainly alter drastically in the coming years, program promotion is bound to use many of the same design tools and have the same acquisitive, competitive, and retentive goals, even in new media. I see six distinctive characteristics of the new programming situation.

- First, virtually all programs will be constantly available. The only exceptions will be live and time-bound programs, meaning some sports, newscasts, and just-produced shows, and they will instantly join the always-available pool.
- Second, programs will have varying lengths. Programs will not be tied to the 30- or 60-minute clock; they can run any length that suits the producers.
- Third, producers will focus on program starts to engage attention. Even more than today, programs will have high-impact cold starts in order to catch and hold attention with big emotional scenes, action scenes, or comedy.
- Fourth, multiple simultaneous messaging will increase. The phenomena of on-screen crawls, boxed inserts, virtual overlays, on-screen bumpers, and squeezed end-credits will persist and move into other parts of programming, such as menus, to maximize use of the viewers' attention.
- Fifth, viewing programs will cost money. Whatever the type of programming, viewers will pay for it. Watching advertising and promotional messages and utilizing interactive sales options will become common ways of reducing that cost.
- Sixth, programming will be packaged. Instead of linear arrangements on a single channel, preset groups of programs drawn from multiple (but largely co-owned) sources will be assembled to fit the viewer's preferences, and a single click will display the options within the package and then begin the play of whatever part of the package is selected.

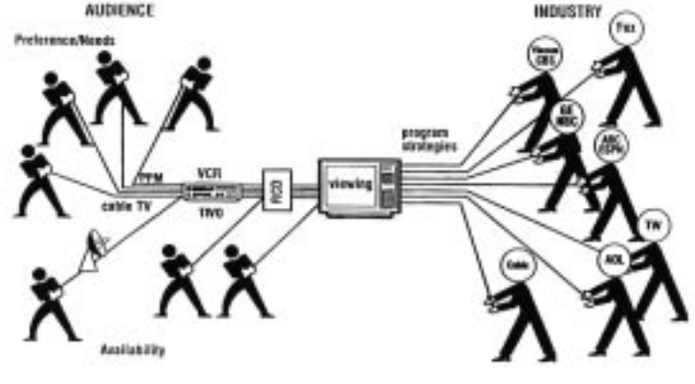
This last characteristic of "packaging" refers to an aspect that is usually missing from discussions of visions of an audience-driven future: the degree of control exercised by the media giants. Will digital convergence, along with PVRs, PPMs, and on-screen menus, free viewers or steer them almost inescapably toward the content owned by the media giants? The compression of major media producers and distributors into just a few mega-corporations gives them enormous leverage, and that power can be exercised in controlling what the more passive viewer chooses. My colleague Herb Terry has called this industry goal "the automated facilitation of viewer passivity." Television program menus won't just be lists requiring the user to choose: Programs will be packaged and wrapped up like (costly) presents!

It is easy to imagine "all-family" packages, "all-top-rated-movies" packages, "all-sports" packages, such as some cable systems tout today, but what will really be pushed is something more probably called the "ABC AAA Deluxe Program Package." The future is likely to consist largely of preset packages of programs in which one media corporation has a financial interest. The "Disney All-Hits Package," may compete with "Fox Extreme Specials," "Viacom Vacation Specials," and suchlike, but such packaging will serve to readily facilitate decision making by those passive viewers. Protracted interactivity will be regarded as very tiring.

What won't change is a media company's predisposition to manipulate viewing to its advantage. Today, the media giants seek control of multiple channels so that whatever the viewer's genre preference, a supplier-owned option is available. The trick for programmers in the menu-driven era will be to lure viewers to watch or listen using the layout, design, and sound of the promotional messages. Content—in the sense of the story and stars—always matters, of course, but promotion generates sampling, and without an initial exposure to a new show, the story and talent have no opportunity to attract viewers. The kind of viewer manipulation characteristic of present-day scheduling in prime time-such as blocking similar shows and running them seamlessly into one another—will no longer be options. All programs will have cold starts. All programs will be constantly available and no longer be tied to the 30- or 60-minute clock. They can be made as long or as short as the producer likes, and viewers can begin watching at any time. One hangover I do see is the continuation of squeezing end-credits to run promos in the ends of programs. Program suppliers won't give up the advantage of having the viewers' lingering attention to try to trigger interest in some other program.

Figure 4 illustrates the tug-of-war between viewers and programmers that will continue to operate. For every advantage technology brings viewers, suppliers and programmers will come up with a counter ploy.

Figure 4: The Industry/Audience Tug-of-War



Will programming become interactive? The common answer is yes, but my opinion is a radical no. There is little doubt that advertising will be eventually successful at getting sufficient viewers to exercise interactive options, but programming is different. Viewers consume entertainment programs as whole units; they want to experience the story the storyteller has created, not interrupt it (even if a TiVo takes them back to the place they left off). The primary exceptions on the programming side are likely to be sports, how-to shows, and music programs targeting young people, such as on MTV, CMTV, and similar channels. I think a lot of click-options inside programs, on products, cloths, hair styles, cars, and so on will be tried out and found to generate little response.

Conclusions

One inescapable facet of television programming is that most viewers, and most listeners, continue to be passive most of the time. The fuller one's life, the more complex the world, the more tired one is, and the more one uses computers for professional work, the less energy one has left to devote to making choices about how one is going to be entertained. Consuming television is, for most people most of the time, an activity that must be relaxing and easy, not interactive and challenging. Those of us intellectuals who pick the sophisticated entertainment shows to watch—the ones that demand brain energy (Remember Murder One? How about Monday Court?)—don't consume a lot of television. We are not the mass audience, a fact that it is so easy to forget. If you and I printed out lists of all the episodes and programs we have watched in our lifetimes, they might stretch from here to New York, but a heavy viewer's list might stretch to the moon! College students are also not the mass audience. They are generally at an energetic time in their lives with spare time (or the need to procrastinate) and few responsibilities; thus, many are especially receptive to invitations to look here, click there, and jump over here. I foresee a programming future for most people most of the time that looks more like Terry's "automated facilitation of viewer passivity" than it does like the dreams of programs full of instantly interactive click-thoughs and pop-ups.

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STUDIO TELEVISION AND THE DISCOVERY PROCESS

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Many problem areas arise in any student-produced television. Such programs are complex production activities that involve specialized positions, substantial human resources and planning. If the television studio laboratory activities are to prepare students to compete in commercial broadcasting, they must effectively integrate a style of teaching that facilitates personal discovery. Indeed, the student's discovery that learning is directly linked to his performance is central to any productive learning about television production. In order to achieve this discovery, teachers must shift the emphasis from the classroom to the studio and student's experience there.

Traditionally the classroom has been viewed as the primary locus of instruction. Assumptions that a student's primary acquisition of knowledge comes from lecture and reading will result in a less meaningful learning experience (Warfied, 1958). Classroom instruction does not prepare students for what they will discover by using equipment in a tactile, hands-on experience. Too little exposure to the technology leaves students isolated from the production process and makes the learning experience less meaningful (Dornan, 2000). The primary facilitator of learning in the television production class is the television studio.

These claims highlight the importance of experiential learning as a pedagogical component; they require the development of a coaching method that successfully integrates classroom instruction and studio experience. The television studio production is, after all, the primary initiator of a valuable learning experience and the students' performance in production duties initiates a discovery that greatly benefits students.

Correspondingly, the television studio production process induces a shift in how students view the learning process itself. This mental shift in student perceptions about learning involves a discovery of great significance to the teaching activity and is instrumental in students' successful transition to the professional world. What occurs in the minds of students when they come to realize that the television production, as a learning activity, is very different from what occurs in traditional classroom study.

What facilitates learning in this production setting? While many answers are possible, the one provided here deemphasizes traditional classroom elements of reason, memory, and logic. That is, the purpose of the television course is to put less emphasis on the conceptual or theoretical areas and more on the performance experience (Kucera, 1962). This emphasis on the experience of learning places one directly within the studio setting, the primary locus of learning for the basic television production course.

Learning and the Expectation of Performance

Television production is typically proficiency driven and yet students routinely expect learning activity and their knowledge of the process to develop through course lecture and the textbook. Learning to think of television class in terms of an "expectation of performance" is quite foreign to most students. If we consider the reason this performance component is foreign, we find that students tend to view the learning process in set ways. In short, they tend to think of college learning in terms of their experience in traditional classes. They associate college education with abstract concepts and rarely view their studies as part of a performance (Summers, 1957). As a result students do not often make the important realization that links textbook learning and the actual production process (Nelson, 1995).

Television instructors encounter a resistance to the performance element, in part, because of common preconceived notions. Eventually, they learn that the mind-set they associate with the classroom can run counter to what actually occurs in the television studio. Students discover the difference somewhere in the process of personal involvement—in their performance of production duties of various kinds. How and when these discoveries are made rest largely on the shoulders of the teacher.

When a teacher examines the problems associated with relating classroom (textbook) learning to the student's experience in the television studio production, one element becomes quite evident. This element involves the discovery students experience at some point when they realize that Television 101 is somehow different from other college classes. It is not unusual to have students talk about a discovery or realization to this effect with comments like "I didn't realize there was so much to it" or, "It's so different from my other classes."

Such comments point out that students experience a profound shift in how they view television production mainly because of the more embodied encounter with educational materials. The studio television class stands out because it requires students to use portions of their brains and bodies not typically employed in other college courses. The television studio introduces students to a different kind of learning experience, one where their contribution to a team performance creates a unique set of expectations. They must make decisions under pressure of the moment and deal with feelings as they arise in the context of this pressure.

As mentioned, students often have difficulty relating the textual material delivered in the classroom to actual production processes because the television studio environment seems disconnected from the classroom setting. Students understand, in general, how television operates but they rarely link the process to what they experience in the classroom (elements associated with memorization, thought processes and abstract analysis). Because there is a tendency to separate the world of television from the world of higher education, students do not consider watching television as an educational activity. Strikingly, most students do not even begin to think in ways native to the actual studio production environment until they are required to perform a production function of some kind. In case after case students comment that the course reading material doesn't make sense to them until they experience the actual performance situation of studio television.

Once they discover this "expectation of performance," students then begin to recognize the relationship between textual learning information and the actual process of producing a television program. The gap between the classroom learning experience and the actual production event is bridged at the time of personal discovery through their involvement. Contrary to a text based view of learning, the primary learning activity is initiated not in the classroom; rather it is initiated at the point of the student's performance, when they shift their thinking from viewing television production as part of the realm of traditional learning processes to those processes, that involve the expectation of performance. Students learn when they are under the perceived expectation to perform, that initiates a transition in their thinking about learning itself, broadening their awareness.

Performance as the Central Element in Learning

The word 'performance' refers to an integrated involvement of the whole person through his/her encounter with technology in a television news production. In order for a student to understand what is involved with television production he must go through a simple shift in thinking about learning itself—that it is a performance. It is not altogether clear where exactly this shift in thinking occurs, but it is definitely located within a context of the studio environment—where students begin to realize they are engaging learning in a different way.

Performance, as it is used here, may be described as an existential referent for a process of discovery—knowledge produced through action taken rather than through abstract thought—that initiates a student to the professional world of studio television (Dornan 3). Classroom materials and instructional activities are, after all, primers for performance. In basic studio television each element of instruction refers to a specific aspect of the production performance process. Lecture activity and reading play a small role in making students aware of this expectation of performance. But the television studio laboratory facilitates such awareness very quickly, bringing about a discovery of what is involved in doing studio television.

In order for the basic television production class to be effective the student's realization must come early in the teaching activity. It makes a great deal of sense to immerse students in studio production from the very outset of the school term. Such immersion allows them to shape their understanding of course requirements according to an expectation to perform a production function. They then adjust their thinking quickly when they realize the expectations of performance is central to having a positive learning experience.

Because a basic studio production class is aimed at a performance and proficiency in the use of technology and production processes, it is useful to briefly examine the nature of this shift in student thinking about teaching method. Television production is a tactile process whereby the student is bodily engaged in a complex, collaborative activity involving technology and people. The learning goal becomes clear to students in the context of handling equipment: camera operation, switching from shot to shot and so on, their visceral responses provide a linkage between thought and action.

In addition, a student's initial reaction to the performance requirement is often emotional rather than intellectual. Students typically relate their learning experience in terms of their feelings and view television production based on their involvement and participation in the production.

This initiation to television production is often confusing, chaotic and unclear to

students who do not yet understand the relationship between the parts and the whole. Gradually students orient themselves to their roles in the class and gain clarity concerning expectations about what they will learn in the initial chaos of performance. The confusion of this first encounter sets in motion the learning process that allows them to succeed in understanding studio television production.

Initiating Performance

The initial orientation to the performance event referred to is an actual live-on-tape shoot, or a remote sports shoot where the production team is in the process of producing a program. The live-on-tape production replicates, to a greater or lesser degree, the context and expectations of professional studio television work. It provides the physical conditions students will be expected to perform under in a professional context. The live-on-tape shoot as an initiation is of great value because with it comes an expectation of performance. Students correlate their level of success in the studio with conditions and expectations of professional television.

Certain elements of this studio performance setting contribute to effective student learning. The first and most important element is atmosphere of intensity produced in the studio. Pressure is a felt component of this environment and students begin to experience a kind of pressure that is not a familiar part of their other courses. This pressure of performance facilitates a shift in thinking whereby students begin to realize there is a relationship between textbook information and their success in the studio. In addition, this production pressure brings about an awareness that something is at stake in the quality of their performance. Their success in production processes makes a difference to the outcome of the program. The student's involvement in a collaborative project insures its success.

The somewhat frenetic environment of the live-on-tape shoot replicates the intensity common to real world production conditions. An intangible form of pressure produced through time constraints and deadlines influences the way students view learning.

Another critical development in the student's initial discovery process is the realization that learning about television production is a collaborative activity where students are interdependent (Ozman and Craven, 1981). This collaborative environment can present many problems for students, who typically view their performance as having little or no affect on the production itself. The interdependent characteristic of studio production prompts students to take more responsibility for their assignment and performance is influenced, most of the time for a positive outcome. They tend to want to excel based on their desire to be part of the team and its success. Peer pressure accounts for an important motivating force whereby students try harder to do well because other students are scrutinizing their work. Likewise, the desire for approval, acceptance and inclusion often replace concerns over grades as primary motivating factors in their work.

Intensity of the moment, deadlines and collaboration all reinforce the need for an early student encounter with the television studio and a specific production venue that requires their participation and performance. It is appropriate for teachers to orient their methodology to emphasize these elements, in order to initiate the student's 'aha!' In the context of the performance requirement students recognize that learning involves a personal discovery that engages their whole being. Students realize what they are to learn in terms of their performance. In addition, a "performance expectation" approach allows students to distinguish Television 101 from their other courses. It is the change in the perception about what learning is that facilitates a positive transition to effective television production. The early immersion of students in the studio environment facilitates greater absorption of information and knowledge and initiates meaningful learning.

These ideas are given with recognition that no amount of studio involvement will guarantee students will become skilled in television production. Students invariable make decisions about their interest level, motivation and personal commitment that will determine the quality of their personal learning experience. Nevertheless, the teacher's early emphasis on performance can provide an important clarification for students concerning what is expected of them both in class and out in the world of professional television. It orients the television student a learning process that requires their performance under the pressures and limitations of real world situations.

Laying the Groundwork—Where to Start

After making an argument for an early immersion of students in the production event, it may be of some value to lay out a few guidelines for this process, a process whereby students move deeper into a productive learning experience. The first encounter with the lab activity should be a visit during rehearsal and taping of a television program. In order to initiate the discovery process, I place students from the class in various production positions as shadows that can look over the shoulder of the team member. The novice's initial access to the technology and the performance comes through an ongoing production event. Shadowing provides a valuable initiation to the production environment and all of its complex workings.

During the second session students are placed in a position of responsibility where he imitates the function of the position (in a kind of miming activity). The student is placed in a role whereby he must simulate the actual work of producing television content. This ritual performance is valuable because it replicates the expectation of performance of an actual production event. Even though he does not know what he is doing, the student nevertheless will yield his personal expectations to the process, ultimately producing confusion, frustration and assorted other responses. The critical discovery produced by this disordered encounter is a new awareness of how Television 101 is a dynamic flux requiring performance. From this orientation, students become aware of their lack of skills knowledge when they fail a performance duty and when they see how their failure influences an outcome.

Why subject students to such pressures? In order to understand the reasoning behind this position, one must recognize that learning is directly linked to such activities. The initial exposure provides the best way to place students in a position of the expectation of performance. Invariably students measure their level of knowledge against the needs and demands of the situation. The expectation of performance sets up a learning process whereby students may more effectively integrate classroom information into a productive and meaningful learning experience. From this discovery of the role of performance, students relate more seriously to the textbook and classroom guidelines insuring their success in Television 101.

One other important reason for these two initial encounters in the studio points to the production process itself. When students are placed in the context of expectation of performance they are more prone to view the equipment as an extension of their knowledge. They discover that knowledge and performance are integrally related. Students must achieve this integration of elements in order to become successful.

An introductory class on studio television should include one other element of instruction that is important for success. The element spoken of involves discovery through "mishap." The mishap initiates discoveries about the functions and limitations of equipment and what students must know about technology in order to succeed in a collaborative performance. The studio television production activity is an experimental and exploratory arena where students learn by making mistakes. Student mistakes are, in some way, motivation for their improvement and success in the production class. Teachers are accustomed to witnessing such mistakes, many of which are routinized and predictable. Regardless of the nature of the "screw-up," every mistake can be correlated with an expectation of performance. In other words, the greater the pressure to perform, the greater the potential for mistakes. Students should be allowed to work through their mistakes and achieve a level of competence in using equipment. Any studio situation that allows students to simulate the actual production helps insure their success. Tutorials given on equipment are followed by hands-on fiddling with the gear, and then by simulated production. After completing these phases, students should be able to perform competently.

Building a Supportive Environment

A student's success in a television production class is assured only when all of the production elements are coached effectively. The instructor's guidance is instrumental in facilitating the discovery process. Likewise, discovery takes place in an organizational setting that affects student involvement and learning. There is a certain benefit to developing a positive organizational culture in the television production class. There are also great advantages to developing and enhancing a sense of team spirit and program ownership among students. Team spirit enhances the learning experience and engenders a sense of exploration among participants—the willingness to take risks.

Encouragement and support are essential parts of any effective discovery in student television operation. Students are more willing to take risks that lead to improvements when they know their efforts are supported. While television productions do vary significantly from school to school, there are several steps that help strengthen the advisor's position and reduce problems. Cocurricular television programs have an identity developed out of expectations, grade requirements, and interpersonal relationships.

As a group it is imperative the that production team has unified goals. Teachers and advisors can help students in their efforts to learn and excel by setting achievable goals. One effective way to insure success by individual students is to closely monitor their progress and development. Interact regularly with students; take an interest in their growth. This is much easier with a small group and can become difficult when multiple sections are offered. Nevertheless, personal interaction and mentoring can make a great difference to students. In my experience quality leadership heightens student alertness, helps them overcome hurtles quickly and prompts them to do their best work.

Success in the Classroom Begins in the Studio

These suggestions concerning the relationship between the classroom and cocurricular production point us toward adoption of teaching methodology where the basic studio television class oriented around the studio performance; course material connects with the expectation of hands-on competence in a production. Students commonly experience a shift in their thinking about television production, what it involves and how it differs from other classes when they discover there is an expectation of performance. A kind of epiphany, this discovery initiates effective learning that is similar to, yet in ways different from, other college classes. I have argued here that a shift in thinking about performance produced in cocurricular is critical to success in the basic studio television class. Certain cocurricular activities may stimulate this discovery and should be employed early in the term in order to insure greater success in the classroom. Early immersion through shadowing and miming, simulate an ontological orientation to education, resulting in the expectation to perform. Effective teaching and advising facilitate the student's early introduction to this aspect of learning, insuring greater success in the classroom.

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COMMENT

THE SIMONE CONTROVERSY: THE END OF REALITY?

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It can be argued that Watergate and “Monica-gate” marked moments when the power of the press surpassed that of the Presidency. Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton were exposed in many senses, and in ways that the hidden affairs of their predecessors such as FDR and JFK were not.

Will the year of Simone, Andrew Niccol’s latest feature film, come to be seen as another pivotal moment—the moment that the power of illusion surpassed that of reality? Will the year of the first “real-or-fake?” feature movie actor be seen as a symbolic bookmark locating the era when we could no longer tell, nor care if we could tell, what is authentic?

Critics do not agree about Simone. Reviews range from raves to pans, with many critics in the “mixed” camp. However, intelligent commentary seems in agreement that it is the premise of Simone , that delivers its potential promise. That premise is that an entirely fake actress, digitally created by a desperate movie director (Al Pacino), could woo an unknowing audience and become a phenomenal star.

But there’s more. Just as Simone, the centerpiece “character” of Niccol’s film, turns out to be a fake, the actual actress who portrays Simone, turns out to be real.

Although Niccol, Pacino, and even the film’s credits claim that “Simone”, the digital character, plays “herself”, members of the press have revealed that Simone is in fact enacted by Canadian supermodel Rachel Roberts.

In the feature film Al Pacino plays Victor Taransky, a creative but fading director who has inherited a sophisticated software program that can synthesize the features of taped personalities from Lauren Bacall to John Kennedy. By mixing gestures, voices, and physical features, Taransky can create and totally manipulate digital characters, from the nuance of their accents to the size of their tears. After his lead actress, Nicola Anders (Winona Ryder) has walked out on him, Taransky creates a CGI surrogate leading lady named Simone. The word Simone is also a double entendre, that plays upon the software acronym “S1m One” or “Simulation One”, but only Taransky knows this secret.

Simone, and all that she symbolizes, provides a world of advantages over her human counterparts. Relative to other leading actors, “she” is inexpensive. She never argues, tires, or negotiates contracts. She can be programmed to say or do anything; and she is eternally young, malleable, and available. Moreover, audiences fawn over Simone and she soon sells out holographic rock concerts, adorns prominent magazine covers, and, according to her official website, writes books.

What seems significant when watching the film is that we the audience become conscious of questioning whether we actually can know truth via the media. After all, what if "Rachel Roberts" is also a hoax, or is only the stage name of quite another person? What if the "Simone" we are seeing is a composite—sometimes Rachel, sometimes her body double, and at other times Niccol's digitized images? Which of these is "Simone"? Moreover, even when a "real" actress is billed as authentic, at what point does a person who may have dyed hair, silicone implants, a tummy tuck, liposuction, surgically removed ribs, a face lift, e-tanned skin, elaborate cosmetic enhancement, digital beauty marks, and acting lessons qualify as "real?" Is anyone authentic? In Simone, "Simone" says " I'm no more artificial than anyone else in Hollywood."

One question that arises between the frames is "Where will we draw the line?" As a society we have accepted astroturf as a substitute for grass despite the injuries caused to athletes. We think nothing of eating and drinking artificial sweeteners, colors, and chemicals. We hardly expect the politicians we meet via the media to act the same when they are off camera. Our standards about authenticity have eroded so much that Niccol can tease us for two hours about it—and the satire stings.

To be sure in the age of cloning, virtual reality, public relations and artificial intelligence, a wave of books and films —*Algeny, AI, Being There, Bicentennial Man, Primary Colors, Virtuosity, Wag The Dog* et al—have already raised questions about what is authentic. Long before this century philosophers have struggled with questions as deep as whether truth exists and, if so, is it knowable? Subjective? Sensory? Universal? But as evocative satire, Simone adds a new, if digitally enhanced, wrinkle. Niccol suggests that we are apathetically conditioned to accept illusion as both socially preferable to and indistinguishable from reality. In an age when the new genre of reality TV means just another scripted, edited, dramatized artifice, how do we know what is programmed, manipulated, or synthesized any more … and does it matter?

Indeed our greatest addiction as a society may not be to drugs, alcohol, or nicotine. Rather it is more likely an addiction to the dreams that money can buy; to the eight hours per day of television per U.S. household; and to the mega-fantasy world of computer games, DVD, VCR, satellite, 100+ channels, wide screen, and websites.

The websites associated with Simone are a case in point. Anyone happening across the realistic websites about Victor Taransky, Amalgamated Films, and Simone's "movies" will not know that these characters and entities are fabrications. So, in an age when fake is fashionable, how do audiences know which websites, characters, actors, politicians, images and sounds are genuine? Indeed one implication of the film-within-a-film is that we no longer are as concerned with "is this true?" as "does this satisfy?" And if we are satisfied, we will permit all manner of pseudo-reality and surrogacy.

The issues raised by Simone point toward a mountain of ethical questions. Everyone from amateur actors to mainstream unions is concerned about replacing flesh and blood actors with digital facsimiles not only in entertainment, but also in news, advertising, and beyond. The issues of fraud and deception also loom large. We do expect magicians, cosmeticians, make-up artists, and film directors to deceive us in some ways. But what is the ethical if not the legal limit? In *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?, Space Jam, Babe,* and *Cool World* it is obvious which characters are human and which are manufactured. But such is not the case with Simone, nor was it in such

controversial media hoaxes as Orson Welles' famed radio broadcast of *The War of the Worlds.*

In theater, we can become engaged when Pirandello has scripted one of his characters to be an "audience member" or when Genet forces us to think about theatrical illusion. However, according to Niccol, thinking is exactly what we mass audiences do not want. Even empty pseudo-entertainment has replaced classical entertainment such that we pay to see a string of product placements and faux actors (Britney Spears, Howard Stern, Mariah Carey, Jesse Ventura) in recycled plots with digital pets and backgrounds while we drink "the real thing" in cloned multiplex cubicles.

In his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death* Neil Postman points to an important distinction separating the science fiction classics *1984* by George Orwell and *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley. In *1984* non-conforming individuals are controlled by being punished in "room 101" where their greatest fear, such as of spiders, heights, or rats, awaits them. However, in Huxley's *Brave New World* of test tube castes, individuals are controlled through pleasure, not pain. Huxley's characters use an all purpose drug soma and enjoy the feelies, a multi-sensory arousing version of the talkies, to avoid and numb their pain or discomfort, whether emotional or physical.

The extreme use of modern "somas" to suppress and conceal our personal problems can create a dangerous state. The red lights beneath our auto speedometers, that alert us to nearly empty gas tanks and to pending engine failure, are important signs. Human physical pain and emotional disturbances can also be key signals that tell us to slow down, to see a doctor or counselor, to work out a relationship, to sleep, to change our diet, to take personal inventory, or to do whatever is necessary to restore health.

In the Simone society, Niccol sardonically implies that we prefer to worship the soma of Simone than to pay attention to the red lights beneath our odometers. We prefer a comfortable synthesized reality to the complexity of what is back of an endangered global economy, politic, and environment. The cultic response of Simone's audience (if not Eminem's, Pam Anderson's, or Jerry Springer's) asks if we have not abandoned thinking for somnambulism.

Like much satire, Simone pushes toward extremes to force feed its message. But to the author's credit such broadsides stimulate rather than homogenize audience thinking. Questions that might occur to some audience members are "Are we asleep at the switch and, if so, how does one call the front desk to request a national wake-up call?" and "To what extent are we concerned about the state of the planet and of ourselves … or would we rather consume another Simona (Simone + soma)?"

It seems high time to give serious thought to whether we are devolving into the children's game of "Simone says." "Simone says 'BUY _____'", and millions rush to purchase a new product with no awareness about whether there has been testing of the product's possible long-term effects. "Simone says 'SEE _____' and millions buy tickets to screen _____ because it features the latest rap star or Playmate…and yet _____ has nothing to say and it quickly resembles last year's model.

The great twentieth century philosopher Martin Heidegger described thinking as "that which is slipping away." If original thinking is indeed receding into a mirage of illusion, it is valuable to have an illusion like Simone to provoke fresh thought.

Often one does not feel a transitional "moment" until, like the paper cut, it has

already broken flesh. If Simone is another of the "Burma Shave" signs along life's highway that lets us know that now is such a prime moment of transition, should we not pay attention? Further forward motion into the mass obsession with, if not addiction to, bottomless mindless illusion has untold consequences for thinking, for our future, and for the real world.

Tudryn Named DESA Winner

Joyce Tudryn has been selected as BEA's 2003 Distinguished Educator Service Award winner.

Biography

JOYCE M. TUDRYN
President, IRTS Foundation

Joyce M. Tudryn will celebrate her 20th Anniversary at the International Radio and Television Society Foundation in 2003. The IRTS Foundation is a non-profit media educational organization, designed to assure that the skills and ideals of today's professionals are passed to future generations of media leaders. The organization's goal is to bring together the wisdom of yesterday's founders, the power of today's leaders, and the promise of tomorrow's young professionals.

Upon becoming President of IRTS in 1994, Tudryn repositioned the Foundation with the unanimous approval of the organization's membership and Board of Directors. As a result, program offerings and funding doubled in the first year of coordination.

IRTS currently stages approximately 45 programs a year to keep college students, faculty, and industry professionals updated on the increasingly complex world of media and entertainment. Tudryn has directed events ranging from star-studded industry galas to conferences, featuring corporate leaders, government officials, electronic journalists and program producers.

Throughout her tenure at IRTS, Tudryn has produced the annual five-day IRTS Faculty/Industry Seminar, where professors from across the nation come to New York for five days of intense meetings with key industry executives. The event concludes with a case study competition that is later released online for use by universities across the nation. Accommodations and conference expenses are underwritten by the IRTS fundraising efforts.

Proceedings from past Faculty/Industry Seminars read like chapters in an electronic media history book. For example: John Malone unveiled the concept of the 500-channel universe, Sumner Redstone spoke in the midst of Viacom's acquisition of Paramount, Senator Joseph Lieberman gave a speech the day the Telecommunications Act was signed into law, and Ted Turner—famed "Mouth of the South"—sat speechless as faculty analyzed his business style. Mayor Rudolph Guiliani recognized the contributions of the event in 1997 by personally presenting an "International Radio and Television Society Day" proclamation from the city of New York.

The IRTS Summer Fellowship Program earned its stripes as one of the nation's 10 best internships after Tudryn overhauled the program in the late eighties, to include an all-expense paid opportunity featuring a one-week orientation to the business, followed by eight weeks of experience in a customized position that complemented the student's career goals. Tudryn's successful development efforts increased the number of Fellows from 10 to 35. The program now boasts more than 550 graduates.

Devoted to increasing diversity within our business, Tudryn helped establish and

produce an annual two-day IRTS Minority Career Workshop that is about to enter its 20th year. The program includes a one-day conference, followed by an opportunity to interview with major companies from throughout the business. Recruiters have labeled this workshop one of the best places to find outstanding job applicants. On average, twenty percent of those who attend the workshop are hired as a direct result of the event.

Whenever possible, Tudryn has extended a hand to other organizations that reflect the ideals of the IRTS mission. She forged a two-year partnership in 1999 with the National Broadcasting Society-Alpha Epsilon Rho, donating full-time administration by IRTS personnel, a fully-programmed membership database, and underwriting for convention travel grants to this 90-chapter student organization. Ms. Tudryn co-produced the 1999 and 2000 IRTS-NBS national conventions, and directed IRTS Day at the NBS Convention in 2001. She was responsible for the National Production Awards Competition in 2000. She was named NBS National Advisory Board Member of the Year in 2001.

Serving as Vice Chairman of Education for the iEmmy Festival produced by the International Council of NATAS, Tudryn was responsible for the administration of a grant that provided underwriting for professors from across the nation to attend this event for the first time.

Tudryn began her career as a member of the editorial staff in the Radio Department at the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington, DC. She has been a trade magazine columnist, as well as a video producer for the public affairs department in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Today, Tudryn frequently gives lectures to students and has authored and/or edited articles in industry-related periodicals and books. The Broadcast Education Association has named Tudryn the 2003 recipient of its Distinguished Education Service Award. Tudryn is an Advisory Board Member of her alma mater—the Newhouse School at Syracuse University, where she was inducted into the Professional "Wall of Fame" Gallery in 2000. She is a member of New York's Media Roundtable and a former officer of the Corporation for Educational Radio and Television. She is listed in "Who's Who in America" and "Who's Who in the World".

As First Vice President of the PTA at her daughter's elementary school this past year, Tudryn staged a fall fair for fundraising, established and edited a school newspaper, and garnered regular publicity of activities in the local press. She resides in Union, New Jersey, where she was honored as a member of the town's Family of the Year in a proclamation presented by the mayor.

An accomplished photographer, Tudryn had a solo exhibition at the New York City gallery "Synchronicity Space" and has been a featured artist at events ranging from the Central New Jersey Railroad Festival to the Potlatch Annual Design Show. Once a month she joins Dominic "Uncle Junior" Chianese of HBO's Sopranos to entertain at a local nursing home; and she occasionally gets into full clown makeup (complete with magic tricks) to perform at charitable events.

Farber Delivers Keynote

Erica Farber is the Keynote Speaker of the BEA 2003, 48th Annual Convention & Exhibition.

Biography

ERICA FARBER
Publisher and CEO, Radio & Records

Erica Farber, Publisher and Chief Executive Officer of Radio & Records, climbed the ropes throughout her career in the radio business, becoming one of the industry's most respected and influential businesswomen.

As head of the industry's leading trade publication for business information and marketing innovations, Erica is the driving force behind the delivery of crucial news reflecting the trends and tremendous growth of an industry which is now the darling of Wall Street.

With offices in Los Angeles, Washington D.C., and Nashville, Erica oversees operations for the company's daily and weekly information sources read worldwide by decision-makers at all levels of management in the radio and music industries.

During the early years of her career, she held positions at KRTH-FM, KABC-FM, KABC-TV, and KIIS-AM in Los Angeles. Her advancement grew quickly when in January of 1975, she was appointed General Sales Manager of WROR-FM in Boston and was promoted to General Manager in June of that year. Her success then led to an appointment as Vice President/General Manager of WXLO-FM, New York, in 1976.

In January of 1980, she joined McGavren Guild Radio as Director of Promotional Selling and was soon named Director of Business Development and Promotion. In 1983, she was appointed Vice President/General Manager of the Radio Marketing Division for the parent company, INTEREP, one of the radio industry's leading national rep firms.

Two years later, Erica was named Vice President/General Manager of INTEREP Marketing Systems and in 1986 was named Executive Vice President/Radio Development of INTEREP. She also acted as INTEREP's Industry Association Specialist, ensuring the active involvement of the company at various broadcasting conferences.

In 1992, after 12 years, she left the INTEREP companies to join Radio & Records as Executive Vice President of Sales & Marketing. In April of 1994, she was promoted to Chief Operating Officer, and then assumed full publishing responsibilities in January, 1995, and formally changed to Publisher and Chief Executive Officer.

Erica has been, and continues to be, a major presenter and speaker at hundreds of broadcast meetings and seminars around the world. Recipient of the Southern California Chapter of AWRT 1996 Genii Award for Radio, and a 1994 AWRT Industry Award.

She is a Past Chairperson (1992-1993) of the Broadcast Promotion and Marketing

Executives, member of the RAB Steering Committee for several managing Sales Conferences, past board member and Past President of the Country Radio Broadcasters, to name a few.

She currently serves on The Radio Hall of Fame Advisory committee and the Southern California Radio Advisory Group of the Museum of Television & Radio.

She is the current Chairperson of the National Board of Governors for the March of Dimes Radio AIR Awards, board member of the Broadcasters' Foundation, member of the newly created Advisory Board for the Conclave Learning Conference and is serving a two-year term as Director-at-Large on the Academy of Country Music's Board of Directors.

In April, 2000 she received an American Broadcast Pioneer Award by the Broadcasters' Foundation. She is consistently voted by the readers of Radio Ink Magazine as one of "The Most Influential Women In Radio", topping the list in 2001. Erica is also on the Board of Directors of Arbitron, Inc.

Travis Linn Dies

Travis Linn, professor and former dean at the Reynolds School of Journalism at University of Nevada, Reno, died January 17 at age 64 after falling ill from a serious infection.

The journalism community locally and throughout the nation expressed shock at the sudden loss of the man who made such an impact on the profession. Hired as the first dean of the School of Journalism in 1984, Linn is remembered by faculty, students and alumni as the heart and soul of the school.

Two memorial funds have been established by the Linn family:

Travis B. Linn Memorial Fund
First United Methodist Church
209 W. 1st Street
Reno, NV

The Travis B. Linn Scholarship Fund in Journalism and New Media
UNR Foundation
Mail Stop 162, UNR
Reno NV 89557-0040
(Make checks payable to UNR Foundation.)

Hirings

Heather Polinski has been hired as a tenure-track faculty member to direct Central Michigan's Broadcast & Cinematic Arts Department's audio unit. In this role, she will be overseeing the audio production course sequence as well as WMHW-FM.

Helena Vanhala has joined University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point as a new member in broadcast education. Helena is a Finnish national and is currently completing her Ph.D. at the University of Oregon under the direction of Janet Wasco. She is also working with Al Stavitski and Daniel Miller, both BEA members. Helena is teaching courses in television news production, broadcast journalism and international communication. She recently joined BEA and will be making her first BEA convention appearance this spring.

NEWS & NOTES

The following is the 2002-2003 AWRT Board of Directors Roster with full contact information. These were provided by Amy Lotz and should be used as possible contacts for classroom lecturs/workshops and/or teleconferences on current trends/issues in media.

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NEWS & NOTES

Ball State Offers New Master's Program in Digital Storytelling

The College of Communication, Information and Media at Ball State University will begin offering a new M.A. in Digital Storytelling. The first cohort of 12-20 students will begin the program this fall. Designed to meet the needs of content creators, the two-year program includes coursework in communication studies, journalism and telecommunications, as well as the college's new "iCommunications" program. Unique to the degree requirements is a 4-week immersion requirement, where students must visit a culture other than their own to learn about storytelling from a different cultural perspective. More information is available from Dom Caristi, Program Director, at dgcaristi@bsu.edu

Directory Update

Bill Rugg has left Central Michigan. He can be found at:
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