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- 499 *Major Principles of Media Law*, by WAYNE OVERBECK and RICK D. PULLEN

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- 503 *The Dictionary of Publishing*, by DAVID BROWNSTONE and IRENE FRANCK
 503 *World Press Encyclopedia*, by GEORGE KURIAN
 503 *A Graphical Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals, 1702-1714*, by W. R. and V. B. McLEOD

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ESSAY: AGENDA-SETTING— MEDIA AS POLITICAL KINGMAKERS?

WEAVER, DAVID H., DORIS A. GRABER, MAXWELL E. MCCOMBS and CHAIM H. EYAL. *Media Agenda-Setting in a Presidential Election: Issues, Images, and Interest*. New York: Praeger, 1981. 227 pp. \$24.95.

► As one of the latest works in a long research tradition, this book raises the question of media agenda-setting effects on individuals and addresses the discretionary role of the media as well. Based on an 11-month panel study of voters and media content during the 1976 election, the findings lead the authors to a strong conclusion about media power in society:

It is . . . no exaggeration to say that the media can make or break presidential hopefuls. Not only may they determine who will be nominated, but their ability to project advantageous or disadvantageous images for candidates and link them to suitable issues also may decide who will be elected. . . . campaigns, which are crucial political

scenes in the electoral drama, are continually altered and adjusted to meet the media's needs and preferences.

In stating this conclusion, the authors border closely on assigning the media an autonomous function in society. Moreover, the theme of editors making highly discretionary choices about which issues to play up and which to play down is repeated throughout the book. This interpretation may raise questions among those who, from a structuralist perspective, view media as integral components of society. Such a perspective, holding that media are dependent upon power centers of a system, has been supported by several studies, including research by Donohue, Olien and Tichenor; by Molotch and Lester; by Sigal; and by Paletz, Reichert and McIntyre. Therefore, it is important to review closely the evidence upon which the interpretation rests, to determine whether it supports the conclusion that "the priorities of the press become the priorities of the public," which the authors regard as the "most radical form" of the agenda-setting hypothesis.

The research team observed voter agendas throughout the 1976 election period, starting in December 1975 and culminating in the

November 1976 election of Jimmy Carter over Gerald Ford. This panel study included nine waves of interviews with about 50 purposively selected voters in each of three communities: Lebanon, N.H., Indianapolis, Ind., and Evanston, Ill. Media agendas are based on content analyses of four newspapers and early evening newscasts of three television networks serving the respective areas.

A central part of the analysis is a series of cross-lagged rank-order correlations between media and voter agendas, based on 11 categories of election issues employed in analyzing both media emphasis and voter saliences, or agendas.

Unlike findings from a number of previous studies, including those by many of the same authors, neither the synchronous nor the "lagged" agenda-setting correlations are, on the whole, particularly strong, either for *intrapersonal* or *interpersonal* agendas. The rank correlations between TV and voter agendas tend to be higher than those between newspaper and voter agendas.

It is the overall pattern of correlations that the authors interpret as supporting the idea of a central and powerful press. The newspaper agenda was highly stable over time, more so than either the TV or the voter agendas. Television agendas became increasingly similar to newspaper agendas and, at least through summer, voter agendas tended to become increasingly similar both to television and newspaper emphases in content. The authors infer from this pattern that the newspaper agenda is copied to some extent by television, which in turn has more effect on voter agendas.

The authors also measured media and voter images of Carter and Ford for the Illinois sample alone, and found much stronger agenda-setting correlations between the *Chicago Tribune* and voter images than was found for the issue agendas.

Concluding from these analyses that newspapers have a fundamental role in agenda-setting for television and ultimately for voters, the authors then raise the question of whether the press acts on its own or adopts agendas from its sources or the political system generally. The conclusion that media are "major issue agenda-setters early in the campaign" comes from several types of evidence. One is from Patterson's 1976 election study in which the issues that candidates stressed were found to be not the same as those displayed most prominently in the news. Another—and the conclusion about media discretion seems to rest heavily on this point—is the finding of sharp disparities between the political party platforms and media emphasis. While both party

platforms emphasized economic issues and government spending, these issues were generally not ranked among the top four by the media.

The authors contend that the media were following more of an "incentive model" than a "campaign politics" model, with the former referring to editors having a high degree of discretion. The authors suggest that the "beat" system of reporting contributes to newspaper constancy in coverage of various issues, and they imply that this constancy is a fixed agenda which may influence television as well as politicians.

Intriguing as the pattern of findings is, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that this book leaves open the question of media discretion in choice of agendas to report. The comparison of media content with platform statements does not deal directly with the question of media reaction to power and power confrontations during the campaign. A political campaign is a process of interaction among organized political groups competing for power, and the media become part of that particular process. The platform is also a component of that process, but a platform does not necessarily reflect points of later emphasis by candidates nor points of challenge between political forces; the platform may well reflect relatively non-controversial middle ground on which disparate factions of a party can agree.

Political debates, on the other hand, have the potential for direct interchanges between contesting groups and candidates, and therefore may provide a better test of whether political organization affects media agendas. The authors present the rankings of emphasis on issues in the Carter-Ford debates and Dole-Mondale debates, as well as content rankings for the same period of time for both media. What they do not state directly is that the debate issue rankings appear to correspond to the newspaper agendas for the Sept. 15-Oct. 25 period. Also, the debate-newspaper agenda similarity appears to increase for the Oct. 26-Nov. 2 period, suggesting mild evidence that the newspaper agendas came into a closer fit with the debate agenda after the debates were over. Thus, the conclusion about the candidates meeting the preferences of the media is open to question.

The authors do point out that among specific issues, foreign affairs and defense, government credibility and social problems were all emphasized by both media and the campaign, while economic issues got more emphasis in the debates than in the media. However, the overall similarity between debate and media agendas seems understated in the book.

Researchers as well as participants in political

processes will find the book provocative; yet the interpretation of the discretionary decision-making power of the press, based on the evidence presented, remains open to continued scholarly debate.

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ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

FLETCHER, ALAN D., and DONALD W. JUGENHEIMER. *Problems and Practices in Advertising Research: Readings and Workbook*. Columbus: Grid, 1982. 210 pp. \$12.95 paper.

SCHULTZ, DON E., *Essentials of Advertising Strategy*. Chicago, Crain, 1981. 131 pp. \$9.95 paper.

► Short, lucid, accurate and comprehensive: these words describe Don Schultz' strategy text. The author tells why and how the magical mix of media and creativity fit into advertising. Throughout this easy-to-read book, Schultz stresses a common-sense approach, advising us to look at all advertising from the consumer's viewpoint.

The often difficult-to-understand concepts of "strategy" and "execution" are described, then incorporated into the text. Schultz uses numerous simple and current examples that allow the reader to relate concepts clearly to real-world situations involving the client, the agency or the consultant.

The reader's attention is focused on understanding the consumer and his buying patterns in order to reach him with a product. Unlike most texts, this one uses package-good advertisers, industrial advertisers and service advertisers to illuminate key points.

In Fletcher's and Jugenheimer's interesting readings book, a student will be exposed to humor, vigor, humility and some good grass-roots approaches to perplexing advertising and public relations research problems. Packed with detail are numerous cases of what fits into the motivational researchers' bag of tricks.

With this entertaining anthology and workbook, a student will understand how good research will help a client and agency, and how poorly organized and executed research could lose an account or cause a client's business failure. Key lessons that the industry relearns daily are emphasized. Many articles illustrate how research methods can be applied, while

complementary exercises enable the student to practice methods and techniques.

As the text progresses, the articles and exercises gradually become more complex. The exercises divide the research task into more easily understood parts that eventually expose students to the entire process. The organization and format of the text follow the structure of the accompanying textbook (Fletcher's and Bowers' *Fundamentals of Advertising Research*).

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LECKENBY, JOHN D., and NUGENT WEDDING, *Advertising Management: Criteria, Analysis and Decision Making*. Columbus, Ohio: Grid, 1982. 657 pp. \$20.

► For years, Crane Publications, based in Homewood, Ill., held a stranglehold on quality advertising textbooks. Recently, however, Grid Publishing in Columbus, Ohio, has been making inroads. Leckenby's and Wedding's effort may be Grid's best and, further, may be one of the best in the field of advertising management. Both authors are professors at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Wedding is emeritus).

Designed for graduate students and senior undergraduates, this book focuses upon both inductive and deductive teaching approaches to, as the authors admit, maximize the advantages of each method and minimize the disadvantages. Fortunately for teachers and students, the marriage of methods has produced a sound contribution to the field. Besides the usual chapters on advertising strategies and campaign objectives, the book delves deeply into two underexplored areas: promotion and the regulatory arena.

The Harvard Business School case-method approach via various examples further strengthens this work. Examples are offered in a wide array of areas from media to budgeting to creative strategies.

This book should attract a strong crossover market. That is, both business and journalism programs would be wise to adopt this text. The only drawback, marginal graphics, is typical of all Grid efforts. But Leckenby's and Wedding's work clearly should not be spurned for packaging when the content is so superb.

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