CHAPTER II

Situating Television in Contemporary Social Science Discourse
Communication and Media

Mass communication is the process whereby media organizations produce the transmit messages to large publics and the process by which those messages are sought, used, and consumed by audiences. Central to any study of mass communication are the media. Media, of course, imply mediation. Media go between the audience and something else. Denis McQuail suggests several views of mediation in mass communication: Media are windows that enable us to see beyond our immediate surroundings, interpreters that help us make sense of experience, platforms or carriers that convey information, interactive communication that includes audience feedback, signposts that provide us with instructions and directions, filters that screen out parts of experience and focus on other, mirrors that reflect ourselves back to us, and barriers that block the truth.

Media Content and Structure

At the heart of mass communication are the media. Of course, media cannot be separated from the larger process of mass communication, nor can one examine media apart from their links with institutions and audiences. In this section we deal with two substantially different theories of media content and structure. Although these theories emphasize the makeup of media messages, they do not ignore media relationship. In fact, both theories show how media messages are understood by their relationship to other facets of society.

Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan

Marshall McLuhan is one of the most famous names in media studies. McLuhan’s early ideas on the media of communication stem from his mentor Harold Adams
Innis. Both Innis and McLuhan treat communication media as the essence of civilization, and both see the course of history as manifestation of the predominant media of the age.

Innis (1951) sees communication media as extensions of the human mind. He teaches that the primary interest of any historical period is a bias growing out of the predominant media in use. Heavy media such as parchment, clay, or stone are time-binding, providing a bias toward tradition. Time-binding media facilitate communication from one generation to another. Space-binding media such as paper and papyrus, on the other hand, tend to foster empire building, large bureaucracy, and military interests. Space-binding media facilitate communication from one location to another. Speech as a medium encourages temporal thinking, which values knowledge and tradition and supports community involvement and interpersonal relationships.

Written media in opposition to oral produce different kinds of culture. The space-binding effect of writing produces interests in political authority and the growth of empires in a spatial sense. Innis teaches that the essence of Western culture has been shaped by a strong print or spatial bias.

One can easily see the connection between McLuhan's ideas and those of his predecessor, but McLuhan clearly has gone beyond the ideas of Innis in discussing the structure of media. McLuhan's most basic hypothesis is that people adapt to their environment through a certain balance or ratio of the senses, and the primary medium of the age brings out a particular sense ratio. McLuhan (1964) sees every medium as an extension of some human faculty, with the media of communication thus
exaggerating this or that particular sense. In his words, "The wheel... is an extension of the foot. The book is an extension of the eye.... Clothing, an extension of the skin... Electric circuitry, an extension of the central nervous system." Whatever media predominate will influence human beings by affecting the way they perceive the world.

We have entered a new age, though according to Mcluhan, electronic technology has brought back an aural predominance. The Gutenberg technology created an explosion in society, separating and segmenting individual from individual; the electronic age has created an explosion, bringing the world back together in a "global village." As a result "it is forcing us to reconsider and reevaluate practically every thought, every action, every institution formerly taken for granted.'

"The medium is the message". This catch phrase, at once, curious and thought-provoking, refers to the general influence that a medium has apart from its context. What really makes a difference in people's lives is the predominant media, not content of the period: "They are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical, and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered".

McLuhan makes a distinction between the hot and the cool media of communication. McLunan describes media in terms of the degree to which they involve people perceptually. Hot media are those that contain relatively complete sensory data, or high redundancy in the information-theory sense. With hot media the perceiver has less need to become involved by filling in missing data. McLuhan refers to hot media
as low in participation. Hot media, because they give us everything, create a dulling or somnambulism in the population. Cool media, on the other hand, require the individual to participate perceptually by filling in missing data. This participation creates healthy involvement.

It is important to realize that McLuhan's use of participation or involvement does not refer to the degree of interest or time spent attending to a particular medium of communication. Rather, he refers to the completeness (hot) or incompleteness (cool) of the stimulus itself. Film, for example is considered to be a hot medium because the image projected on the screen is complete in every detail. The viewer of a film is not required perceptually to fill in anything. In an information-theory sense, we could say that the film has high redundancy, low information. Television, on the other hand, provides the viewer with only a sketch through the illumination of tiny dots. The viewer must perceptually fill in between these visual dots. In short, the viewer must become involved perceptually with the stimulus. This distinction is crucial, for McLuhan sees it as a fundamental point of impact on society. As he puts it, "so the hotting-up of one sense tends to effect hypnosis, and the cooling of all senses tends to result in hallucination."

Given the definition of cool media, one can see why McLuhan believes that television is changing the fabric of society. McLuhan makes clear that a shift from one kind of medium to another creates tremendous stresses in society.

**Media as Social Institution**

In communication studies, media are most often considered for their information dissemination function, but actual operating organizations within society comprise the
media. They are an important social institution and are part of a complex matrix of societywide relations. McQuail (1987) discusses five major media links. Here the media themselves are shown in the center and include a management function, a professional set of personnel, and the technical element.

**Marxists Theories of media**

Perhaps the most important line of theory to address media as institution includes various Marxist-based critical theories. Marxist-based theories are concerned with the distribution of power in society and the domination of certain interests over others. Clearly, the media are seen as a major player in the ideological struggle. Dominant ideologies are perpetuated by the media. Most Marxist communication theories are concerned with mass media primarily because of their role in disseminating the dominant ideology and their potential for expression of alternative and oppositional ideas. For critical theorists, media are part of a culture industry that literally creates symbols and images that can oppress marginalized groups.

According to McQuail there are five major branches of Marxist media theory. The first is classical Marxism. Here, the media are seen as instruments of the dominant class and as a means which capitalists promote their profit-making interests. They disseminate the ideology of the ruling classes in society and thereby oppress other groups.

The second is political-economic media theory. It is close to classical Marxism in that it blaming the structures of ownership in society for social ills. In this school of thought, media content is a commodity to be sold in the marketplace, and the
information disseminated in controlled by what the market will bear. This system leads to a conservative, non-risk-taking operation, making certain kinds of programming and certain media outlets dominant and other marginalized.

The third line of theory is the Frankfurt School. This school of thought places more emphasis on ideas than on materials goods. It sees the media as a means of constructing culture, which leads to the domination of the ideology of the elite. This outcome is accomplished by media manipulation of images and symbols to benefit the interests of the dominant class.

The fourth school is the hegemonic theory. Hegemony is the domination of a false ideology or way of thinking over the ways of understanding. Ideology is not caused by the economic system alone but is deeply embedded in all activities of society. Thus, ideology is not forced by one group on another but is pervasive and unconscious. The dominant ideology perpetuates the interests of certain classes over others, and the media obviously take a major role in this process.

The final approach to Marxist media studies is the sociocultural approach. Relying in large measure on semiotics, this group of scholars is interested in the cultural meanings of media products. They look at the ways in which media content are interpreted, including both dominant and oppositional interpretations.

**Media and the Audience**

The other important part understanding media is the link between media and audience. Here, the concern is with questions about the nature of the audience and
how the media interact with them. No area in media theory has presented such theoretical issues and debates as studies of the audience. Media theorists are as far from consensus on how to conceptualize the audience as they are on how media influence audiences. Disputes on the nature of the audience seem to involve two related dialectics. The first is a tension between the idea of audience as a mass versus the idea of audience as community. The second is a tension between the idea of audience as passive versus the idea of audience as active.

Mass Society Versus Community

This controversy pits ideas about the audience as an undifferentiated mass against those of the audience as a highly differentiated set of small groups or communities. In the case of the former, audiences are viewed as a large population to be molded by the media. In the case of the latter, audience are viewed as discriminating members of small groups who are influenced most by their peers.

The theory of mass society is a concept growing out of the large, complex, bureaucratic nature of the modern state. The theory envisions a malleable mass of people in which small groupings, community life, and ethnic identity are replaced by societywide depersonalized relations. As William Kornhauser says, "all members of mass society are equally valued as voters, buyers, and spectators. Numerical superiority therefore tends to be the decisive criterion of success". Greatness therefore comes to those who can effectively manipulate the mass.

At the other end of the mass-community dispute is the idea that the audience cannot be characterized as an amorphous mass, that it consists of numerous highly differentiated communities, each with its own values, ideas and interests. Media
content is interpreted within the community according to meanings that are worked out socially within the group, and individuals are influenced more by their peers than by the media. The meanings of media message are worked out interactively within groups of people who use a medium in a similar way.

The community view was given impetus by a now classic voting study in 1940 conducted by Lazarsfeld (1948) and his colleagues in Elmira, New York. The researchers found an unexpected occurrence that implied a possible involvement of interpersonal communication in the total mass-communication process. This effect, which came to be known as the two-step flow hypothesis, was starting, and it had a major impact on our understanding of the role of mass media.

Research more recent than the Lazarsfeld study has shown that the dissemination of ideas is not a simple two-step process, and a multiple step model of diffusion is now more universally accepted.

Active Audience Versus Passive Audience

Another controversy in the study of the audience deals with whether the audience is primarily passive and easily influenced in a direct way by the media or relatively active in structuring its own reality. This tension has to do with the extent to which audience can be influenced by the media, and it is correlated with the mass-community tension. For the most part, mass theories tend to subscribe to a passive conception of audience, although not all passive-audience theories can be called mass-society theories. Similarly, most community theories subscribe to an active
notion of audience, and although most active-audience theories would acknowledge the legitimacy of the community notion.

Frank Biocca (1988) discusses five characteristics of the active audience implied by the theories in this genre. The first is selectivity. Active audience are considered to be selective in the media they choose to use. The second characteristic is utilitarianism. Active audiences are said to use media to meet particular needs and goals. The third characteristic is intentionality, which implies the purposeful use of media content. The fourth characteristic is involvement, or effort. Here, audiences are actively attending, thinking about, and using the media. Finally, active audiences are believed to be impervious to influence. In other words, they are not very easily persuaded by the media alone. These characteristics and antithetical to the passive notion of audience.

Many media scholars believe that the mass-community and active-passive dichotomies are too simple, that they do not capture the complexity of audience. It may be that audience have some elements of mass society and other elements of local communities. Audiences may be active in some ways and passive in other times. Rather than ask whether audience are easily influenced by the media, it might be better to ask when and under what conditions they are influenced and when they are not.

Another way to view the tensions in the definition of audience is a natural contradiction of definition within society itself. In other words, sometimes society acts in ways that define the audience as a mass and sometimes as a community. Some
times society acts in ways that define an audience as active and at other times passive. This view changes the debate from one over what the audience really is to its meaning for people at different times and in different places.

Theories of Cultural Outcomes
A looming question throughout the history of media theory has been the effect of media on society and individuals. In this section we shall examine the theories that are concerned with the general cultural outcome. Though there can not a compartmentalization of 'effect' as what outcome happens in society will and does affect the individual as well.

The functions of mass communication
One of the earliest and best known theorists of mass communication is Harold Lasswell. In his classic article, The structure and function of communication in society, in The communication of ideas (1948), he presents the simple and often-quoted model of communication:

Who
Says what
In which channel
To Whom
With what effect

The model outlines the basic elements of communication that have received the most research attention. Indeed, the last element in the model directs us t the entire outcome research tradition. Lasswell's work is paradoxical because it implies a linear process
of mass communication, yet it also presents a set of functions fulfilled by mass communication, which are not easily classified as causal effects. Lasswell identifies three functions of the media of communication. These are surveillance (knowing what is going on), correlation (having options or solutions for dealing with societal problems), and transmission (socialization and education).

The Diffusion of Innovations

The broadest and most communication-oriented theory is that of Everett Rogers and his colleagues. Rogers (1962) begins his theory by relating it to the process of social change in general. Social change consists of invention, diffusion (or communication), and consequences. Such change can occur internally from within a group or externally through contact with outside change agents. In the latter case, contact may occur spontaneously or accidentally, or it may result from planning on the part of outside agencies. Diffusion of innovations is a time-consuming process. Rogers states, in fact, that one purpose of diffusion research is to discover the means to shorten this lag. Once established, an innovation will have consequences, be they functional or dysfunctional, direct or indirect, manifest or latent. Change agents normally expect their impact to be functional, direct, and manifest, although this outcome does not always occur.

Although mass-communication channels may play, significant roles in diffusion, interpersonal networks are most important. Networks are more than a simple information linkage between opinion leader and followers. How individuals understand ideas and the degree to which ideas are accepted and modified depend in large measure on the interaction along the links in the network. Communication in the
process of diffusion is a convergence of meaning achieved by symbolic interaction. The adoption, rejection, modification, or creation of an innovation is a product of this convergence process. Rogers obviously makes liberal use of symbolic interactionism, system theory, and network theory.

Public Opinion and the Spiral of Silence

Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's theory of the "spiral of silence" shows the effect by demonstrating how the interpersonal-media link operates in the development of public opinion. As a political researcher in Germany, Noelle-Neumann (1983) observed that in elections certain views seem to get more play than others; her idea of the spiral of silence account for this. The spiral of silence occurs when individuals who perceive that their opinion is popular express it, whereas those who do not think their opinion is popular remain quite this process occurs in a spiral, so that one side of an issue ends up with much publicity and the other side with little. In everyday life people express opinions in a variety of ways: They talk about them, they wear buttons, and they put stickers on cab bumpers. According to this theory, people are more apt to do these kinds of things when they perceive that others share their opinion and less apt to do so when they do not.

Of course, other factors enter into the decision to express one's opinion. People and groups vary in their tendency to express ideas, regardless of the prevailing opinion. Young people are more expressive than older people; educated individuals will speak up more than uneducated one; men are generally more disclosive of their opinions than women. However, the spiral of silence is also a factor, and according to this research, a very powerful one.
The spiral of silence seems to be caused by the fear of isolation. As Noelle-Neumann puts it, "To run with the pack is a relatively happy state of affairs; but if you can't, because you won't share publicly in what seems to be a universally acclaimed conviction, you can at least remain silent, as a second choice, so that others can put up with you. The spiral of silence is not just a matter of wanting to be on the winning side but is an attempt to avoid being isolated from one's social group. Threats of criticism from others were found to be powerful forces in silencing individuals.

There are, of course, exceptions to the spiral of silence. There are groups and individuals who do not fear isolation and who will express their opinions no matter what the consequences. This may be a characteristic of innovators, change agents, and the avant-garde. Although public opinion is formed by both personal observation and media, individuals mix the two and confuse what is learned through the media with what is learned through interpersonal channels. This tendency is especially true for television, with which so many people have a personal relationship. Noelle-Neumann addresses the complexity of media effect in the following excerpt:

It sometimes happens that journalists' opinions differ from that of the general public, and media depictions contradict the prevailing expression of individuals. When this occurs, a dual climate of opinion results. Here, two versions of reality operate. Noelle-Neumann likens this event to an unusual weather situation - interesting and seemingly bizarre. The spiral of silence, then, is a phenomenon involving personal and media channels of communication. The media publicize public opinion, making evident which opinions predominate. Individuals express their opinions or not, depending on
the predominant point of view; and the media, in turn, attend to the expressed opinion, and the spiral continues.

Cultivation Analysis
Another theoretical program dealing with the socio-cultural outcomes of mass communication is that of George Gerbner (1990) and his colleagues. This theory deals with an important effect of television, which the theories call cultivation. In a nutshell, television is believed to be a homogenizing agent in culture. Because television is the great common experience of almost everyone, it has the effect of providing a shared way of viewing the world. Television is a centralized system of storytelling. It is part and parcel of our daily lives, its drama, commercial news, and other programs bring a relatively coherent world of common images and messages into every home. Television cultivates from infancy the very predispositions and preferences that used to be acquired from other primary sources. Transcending history barriers of literacy and mobility, television has become the primary common source of socialization and everyday information (mostly in the form of entertainment) of an otherwise heterogeneous population. The repetitive pattern of television's mass-produced messages and images forms the mainstream of common symbolic environment.

The theory predicts a difference in the social reality of heavy television viewers as opposed to light viewers. Heavy viewers will believe in a reality that is consistent with that shown on television, even though it does not necessarily reflect the actual world. Gerbner's research on prime-time television, for example, has shown that there are three men to every woman on television, there are few Hispanics and those shown are typically minor characters, there are almost entirely middle-class characters, and there are three times as many law enforcement officers as blue-collar workers.
One of the most interesting outcomes of television cultivation is the "mean-world syndrome". Although less than 1 percent of the population are victims of violent crimes in any one-year period, "one lesson viewers derive from heavy exposure to the violence-saturated world of television is that in such a mean and dangerous world, most people 'cannot be trusted' and that most people are 'just looking out for themselves". Cultivation analysis has also found, however, that there is a general fallout effect from television to the entire culture. In this way culture is essentially homogenized and maintained by television. Television is not a force for change as much as it is force for stability. Gerbner calls the homogenization effect television *mainstreaming*. Although cultivation is a general outcome of television viewing, it is not a universal phenomenon, despite the mainstreaming effect. In fact, different groups are affected differently by cultivation. Clearly, heavy viewers are more "cultivated" in this sense than are light viewers. The nature of one's personal interaction affects the tendency to accept the television reality. For example, adolescents who interact with their parents about television viewing are less likely to be affected by television images than are adolescents who do not talk with their parents about television. Interestingly, people who watch more cable television tend to manifest more mainstreaming than do people who watch less.

In short, Gerbner summarizes the cultivation theory in the following six propositions:

1. Television is unique medium requiring a special approach to study.
2. Television messages form a coherent system, the mainstream of our culture.
3. Those messages, systems (content) provide clues to cultivation.
4. Cultivation analysis focuses on television's contributions over time to the thinking and actions of large and otherwise heterogeneous social aggregates.

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5. New technologies (such as VCR) extend rather than deflect the reach of television's message.

6. Cultivation analysis focuses on pervasive stabilizing and homogenizing consequence.

The Agenda-Setting Function
The agenda-setting function has been most described by Donald Shaw, Maxwell McCombs (1977), and their colleagues. In their major work on this subject, Shaw and McCombs write about the agenda setting function:

Considerable evidence has accumulated that editors and broadcasters play an important part in shaping our social reality as they go about their day-to-day task of choosing and displaying news... This impact of the mass media - the ability to effect cognitive change among individuals, to structure their thinking - has been labeled the agenda-setting function of mass communication. Here may lie the most important effect of mass communication, its ability to mentally order and organize our world for us. In short, the mass media may not be successful in telling us what to think, but they are stunningly successful in telling us what to think about.

In other words, agenda setting establishes the salient issues or images in the minds of the public. Agenda setting occurs because the press must be selective in reporting the news. The news outlets, we gatekeepers of information, make choices about what to report and how to report it. Therefore, what the public knows about the state of affairs at any given time is largely a product of media gate keeping. Further, we know that how a person votes believes to be important. For this reason some researchers have come to believe that the issues reported during a candidate's term in office may have more effect on the election than the campaign itself.

The agenda-setting function is a three-part linear process. First, the media agenda itself must be agenda comes into being in the first place. Second, the media agenda in
some way affects or interacts with the public agenda, or the public sense of issue
importance. This process raises the question of how much power the media have in
affecting the public agenda affects or interacts in some way with the policy agenda.
The policy agenda is what public and private policymakers think is important. In its
simplest and most direct version, the agenda-setting theory predicts that the media
agenda affects the public agenda and the public agenda, in turn, affects the policy
agenda. The prevailing opinion now among media researchers seems to be that the
media can have a powerful effect on the public agenda, but not always. The power of
media depends on such factors as media credibility on particular issues at particular
times, the extent of conflicting evidence as extent to which individual members of the
public, the extent to which individual share media values at particular times, and the
public's need for guidance. When media credibility is high, conflicting evidence is
low, individuals share media values, and they have a high need for guidance, then the
media are probably powerful in establishing the public agenda.

A natural question is - Who affect the media agenda in the first place? This is
complex and difficult question. It appears that media agendas result from pressures
both within media organizations and from outside sources. In other words, the media
agenda is established by some combination of internal programming, editorial, and
managerial decisions and external influences from non-media sources such as social
influential, government officials, commercial sponsors, and the like.

The power of media in establishing a public agenda depends in part on their relations
with these outside power centers. If the media have close relationships with the elite
class in society, that class will probably affect the media agenda and the public
agenda in turn. Many critical theorists believe that media can be an instrument of the dominant ideology in society, and when this happens, that dominant ideology will permeate the public agenda.

**Theories of Individual Outcomes**

Much research has also dealt with the individual effects of mass communication. This is an area which is most valued for the purpose of this study as later we shall pick up from here to formulate the questions and look for answers to the central hypothesis. Let us begin with a general discussion of effects research.

**The Effects Tradition**

The theory of mass-communication effects has undergone a curious evolution in this century. Early in the century, researchers believed in the 'magic bullet' theory of communication effects. Individuals were believed to be directly and heavily influenced by media messages. In other words, media were considered to be extremely powerful in shaping public opinion. Then, during the 1950s when the two-step flow hypothesis was popular, media effects were considered to be minimal. Later, in the 1960s, it was proposed that the media have effects on audience members but that these effects are mediated by audience variables and are therefore only moderate in strength. Now, after research in the 1970s and the 1980s, scholars have returned to the powerful-effects model, in which the public is considered to be heavily influenced by media. This later research centres on television as the powerful medium.
Limited or Powerful Effects

Perhaps the most well-known early work on limited effects was the reinforcement approach most notably articulated by Joseph Klapper (1960). Klapper, in surveying the literature on mass-communication effects, developed the following propositions:

1. Mass communication ordinarily does not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather functions among and through a nexus of mediating factors and influences.

2. These mediating factors are such that they typically render mass communication a contributory agent, but not the sole cause, in a process of reinforcing the existing conditions.

Many variables involved in the audience interact, to shape effects in various ways. Two of the more important areas of audience mediation are group or interpersonal effects and selectivity. Studies have shown that audience members are selective in their exposure to information. In its simplest form, the hypothesis of selective exposure predicts that people in most circumstances will select information consistent with their attitudes and other frames of reference.

The problem of the limited-effects model is that it maintained a linear, cause-to-effect paradigm for research and theory. It failed to take into account the social forces on the media or the ways that individual might affect the process. The model remained one of active media and passive audience. In addition, the limited-effects model concentrated almost exclusively on attitude and opinion effects, ignoring other kinds of effects and functions. Finally, such research focused on short-term effects of mass communication without questioning whether repeated exposure or time latency might affect the audience.
The work Klapper and others on limited effects results in two general types of
response. The first was rejection of limited effects in favor of powerful effects, and
the second was an attempt to explain limited affects in terms of the powers of
individual audience members, not of media. Perhaps the most vocal contemporary
spokesperson, in favor of powerful effects is Noelle-Neumann. She believes that
limited-effects theory has "distorted the interpretation of research findings over the
years", and "that the dogma of media powerlessness' in no longer tenable".

This critic thinks that the limited-effects model was an ideological response on the
part of the professional journalists, who did not want to see themselves as
manipulative. Most limited-effects researchers were either academic journals or
people who held the media in a free society in high regard. These individuals were
interested in painting a picture of the media as disseminators of information, but not
of influence. If they were viewed as important, but not as controlling, the media
would continue to have the freedom to investigate and report whatever they felt to be
important at a particular time. This interest led to the tendency to "see" limited rather
than powerful effects in media research results. This Noelle-Neumann calls "the
media's effect on media research".

There are still many who believe that this reaction to limited effects is extreme and
over simple. In the following sections, we view theories that take a more moderate
stand than either the limited-or powerful-effects model.
Uses, Gratification, and Dependency

One of the most popular theories of mass communication is the uses-and-gratifications approach. We first examine the original idea of uses and gratifications and then look at some interesting extensions.

The Uses-and-gratifications approach focuses on the consumer, the audience member, rather than the message. This approach begins with the person as an active selector of media communications, a viewpoint different from the powerful-effects model. Compared with classical effects studies, the uses and gratifications, approach takes the media consumer rather than the media message is its starting point, and explores his communications behavior in terms of his direct experience with the media. It views the members of the audience as actively utilizing media contents, rather than being passively acted upon by the media. Thus, it does not assume a direct relationship between messages and effects, but postulates instead that members of the audience put messages to use, and that such usage act as intervening variables in the process of effect.

The individual most commonly associated with the uses-and-gratifications approach are Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz. These authors have outlined a number of basic theoretical and methodological assumptions. Three theoretical assumptions warrant discussion. The first is that the audience of mass communication is active and goal-directed. Unlike most effects theories, uses-and-gratifications theory assumes that audience members are not passive but take a proactive role in deciding how to use media in their lives. Second, the audience members is largely responsible for choosing media to meet needs. Audience members know their needs and seek our
various ways to meet these needs. The third assumption, related to the other two, is that media compete with other sources of need gratification. In other words, out of the options that media present, the individual chooses ways to gratify needs.

Expectancy-value theory

Acknowledging the lack of theoretical coherence in early uses-and-gratifications work, Phillip Palmgreen codified a theory of uses and gratifications based on his own work and that of several colleagues, including Karl Rosengren and others. Perhaps the most well-known expectancy-value theorists is Martin Fishbein. According to this theory, people orient themselves to the world according to their expectancies (belief) and evaluations. Viewing media gratifications as an application of the general expectancy-value phenomenon, Palmgreen and his colleagues have defined gratifications sought in terms of one's beliefs about what a medium can provide and one's evaluation of the medium's content. For example, if you believe that sitcoms provide entertainment and you evaluate entertainment needs by watching sitcoms. If, on the other hand, you believe that sitcoms provide an unrealistic view of the life and evaluate such content as bad, you will avoid viewing sitcoms.

Although the idea of expectancy and values is used as the basic explanatory mechanism for uses and gratifications, several other causal factors must be taken into account. Palmgreen has put together a complex model to depict the process of media uses that he sees reflected in the research literature. One's beliefs about what certain media segments can provide are affected by (1) one's culture and social institutions, including the media themselves, (2) social circumstances such as the availability of media, and (3) certain psychological variables. Beliefs and values, as noted before,
determine the gratifications sought, which in turn determine one's media-consumption behavior. Depending on what is consumed and what non-media alternative are undertaken, certain media effects will be felt, and these in turn will feed back to one's beliefs about the media.

Dependency theory

The uses-and-gratifications approach is a limited-effects theory. In other words, it grants individuals much control over how they employ media in their lives. As we have seen, however, media scholars are divided about just how powerful the media are. Some have argued that the limited-effects and powerful-effects models are not necessarily incompatible, and dependency theory takes a step towards showing how both may explain media effects.

Dependency theory was originally proposed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur (1982). Like uses-and-gratifications theory, this approach also rejects the causal assumptions of the early reinforcement hypothesis. To overcome this weakness, these authors take a broad system approach. In their model they propose an integral relationship among audiences, media and the larger social system: "It is through taking these sets of variables into account individually, interactively, and systematically that a more adequate understanding of mass communication effects can be gained.

As the center of this theory is the notion that audiences depend on media information to meet needs and attain goals. This approach is consistent with the basic idea of the uses model, but unlike the latter, the dependency model assumes a three way
interaction among media, audience, and society. All three affect each of the others. The degree of audience dependency on media information varies, and the more dependent the audience becomes on an aspect of media the more that will have an affect on them.

There are two sources of variation in the amount of dependency a person might experience. On is the number and centrality of information functions being served. We know that the media serve a gamut of functions such as monitoring government activities and providing entertainment. For any given group, some of these functions are more central or important than others. A group's dependence on information from a medium increase as that medium supplies information that is more central to the group. The second source of dependency variations is social stability. When social change and conflict are high, established institutions, beliefs, and practices are challenged, forcing people to make reevaluations and choices. At such times reliance on the media for information increases. The dependency theory includes three types of effects: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Mass communication effects within these three areas are a function of the degree to which audience are dependent on media information.

Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur outline five types of cognitive effects. The first of these is ambiguity resolution. Events in the environment often create ambiguities, leading to a need for additional information. The media themselves often create ambiguity, and when it is present, dependence on media increases. At such times the power of mediated messages to structure understanding or to define situations may be great. At other times when the ambiguity is lessened, this effect may be much reduced.
The second cognitive effect is attitude formation. The selectivity and other mediational processes outlined by Klapper and the diffusion theorists probably come into play in this effect. Third, media communications create agenda setting, in which people use the media to decide what the important issues are, to decide what to be concerned about. Agenda setting is an intersectional process. Topics are chosen by the media and disseminated through mass channels. From these topics people sort out information according to their individual interests and psychological and social characteristics. The fourth cognitive effect is expansion of the belief system. Information may create a broadening of the number of beliefs within such categories as religion or policies, and it may also increase a person's number of categories or beliefs. The fifth cognitive effect, value clarification, may occur, for example, when the media precipitate value conflict in such areas as civil rights. Faced with conflicts, audience members are motivated to clarify their own values.

Affective effects relate to feelings and emotional response. Such states as fear, anxiety, morale, or alienation may be affected by mediated information. Effects may also occur in the behavior realm. Activation, initiating new behavior, and deactivations, ceasing old behavior, may occur as a result of information received from the media. The important point from dependency theory is that mediated messages affect people only to the degree that persons depend on media information. In a nutshell, "when people do not have social realities that provide adequate frameworks for understanding, acting, and escaping, and when audiences are dependent in these ways on media information received, such messages may have a number of alternation effects."
We see here that audiences can be affected by media to varying degree, depending on their dependency on the media. Audiences do use media for their own ends but in the process may become dependent on them. Alan Rubin and Sven Windahl explain:

Uses and gratifications, then, adds a voluntaristic element to dependency, just as dependency adds a more deterministic flavor to uses and gratifications. This makes a conceptualization of uses and gratifications more situational and context-bound....we propose that people's needs and motives vary as they evolve in interactions with societal and communications systems.

Rubin and Windahl have created a model to depict this process. This model shows that social institutions and media systems interact with audiences so as to create needs, interests, and motives in the individual. These in turn influence the individual to choose various media and non-media sources and gratifications, which may subsequently lead to various dependencies. Consistent with dependency theory, individuals who grow dependent on particular segment of the media will be affected cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally by that segment. Those dependencies, then feed back to broader societal and media systems and institutions. Dependency itself develops when certain kind of media content are used to gratify specific needs or when certain media forms are consumed habitually as ritual, to fill time, or as an escape or distraction. People will fulfill their needs with media in different ways, and a single person may use media differently in different contexts. Further, one's "needs" are not always strictly personal but may be shaped by the culture or by various social conditions. In other words, individuals, needs, motives, and uses of media are contingent on outside societal and cultural factors that may be out of the individual's control. These outside factors act as constraints on what and how media can be used and on the availability of other non-media alternative.
For example, an elderly person who does not drive and has few friends nearby may come to depend on television in a way that other individuals, who life situations are different, will not. A teenager may become dependent on music videos because of
certain norms in the social group. In general, "the more readily available, the greater the perceived instrumentality, and the more socially and culturally acceptable the use of a medium is, the more probable that media use will be regarded as the most appropriate functional alternative. Furthermore, the more alternatives an individual has for gratifying needs, the less dependent he or she will become on any single medium, the number of functional alternatives, however, is not just a matter of individual choice or even of psychological traits but is limited also by sociocultural factors such as availability of certain media.

Reception Analysis

Reception, indicating the process by which understanding and significance are produced by viewers from what they watch, within the shaping contexts and habits of viewing, was the most significant new focus in the television research of the 1980s. It has continued through into the 1990s with both a diversification in the kinds of enquiry undertaken and some signs of uncertainty as to guiding ideas. It can be regarded as an emphasis on the consumption of television, the modes and the setting of this, but the way in which viewers engage with television and work its meaning, knowledge, and pleasure into their everyday lives raises issues very different from the consumption of material goods. In this respect, the notion of consumption can simplify what is at issue for criticism and research.

Television's domesticity extends well beyond these immediate physical and temporal factors, these grounding conditions, to inform the medium's more general character's as a cultural technology. The recognition of domesticity informs critical ideas in relation to television across its whole profile (Silverstone, 1994) and not simply in
relation to questions of reception, although it is around these questions that much
enquiry has understandably focused. The phase during which television arrives within
a national domestic culture (the availability of the television set, hired or purchased,
to the majority of the population) marks a decisive shift in the meaning and
possibilities of home life.

Television reworks the meaning of home life in modernity by developing new modes
of linkage and separation between world and home, between public and private, often
taking its cue from those established by ratio. Within the new system of culturally
formative alignments, home space becomes permeable to the public world and the
wider popular culture in ways which effect a radical change in both. The possibilities
for shared family entertainment allowed television to be canvassed as an agency of
family consolidation, but quite soon it was the potential division opened up between
husband and wife and between parents and children which provided the main focus
for comment, serious and comic. These divisions were seen to be both the product of
conflicting viewing preferences and also, more deeply, the consequence of television's
impact upon family discipline and attitudes towards conventional home culture.
Certainly, no modern history of family life could proceed without recognition of the
role of television as a device both of pleasurable and unpleasurable unity and of
various kinds of alienation, evasion, and hostility.

Reception and the Question of Influence

In showing the fact of variant understanding and response in a wide range of
researched instances and contexts of viewing, how have ideas about reception
increased our understanding of television in society? They have certainly introduced a
new complexity into thinking about the character of viewing, quite often displacing the idea of impact with that of interaction. What they have not done so far is to provide much by way either of specific social explanations for how variant readings are actually reduced or firm ideas about the social consequences which variation, in a particular instance, might carry. Nevertheless, some studies have attempted to get closer to the causal nature of the relationship between interpretative variables and social group identity by holding a tight focus on selected themes being mediated. For instance, one of the most important findings of Jhally and Lewis's (1992). It is likely that such theme-specific linkage between interpretative frameworks and the particular social biographies of viewing groups offers a more productive way forward in the researching of reception than attempts pitched at a more generalized level.

Simulation, Hyperreality and Implosion: Baudrillard

Douglas Kellner traces the rise of Baudrillard in French radical social theory of media and society. In Baudrillard's universe, simulacra and simulation play such a key role in social life that previous boundaries and categories of social theory dissolve altogether. All dichotomies between appearance and reality, surface and depth, life and art, subject and object, collapse into a functionalized, integrated and self-reproducing universe of 'simulacra' controlled by 'simulation' models and codes. The initial sketch of this new social situation is found in 'The Orders of Simulacra', first published in French in *L'échange symbolique et la mort* (1976) and collected in *Simulations* (1983). For Baudrillard, 'simulacra' are reproduction of objects or events, while the 'orders of simulacra' form various stages or 'orders of appearance' in the relationships between simulacra and 'the real'. Baudrillard presents a theory of how simulacra came to dominate social life, both historically and phenomenologically. In a
historical sketch of the orders of simulacra, heavily influenced by Foucault's archaeologic of knowledge in *The Order of Things*, Baudrillard claims that modernity broke with the fixed feudal medieval hierarchy of signs and social position by introducing an artificial, democratized world of signs which valorized artifice (stucco, theater, fashion, fixed medieval hierarchies and order.

In the society of coded simulation, urban planners, for example, modulate codes of city planning ad architecture in creating urban systems, in much the same way that television producers modulate television codes to produce programs models and codes thus come to constitute everyday life and modulation of the code comes of structure a system of differences and social relations in the society of simulations. The codes and signals and continually test individuals, inscribing them into the simulated order. Response are structured in a binary system of affirmation or negation: every ad, fashion, commodity, television program, political candidate and poll presents a test to which one respond. Is one for or against? Do we want it or not? Will we choose X or Y? In this way, one is inserted in a coded system of similarities and dissimilarities, of identities and programmed differences. The society of simulations thus comes to control an individual's range of response and options for choice and behavior. As opposed to previous determinist social theories, as well as conspiracy theories which postulate individuals or groups manipulating the public for certain ends, Baudrillard's model appears to be radically indeterminist, and offers a new models social control in which codes and programming become the principle of social organization, and individuals are forced to response to pre-coded messages and models in the realm of economics, politics, culture and everyday life (SIM, pp.111ff.). Although one is
allowed a range of choices - indeed such choice is constantly demanded - the options are predetermined and precoded (SIM, p.117).

Michel Foucault's disciplinary society with its models of surveillance and punishment thus becomes for Baudrillard a society of simulated 'tests' and programmed differences. Polling, elections, consumer purchases, fashions, media and so forth are all part of system of binary regulation stabilized by two political parties, two opposing classes, two hostile superpowers, two (or more) choice at every moment. The matrix 'remains binary', however, and from 'the smallest disjunctive unity (question/answer particle) up to the great alternating systems that control the economy, politics, world co-existence, the matrix does not change: it is always the 0/1, the binary scansion that is affirmed as the metastable or homeostatic form of the current systems. This is the nucleus of the simulation processes which dominate us' (SIM, pp.134-5).

The End of The Social?

Douglas Kellner states that Baudrillard in his 1978 text 'In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities' (hereafter SSM), puts in question previous theories of the social and of related theories of class, social relations, socialism and so on, arguing that these concepts have imploded in the society of simulations. Consequently, traditional theories of politics, the social, class conflict, social change and so forth are obsolete if they posit individuals, class or masses as capable of social action. Instead, in an era of 'hyperconformity' the masses concern themselves solely with spectacle: 'Messages are given to them, they only want some sign, they idolize the play of sings and stereotypes, the idolize any content so long as it resolves itself into a spectacular sequence' (SSM, p.10).
Baudrillard argues that 'the social' - with its idealized resonances of human interaction, communication, civility and the rest - has imploded into 'the masses'. Refusing to participate in social and political events, the masses sullenly go their own ways, ignoring attempts to manipulate them. From these example, he concludes that 'power manipulates nothing, the masses are neither misled nor mystified this indifference of the masses is their true, their only practice. There is no other idea of them to imagine, nothing in this to deplore, but everything to analyse as the brute fact of a collective retaliation and of a refusal to participate in the recommended ideals, however enlightened (SSM, p.14).

After describing the indifference of these silent majorities', the masses', Baudrillard concludes that the era of 'the social' is over. 'the energy of the social is reversed, its specificity is lost, its historical quality and its ideality vanish in favour of a configuration where not only the political becomes volatilised, but where the social itself no longer has any name' (SSM, pp.18)-19). This 'silent majority' does not signify that the mass no longer exist. Rather, it means that their representation is no longer possible. The masses are no longer a referent because they no longer belong to the order of representation. They do not express themselves, they are surveyed. They don't reflect upon themselves, they are tested. The referendum and the media are a constant referendum of directed questions and answers ) has been substituted for the political referent. Now polls, tests, the referendum, media are devices which no longer belong to a dimension of representations, but to one of simulation. (SSM, p.20).

Baidrillard's argument seems to be that polling, testing, voting and so on pit individuals against simulation models rather than social forces or each other. It provides a quantitative abstraction of the social, a dead simulation. This simulation of the social, however, kills genuine sociality, and renders the masses more passive,
apathetic and inertial. Yet in Baudrillard's view, this very intertia represents a form of 
resistance, and disturbs a power structure which wants at least some limited form of 
participation, response and activity. Consequently the system is desperately driven to 
try to produce 'the social". The main force in rendering the masses an apathetic silent 
majority seems to be the proliferation of information and media. Baudrillard claims:

Instead of transforming the mass into energy, information produces even more 
mass. Instead of informing as it claims, instead of giving form and structure, 
information neutralises even further the 'social field'; more an more it creates 
an inert mass impermeable to the classical institutions of the social and to the 
very contents of information. Today, replacing the fission of symbolic 
structures by the social and its rational violence, is the fission of the social 
itself by the 'irrational' violence of media and information - the final result 
being precisely an atomised, nuclearised, molecularised mass, the result of two 
centuries of accelerated socialisation and which brings it irremediably to an 
end. (SSM, pp.2506).

On this analysis, the social-taken as interpersonal relations, as a specific sphere 
mediating between the public and private spheres - is literally electrified in media and 
computer networks which relate and organize individuals through electronic circuits 
rather than libidinal or face-to-face social relations. Baudrillard thus opposes theories 
of the media and information which see the mass media as manipulating and 
information as socializing the mass, maintaining instead that the proliferation of 
information and media neutralizes the masses, bores and emulsifies them, thereby 
destroying the social. Consequently,

From the point of view, it could be said that the social regress to the same 
degree as its institutions develop. The process accelerates and reaches its 
maximal extent with mass media and information. Media, all media, all 
information, act in two directions: outwardly they produce more of the social, 
inwardly they neutralize social relations and the social itself. But then, if the 
social is both destroyed by what produces it (the media, information) and 
reabsorbed by what it produces (the masses), it follows that its definition is 
empty and that this term which serves as a universal alibi for every discourse, 
no longer analyses anything, no longer designate anything. Not only 
something else: defiance, death, seduction, ritual, repetition - it conceals that it 
is only abstraction and residue, or even simply an effect of the social, a 
simulation and an illusion. (SSM, p.66).
Without specifying what is at stake, Baudrillard is implicitly contrasting a (normativemetaphysical) concept of the social with what he sees as its demise in the contemporary situation. In short and to conclude, Baudrillard claims that the social has imploded into the mass, and no loner exists as a self-sufficient domain of reality.

Jerry Mander argues in his strangely titled book "Four Arguments for the Elimination of television" that one of the fundamental changes that television produces is the replacement of experience. He states that it was only after a long while and many half-steps of change in viewpoint that I finally faced the fact that television is not reformable, that it must be gotten rid of totally if our society is to return to something like sane and democratic functioning. So, to argue that case, especially considering that it involves a technology accepted as readily and utterly as electric light itself, is not something that ought to be done rapidly or lightly. Nor can such a case be confined to the technology itself, as if it existed aside from a context.

The first argument is theoretical and environmental. It attempts to set the framework by which we can understand television's place in modern society. Yet, this argument is not about television itself. In fact, television will be mentioned only occasionally. It is about a process, already long under-experience and therefore knowledge and perceived reality. We have all been moved into such a narrow and deprived channel of experience that a dangerous instrument like television can come along and seem useful, interesting, sane and worthwhile at the same time it further boxes people into a physical and mental condition appropriate for the emergence of autocratic control.
The second argument concerns the emergence of the controllers. That television would be used and expanded by the present powers-that-be was inevitable, and should have been predictable at the outset. The technology permits of no other controllers.

The third argument concerns the effect of television upon individual human bodies and minds, effects which fit the purposes of the people who control the medium.

The fourth argument demonstrates that television has no democratic potential. The technology itself places absolute limits on what may pass through it. The medium, in effect, choose its own content from a very narrow field of possibilities. The effect is drastically confine all human understanding within a rigid channel.

What binds the four arguments together is that they deal with aspects of television that are not reformable. What is revealed in the end is that there is ideology in the technology itself. To speak of television as "neutral" and therefore subject to change is as absurd as speaking of the reform of a technology such as guns.

Anecdotal Reports; Sick, Crazy, Mesmerized

I also kept an informal record of the terms people used in ordinary conversion to describe how they felt about television. In all, I recorded about two thousand conversational and written descriptions. While I make no claims about this amounting to any kind of bona fide sampling, the phrases people chose had a definite consistency. To give you an idea, I'm going to list the fifteen phrases most frequently used. If you could somehow drop all preconception of television and read this list as though people were describing some instrument you'd never seen yourself, I think the
picture you would obtain is of a machine that invades, controls and deadens the people who view it. It is not unlike the alien-operated "influencing machine" of the psychopathic fantasy.

1) "I feel hypnotized when I watch television".
2) "Television sucks my energy".
3) "I feel like it's brainwashing me".
4) "I feel like a vegetable when I'm struck there at the tube.
5) "Television spaces me out".
6) "Television is an addiction and I'm an addict'.
7) "My kids look like zombies when they're watching".
8) "TV is destroying my mind".
9) "My kids walk around like they're in a dream because of it".
10) "Television is making people stupid".
11) "Television is turning my mind to mush".
12) "If a television is on, I just can't keep my eyes off it".
13) "I feel mesmerized by it".
14) "TV is colonizing my brain".
15) "How can I get my kids off it and back into life?"

At one point I heard my son Kai say: "I don't want to watch television as much as I do but I can't help it. It makes me watch it".

I don't mean to suggest that there weren't many favorable reports. Often the people who described themselves as "spaced out" liked that experience. They said it helped them forget about their otherwise too busy lives. Many added the word "meditative";
others found it "relaxing", saying that it helped them "forget about the world." Some who used terms like "brainwashed" or "addicted" nonetheless felt that television provided them with good information or entertainment, although there was no one who felt television lived up to its "potential." In all the time I collected responses, only eight people suggested they watched too little.

The Plug-In Drug by Mary Winn

In the spring of 1977, an extremely interesting book appeared, the first to argue that the experience of television - the act of watching it - is more significant than the content of the programs being watched. The Plug-In Drug by Marie Winn caused a sensation among worried parents, psychologists and educators. It asserted that television viewing by children was addictive, that it was turning a generation of children into passive, incommunicative "zombies' who couldn't play, couldn't create, and couldn't even think very clearly.

She combined these with whatever could be gathered from non-television-related research on cognition, on reading patterns, on verbal and non-verbal thinking, and on the observations of other writers, and what she could gather from her own observance of the television experience.

She drew a horrifying picture of a generation of children who were growing up without the basic skills that most earlier generations had used to get through life, children who could not even solve the problem of dealing with free time. She also described the disassembling effects television has upon family life, in which
communication and even direct affection and participation in each other's lives were being processed through television experience, to the extreme detriment of everyone.

Having gone as far as she went, however, Marie Winn didn't apply her findings to adult and didn't relate any of the effects of television to the power drives and soon wider society.

Jerry Mander decided to continue digging and soon found and arriving at a horrifying picture of television's effect and how it fit the needs of the juggernaut. The nature of the viewing experience itself, the technology of fixation (which I already knew from advertising), new research on biological effects, together with discoveries about the power of implanted imagery, combine to create a pattern in which the newly diminished role of the human being is more and more apparent.

When you are watching TV, you are experiencing mental images. As distinguished from most senses-deprivation experiments these mental images are not yours. They are someone else's. Because the rest of your capacities have been subdued, and the rest of the world dimmed, these images are likely to have an extraordinary degree of influence. Am I saying this is brainwashing or hypnosis or mind-zapping or something like it? Well, there is no question but that some one is speaking into your mind and wants you to do something.

First keep watching.

Second, carry the images around in your head.

Third, buy something.

Fourth, tune in tomorrow.
Neil Postman in his small but very popular book - Amusing ourselves to death - has several historical argument which look at television and the print media differentials.

Television offers a delicious and, Postman says, original alternative to all of this. We might say there are three commandments that form the philosophy of the education which television offers. The influence of these commandments is observable is every type of television programming - from "Sesame Street" to the documentaries of "Nova' and "the National geographic" to "Fantasy island" to MTV. The commandments are as follows:

**Thou Shalt have no prerequisite**

Every television program must be a complete package in itself. No previous knowledge is to be required. There must not be even a hint that learning is hierarchical, that it is an edifice constructed on a foundation. The learner must be allowed to enter at any point without prejudice. This is why you shall never hear or see a television program begin with the caution that one will be meaningless. Television is a nongraded curriculum and excludes no viewer for any reason, at any time. In other words in doing away with the idea of sequence and continuity in education, television undermines the idea that sequence and continuity have anything to do with thought itself.

**Thou Shalt induce no perplexity:**

In television teaching, perplexity is a superhighway to low ratings. A perplexed learner is a learner who will turn to another station. This means that there must be
nothing that has to be remembered, studied, applied or worst of all, endured. It is assumed that any information, story or idea can be made immediately accessible, since the contentment, not the growth, of the learner is paramount.

**Thou Shalt avoid exposition like the ten plagues visited upon Egypt:**

Of all the enemies of television-teaching, including continuity and perplexity, none is more formidable than exposition. Arguments, hypotheses discussions, reasons, refutations or any of the traditional instruments of reasoned discourse turn television teaching always takes the form of story-telling, conduct through dynamic images and supported by music. This is as characteristic of "Star Trek" as it is of "cosmos", of "different strokes" as of "Sesame Street" of commercial of "Nova". Nothing will be taught on television that cannot be both visualized and placed in a theatrical context.

The name we may property give to an education without prerequisites, perplexity and exposition is entertainment. And when one considers that save for sleeping there is no activity that occupies more of an American youth's time than television viewing, we cannot avoid the conclusion that a massive reorientation toward learning is now taking lace.

The Hidden Persuaders by Vance Packard (1991) was an influential book in America in the 1950s. It is still popular and read and referred to as one of the first studies to research and document the behind the scene action and manipulation by the media and in particular the advertising industry. He states that the book is an attempt to explore a strange and rather exotic new area of modern life. It is about the way many of us are being influenced and manipulated - far more than we realize - in the patterns
of our everyday lives. Large-scale efforts are being made, often with impressive success, to channel our unthinking habits, our purchasing decisions, and our thought processes by the use of insights gleaned from psychiatry and the social sciences.

Typically these efforts take place beneath our level of awareness; so that the appeals which move us are often, in a sense, 'hidden'.

Some of the manipulating being attempted is simply amusing. Some of it is disquieting, particularly when viewed as a portent of what may be ahead on a more intensive and effective scale for us all. Cooperative scientists have come along providentially to furnish some awesome tools. The use of mass psychoanalysis to guide campaigns of persuasion has become the basis of a multimillion-dollar industry. Professional persuaders have seized upon it in their groping for more effective ways to sell us their wares - whether products, ideas, attitudes, candidates, goals, or states of mind.

This depth approach to influencing our behaviour is being used in many fields and is employing a variety of ingenious techniques. It is being used most extensively to affect our daily acts of consumption. The sale to us of billions of dollars' worth of United products is being significantly affected, if not revolutionized, by this approach, which is still only barely out of its infancy. Two-thirds of America's hundred largest advertisers have geared campaigns to this depth approach by using strategies inspired by what marketers call 'motivation analysis'.

Meanwhile, many of the nation's leading public-relations experts have been indoctrinating themselves in the role of psychiatry and the social sciences in order to
increase their skill at 'engineering' our consent to their propositions. Fund raisers are turning to the depth approach to wring money from us. A considerable and growing number of our industrial concerns (including some of the largest) are seeking to sift and mould the behaviour of their personnel - particularly their own executives - by using psychiatric and psychological techniques. Finally, this depth approach is showing up nationally in the professional politician's intensive use of symbol manipulation and reiteration on the voter, who more and more is treated like Pavlove's conditioned dog.

The efforts of the persuaders to probe our everyday habit for hidden meanings are often interesting purely for the flashes of revelation they offer us of ourselves. We are frequently revealed, in their findings, as comical actors in a genial if twitchy Thurberian world. The findings of the depth probers provide starting explanations for many of our daily habits and perversities. It seems that our subconscious can be pretty wild and unruly. What the probers are looking for, of course, are the whys of our behaviour, so that they can more effectively manipulate our habits and choices in their favour. This has led them to probe why we are afraid of banks; why we love those big fat cars; why we really buy homes; why men smoke cigars; why the kind of car we draw reveals the brand of gasoline we will buy why housewives typically fall into a hypnoidal trance when they get into a supermarket; why men are drawn into auto showrooms by convertibles but end up buying sedans; why junior loves cereal that pops, snaps and crackles.

One of the important new theorist is J. B. Thompson. He is attempting to product a social theory of media. In a book of the same name he presents some general
characteristics of mass communication. He also relates Mass Communication and Social Interaction critically. The analysis of the general characteristics of mass communication provides a backcloth against which I want to consider some of the ways in which the development of mass communication has transformed the nature of social interaction and the modes of experience in modern societies. Here I shall be concerned, not so much with the specific ‘effects’ of particular media messages, but rather with the ways in which the deployment of technical media serve to reorganize and reconstitute social interaction. I shall argue that the deployment of different media of mass communication should not be seen as a mere supplement to pre-existing social relations, as the introduction of neutral channels which diffuse symbolic goods within society but leave social relations unchanged. On the contrary, the deployment of technical media has a fundamental impact on the ways in which people act and interact with one another. This is not to say that the technical medium determines social organisation in some simple, mono causal way, the deployment of technical media is always situated within a broader social and institutional context which limits the available options. But new technical media make possible new forms of social interaction modify or undermine old forms of interaction, create new foci and new venues for action and interaction, and thereby serve to restructure existing social relations and the institutions and organisation of which they are part.

It is to the credit of the media theorists, such as Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan, that they highlighted the fact that the nature of social interaction may be affected by the very form of media transmission. These theorists argued, rightly in my view, that different technical media help to create different environments for action and
interaction: they argued that the form of the medium itself, quite apart from the specific content of the messages it conveys has an impact on the nature of social life. However, I do wish to pursue the general theme highlighted by the media theorists and to examine some of the ways in which the development of technical media have transformed the nature of social interaction, have created new contexts for action and interaction and new arenas for self presentation and the perception of others.

Television broadcasting does not operate in isolation from other modalities of mass communication, but it does play a central role in the contemporary constellation of technical media. By focusing on some aspects of television and comparing these with the characteristics of other media, we can examine some of the ways in which social interaction has been transformed by the advent and widespread deployment of the televisual medium. We can thereby highlight certain respects in which cultural experience in modern societies is different from the forms of cultural experience which were characteristics of societies in which symbolic forms were transmitted exclusively or primarily by oral or written means. Today we live in societies in which the diffusion of symbolic forms via electronic media has become a common, and in certain respects primary, more of transmission based on electronically mediated culture in which oral and written modes of transmission have been supplemented, and to some extent displaced, modes of transmission based on electronic media. Here I shall not attempt to explore in detail the comparison between oral, written and electronically mediated forms of transmission, although such a comparison raises issues which merit systematic analysis.
Taking the medium of television as the primary focus, my aim in this section will be
to elucidate what is shall describe as the interactional impact of technical media. I
shall distinguish four dimensions of this interactional impact of technical media. I
shall distinguish four dimensions of this interactional impact (1) media facilitate
interaction across time and space; (2) they affect the ways in which individuals act
for others, in so far as the others for whom they are acting may comprise an audience
which is extended, dispersed and remote in time and space; (3) they affect the ways in
which individuals act in response to others, in so far as they are able to act in response
to others who are located in distant contexts; and (4) media also affect the ways in
which individuals act and interact in the process of reception, that is, they affect the
social organization of those spheres of everyday life in which the reception of
mediated messages is a routine activity.

Media Studies in Indian Context

The beginning of Television

Television began in India as an UNESCO-supported educational project in 1959, and
grew very slowly in the 1960s. The big leap in the Indian television came in 1975
with SITE, which broadcast to 2400 villages in six Indian states. Satellite television
conveyed educational-development information to rural India, and provided Indian
technologists an opportunity to gain television expertise prior to launching their own
national satellite, INSAT, about eight years later. Television changed to colour from
black and white during the 1982 Asian Games which were hosted in New Delhi. Then
the Indian National Satellite was launched in 1983 to expand access to television
broadcasting in India. By 1990, an estimated 15 percent of Indian households (in
actual terms 60 million people) were regularly watching television. Till that point
there was only one channel, Doordarshan, and it was government controlled. It was not a 24 hour service. Soon a two-hour afternoon transmission service was started. It was followed by a two-hour morning transmission also. Then during the gulf war things changed suddenly and rapidly.

The Satellite Invasion

The satellite television invaded India in 1991 and all hell broke lose. CNN and soon ZEE and STAR entered the Indian skies and homes. Since then there have been a prolific growth in the channels and the programming as well in audience numbers. The Indian TV homes can now receive 40 to 70 or even 100 channels. The programming time and content has also undergone tremendous changes. There have also been changes in technology of production transmission that has further facilitated the growth of television.

Communication Research in India

Communication research in India gained a foothold during SITE, conducted in 1975-76. A pilot project, intended in part to make an objective evaluation of television's impact in Indian villages, SITE's communication research component was coordinated through Space Application Center (SAC) in Ahmedabad. Communication research workers were drawn from the audience research wings of All India Radio (AIR), Doordarshan, The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), The Council for Social Development (CSD), the Planning Commission, and from communication programmes at Bangalore University, Osmania University, and others.
Many committees were set up for the growth and agenda for the television. Chanda committee report and the others that followed but most of them remained paper work. The Joshi commission report, An Indian personality for television, today looks mockingly at the inversion and subversion of the government television channel, Doordarshan, content and form.

Despite the early start the communication research has been slow and rather narrow till the expansion and colouring of television in eighties and then the after the coming of the satellite television in early nineties.

J.S. Yadava, formerly Director of Indian institute of mass communication, New Delhi in an article looks back at the communication research scenario in India during the seventies till the eighties. The research till that point is dominated by the print world. Very few studies on Television were undertaken. The few that did were from the point of view of rural, agricultural and development perspective.

J. S. Yadava notes that the first annotated bibliography on mass communication in India was compiled by the IIMC library at the initiative of the Asian Mass Communication Research and material. In this compilation non-English studies were left out. The first compilation which was published in 1975 by AMIC has 836 entries. Not all of them are necessarily research studies in the strict sense. But an analysis of the entries do tell something about the kind of concerns and studies that dominated during the period. One thing that immediately strikes is that nearly half of the entries are under two headings: (1) Broadcast Media (200) and (2) Communication in Development (202). The other heading under which a substantial number of studies
are listed is Newspaper. The rest of the material is under 18 different headings. The inference is obvious, the number of studies under other heads is rather small. For instance under communication technology only two studies are listed and under communication theory and research methods only five. TV is not given even a separate heading.

The second annotated bibliography published by IIMC in 1982 covered the period from 1974 to 1977. It covers mostly published books and unpublished reports and thesis. Annotations are more comprehensive as compared to the first compilation. In all there are 301 entries in this volume. The third annotated bibliography of IIMC covers the period from 1978 to 1980. It has in all 588 entries. As the broad trend in these two bibliographies is the same these have been considered together. With the result of the total number of entries analyzed is 899.

TV has come up, in a fairly big way as topic for research during 1974-80. These two bibliographies have TV as a separate heading. The number of studies on radio has substantially come down, Further, there is marked increase in the number of studies on traditional media and folk forms of communication.

Qualitatively speaking a notable feature is that studies listed are more empirical research data based as compared to those listed in earlier compilation. There are perceptibly more studies on mass communication and mass media in broader framework. Further, though there are substantive number of studies dealing with agriculture and family welfare topics their focus is more sharply on their communication dimensions. On the whole the studies are more and more empirical
research base and focused more sharply on communication events, phenomenon and processes rather than being general social science research studies with mere communication optics. Another noticeable increase is in studies dealing with message or content of communication.

Current Media Studies/Research in India: An Overview

The current media studies and research in India can be classified in the following categories:

- Media/Television and children
- Media/Television and women
- Media/Television and sex
- Media/Television and violence
- Media/Television and values
- Media/Television and consumerism
- Media/Television and policy/technology
- Media/Television and development
- Media/Television and education

Let us look at some of the current research in mass communication in India.

Amrita Shah in Hype, Hypocrisy and Television in Urban India (Vikas, 1997) notes that in the early '80s when television was synonymous with Doordarshan, a study in Delhi and Madras had revealed that while television occupied a significant chunk of the leisure time of young people it had a marginal effect on study, play and hobbies.
mainly due to selective and spasmodic viewing. A decade later, with the proliferation of cable and satellite television, however, the scenario underwent a complete transformation. A survey by the State Council of Educational Research and Training in Calcutta discovered that 75 per cent of schoolchildren were glued to their television sets for 3-4 hours a day, often missing play and household chores to do so. Few of them evinced an interest in travel, sports, and cultural or educational programmes. Most admitted to spending their time on films and serials. It was with reason then that one of urban India's most pressing concerns in the early '90s revolved around the impact of television on children.

Shah reports a study done by a Delhi school - Sardar Patel Vidyalaya - students described the various ways, in which a family could spend Sundays and what they considered the happiest time in the lives of their families. Thirty-four of the forty students drew near identical pictures of a small nuclear family clustered around a television set. In each one, the people were represented by faceless, anonymous backs; the focus was unwaveringly on the idiot box. Shaken by the incident, Vibha Parthasarathi, principal of the school commissioned a study on the impact of television on her students. The study, conducted in 1991-92 focused on the effect of satellite television on senior students (Class 9-12) and its findings, accompanied by first hand observations made by teachers and the astute principle yielded interesting insights into the phenomenon.

**Shifting Focus on Youth**

The most fundamental of these changes had to do with the growing significance of the young in Indian society. Traditionally in India, youth had not counted for those who
had earned it with years. Wisdom, it was believed, came with age. It was the old that laid down the laws and it was the duty of the young to obey. In modern times, however, attitudes had begun to shift. One indication was the rising amount of money spent on children. In 1995 under 14-years-olds were estimated to consume about a fifth of all consumer goods produced in the country. Children are believed to eat Rs.20 crore worth of ice-cream every year, motivate the purchase of six hundred thousand colour TV and sustain upto 70 per cent of the health foods industry. Moreover, kids were playing an increasingly important role in decisions regarding household buys. So much so that 40 per cent of corporate adspend was directed at targeting children and, in 1994, a whole advertising fair was organised to explore methods of grabbing the attention of children. "If the consumer is king" said a marketing executive to Sunday magazine, "the child is emperor".

Shah states that there were various sociological factors responsible for the emerging significance of the child such as modernisation and the breakdown of the joint family system which restricted the size of families and allowed parents to lavish more resources on their offspring. Material aspirations also formed a significant aspect of the phenomenon.

Murli Desai, a sociologist at the Tata Institute of Social Science hazarded a theory that linked the shifting focus from the old to the young with changing notions of social approval. "In today's world it is wealth rather than moral virtue that wins approval", she observed. "Looking after the old isn't glamorous while children on the other hand can advertise your wealth by what they wear, what they eat, where they study and what they buy. They are visible status adders, hence the high spending".
The difference was in appearance of things. Or is it?

Ideas of 'fun', 'good', 'bad', 'right', 'wrong', seemed to take on an increasingly pliable shape. And in a world without moral consequences, pragmatism was the new god. The trend was clearly reflected in the heroes of the times. Harshad Mehta, prime accused in a multi-billion securities scandal, was a much-admired figure. Market researchers Meena Kaushik, claimed from interviews with youngsters that popular contemporary role tended to be heroic without being all good.

The western emphasis on individuality and selfhood were some of the values feared by Swami Agnivesh. "The family and community living are the pillars of Indian society" he claimed passionately, "We do not need the western concept of social security, we always had it. In my native village, for instance, no one was allowed to sell a cow or milk. Whenever there was a surplus it had to be distributed among the needy. That spirit of sharing will go".

The media protest actions were a clear reflection of Agnivesh’s view that the ‘consumerist culture’ popularized by the media was injecting new vices into Indian society. "It is not as if we did not have vices before. The difference was that they did not have social sanction. Boozing, gambling and smoking were considered evils. People did give bribes but there was a shame and fear associated with the act that has disappeared. "People made money then too but they were not worshipped. Respect was reserved for Tyagis and tapasvis - the ascetics. Those values have disappeared after industrialisation. Congressmen used to wear khadi, today they lay flowers on
Mahatma Gandhi's grave in three piece suits. And television is abetting the degeneration of values.

The electronic medium with its stupendous reach, its sense of immediacy, visual impact and direct entry into people's homes is potentially a far more potent agent of change. Looking back at the manner in which television has evolved in India, the picture that emerges is one of thwarted intentions. Consider the patterns:

- The arrival of television broke down barriers between neighbours as communities gathered to share the marvels of the new medium; the proliferation of the television put a set in every home and re-erected the barriers.

- Television as brought in to aid development; but the government appropriate it to spread propaganda.

- The medium was introduced with a view to benefit the rural masses in far-flung corners of the country; but the urban constituency turned it into a medium of entertainment of city-dwellers.

- Television was supposed to build confidence by imparting knowledge; in fact, it deepened insecurities by creating unaffordable desires.

- Television was for all. But it ended up giving the majority has for all. But it ended up giving the majority community an unassailable edge.

- By creating material aspirations television freed women from confines of the home; the backlash put them in new chains.

- By bringing the same fare to every home, television brought about a certain measure of democratisation till channels proliferated and soon everyone will get what they pay for.
Video and cable television challenged state monopoly and provided a platform for alternative viewpoints but market forces stepped in and turned a potential news sources into a giant entertainment machines.

Consider the implications: A new development occurs. Old India, resists it. Change enters through the back door. India's openness can now be celebrated. Everyone is happy because everyone has saved face.

All we have done is exchanged one set of symbols for another. Just a little while ago, the Indian middle class was extolling the virtues of denial and ascetism. Today the same class can't seem to get enough. In the past we celebrated the old today we worship the young. Back in time, caste determined status. Today, we have a new caste system based on money: these days the most powerful man in a village is most likely to be the main with the motorcycle.

**Television and violence: A UNESCO study**

A monitoring study (UNESCO, 1999) conducted by Centre for Advocacy and Research/ Akhila Sivadas / Shailaja Bajpai on the extent of violence in television serials on terrestrial, cable and satellite TV channels serving India clearly indicated that the depiction of violence occurs across channels, in programmes telecast throughout the day and aimed at different target audiences, which include children and adolescents. In all, there were 759 acts of violence across five channels over a period of nine days.
The study conclusively establishes that there is a great deal of violence on television; that this violence is often graphic and specifically targeting a child audience. The study has spelt out certain areas of particular concern. These are areas which need to be addressed by the TV industry and the government when it formulates its Broadcast Policy. It also suggests media education and creation of critical viewing skills for the audience specially children.

Sevanti Ninan takes up the study of television and change in India in her book Through the Magic Window.(1995). When Ninan claims to have made 'the first comprehensive study of television in India' out of a professional urge, one expects she is aware of the challenge she is accepting. Especially since, despite number of impressive studies of a sectoral nature - from the impact of television on village life to textual analyses of the serial Mahabharata - there is an absence of a comprehensive study on this subject. The content of the book - chapters dealing with television's history, dimensions as an agent of change, local-global interaction, impact on rural India, effects on children and women, role as an educational tool and as the market place of commercial mass culture, and its encounter with the satellite revolution - gives reason to hope this void would be filled by Ninan. However, her attempt to weave a 'multifaceted story' on the basis of the experience of different strata of Indians turns out to be an essentially descriptive account. Presumably, Ninan's endeavour revolves around the impact of television as a social institution in general, and as generator of everyday events in particular. This calls both for dexterity in analysis and going beyond mere description. This is because in stimulating and simulating audiences by its representational practices, television in India manipulates public and private spheres, crosses temporal limits by playing with past, present, and
future, and reproduces certain meanings. But the author's preoccupation with individualized accounts fails to highlight the process through which the television in India performs the act of articulation.

It opens dramatically with an incident wherein some Muslim families of Bombay threw their television sets out of the window for fear of 'cultural aggression' by the Hindi film songs (p.1). The author's treatment of the take off stage and the associated teething troubles faced by the first television transmission in India contains interesting tidbits (chapter on 'From Sermons to Sitcoms: A History'). So does her account of the Rajiv Gandhi, and their miscalculations. One of the better written chapters is 'After the Satellite Revolution' where Ninan discusses the state-owned Doordarshan's change of heart after the arrival of various satellite.

The Week (January 9, 1994) carried a cover story entitled: HOOKED, Is TV harming his body and mind? The headline of the story inside is SWITCHING ON TROUBLE. The story calls Television, the great entertainer, is turning out to be the electronic Pied Piper of our times. It has lured children away from their studies, the playground, story books and, in some cases, even friends. Caught in its spell, children glued to the set watch with glazed eyes. They are the TV zombies.

Educationists and parents in the metros are worried but the fact is that television cannot be wished away. Nor should it be. Whatever its evil effects, TV provides important experiences for growing children. The problems arise when his powerful medium of communication is allowed to become an idiot box, when it fails to provoke and stimulate thought and replaces activities that do. But it is the current channel
boom that poses a real challenge to educationists and parents. A study by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication in Delhi in January 1992 revealed the growing concern among parents about their children's addiction to TV. Over 62 per cent of the parents in the study sample were worried about the negative impact of cable TV and the other programmes on their children. Most of them (62 per cent) feared that TV would curtail the sports activities of the children while 51 per cent felt that creative activities and reading would suffer. An average child in a metropolitan city watches TV for about four hours on Sunday and two to three hours on other days.

They are also indiscriminate about the programmes they watch. A 1986 study by the Operations Research Group, Baroda, in the favour metropolitan cities, showed that children watched more TV than adults. The effects of the new toy have started showing in the school grades. "The bright students have grades. "The bright students have managed to keep their scores but the average students' grades have tumbled". After a number of meeting with parents and sessions with children the teachers concluded that TV was the main distraction.

A school principal says that the school library is not as popular as it used to be. "Children from the middle level usually flocked to borrow books. But now there are few takers. "lending libraries have also become less popular. "During holidays there is a rush for books. But it has not been so far the past few years. Children now spend time watching TV. The request for comics has, however, not gone down" says a lending library owner in South Delhi.
Physical training instructors in schools says that children take less interest in sports now and, above all, they seem to be becoming obese. Samir Biswas of Sardar Patel School observers: "A lot of children have put on weight as a result of their diminishing interest in outdoor activities. Even in school they prefer to hang about in groups talking about the serials or other programmes on TV". Another reason could be that children munch snacks while viewing TV.

Going out with friends for a stroll in the evening or just to meet each other after school is also on the decline. "When I tell my daughter to go out with the neighbours' kids or other children in the colony she says they are busy watching TV", remarked a housewife in Delhi. Mrs. Kapoor says that often her children refuse to accompany them when they go visiting because their favourite programme is to be telecast.

Like most parents they do not give it much thought. For them TV viewing is fine as long as the children have done their homework. A short-term study done by the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development has found that play time has been converted into study time so that TV viewing can be accommodated. Parents will not allow studies to be affected; so children have found this way out. Parents are still to realise the danger of TV viewing replacing important activities like play and reading, besides hampering studies. Some parents to restrict children from seeing too much TV but the guiding factor is the time set aside for studies.

The Business World (7 Sep 1997, p98-99) present another stakeholders point of view with respect to the children's programming and children's television. The story is entitled- Kid stuff is now serious business. When Doordarshan's national network telecast a 13-episode pre-school children's programme called Tarrom Too five years
ago, the reviews were fantastic and the viewer response even better. Modelled on the US children's show, *Sesame Street*, the Indian programme was almost revolutionary in a market where children were saddled with either drab afternoon shows on mathematics and biology or, at best, inane cartoons spouting homilies. But oddly enough, *Tarrom Too* could not rake in any advertising revenue. "The situation has not changed much since, despite a totally altered media scenario", says Discovery Channel chief operating officer Kiran Karnik, who was closely associated with Tarrom Too as director of the Indian Space Research Organisation's education communication unit.

Some channels have adopted another tack altogether: dubbing kids' programmes into Hindi. STAR, for instance, has dubbed the popular children's show, *Small Wonder*, into Hindi. Sony has also dubbed two of its most popular kids' shows, *I Dream of Jeannie* and *Bewitched*, into Hindi. The TRPs (television rating points) for programmes like *Small Wonder*, *Bewitched* and *I dream of Jeannie* have gone up by 10% to 15% after they were dubbed in Hindi. Encouraged by Sony and Star's success with dubbing, Discovery, too, is increasing its dubbed programming. Most interestingly, even Cartoon Network is considering dubbing as an option. "Since standards of dubbing for the network have been set very high, it will be some time before the channel can offer the alternative", say Pant.

But things are beginning to change. Advertisers are realising begun to play in buying decisions even in India, though not to the extent they play in developed markets. Most TV channels aiming at a larger children's viewership work on the assumption that things are bound to change as the children's market in India moves towards branded
goods, breakfast cereals, pocket money and multi-TV households. Kellogg has decided to sponsor a serial on Star Plus called *Daal Mein Kala* at prime time to catch both the child as well as the mother. Mumbai's India Book House (IBH) is looking for serials to advertise its Power-ranger toys. "Child audiences will be come a realistic niche. They will become a critical mass", predicts Sony's Mukherji.

If poor advertising has been a major factor hampering the development of children's television in India, the other big reason is the high cost of production of children's programmes. Animation, for instance, which drives children's programmes worldwide, is conspicuous by its absence in India. This is probably the reason why Indian television software companies are not really venturing into animation at the moment. Of course, if ad revenues for children's programmes pick up over the next few years, all this could change. And children in India could easily be watching their favourite *Amar Chitra Katha* in state-of-the-art animation and hi-tech wizardry that could give even *Sesame Street* a run for its money.

It is obvious that the business angel to the issue is quite different to the one from a parents or an educationists as sketched in the story in the Week. It comes out clearly that the enterpreneur sees the market and potentials of sales and the other side sees the potential personality and psychological problems of engagement with the box.

**Media and gender perspective**

Shohini Ghosh in *Image Journeys* (eds. Christiane Brosius and Melissa Butcher, 1999) explores the troubled existence of sex and sexuality, feminists engage with censorship. She observes that satellite TV is seen to cause 'deviant' acts while eroding
the 'culture and tradition' of India. The protests around this new threat have primarily revolved around demands for stringent legislation and vigilant censorship. Shohini looks at two major players in the debate: the Hindu right and the secular women's movement. She states that motivated by entirely divergent agenda, these two players have mounted the most vocal opposition to satellite television.

Feminists and women activists have long been skeptical of popular cinema for reasons other than elitism. Popular cinema's deployment of discriminatory 'stereotypes' of women and minorities have frequently precluded more complex representations. She reasons that gender identities are complicated by intersecting identities of class, caste, region, religion, language, ethnicity, age and sexual preference signalling the inadequacy of 'gender-only' identity politics.

The first major controversy around 'obscenity' was articulated throughout major representational shifts concerning women: the blurring of distinction between the 'bad' heroine (Westernized, sexy and promiscuous) and that of the 'good' heroine (chaste and virtuous). Like most non-conventional 'disruptions', it appeared first in the long and dance sequences and was celebrated unbashedly in 'Choli ke Peechey Kya hai' (What's Behind the Blouse?) from the film Khalnayak (The Vilain, 1993).

The ritual of outrage and anxiety around the 'choli' song was reenacted around subsequent songs like 'Sexy, Sexy, Sexy, Mujha Log Bole' (People Say I am Sexy, Sexy, Sexy) from Khuddar (Self-respecting Person, 1993), 'Meri Pant Bhi Sexy' (My Pant is Sexy...) from Dulaara (The Loved One, 1993); 'Sarkayeleo Khatiya Jara Lage' (Bring Your Cot Closer, I am Feeling Cold) from Raja Babu (Hi Lordship,
1993) and similar songs with double entendres. The world 'sexy' placed both the songs from Khuddar and Dulaara in trouble. The CBFC asked the director of Dulaara to replace the word 'sexy' with 'fancy'. Despite AIR's ban the song topped all popularity charts. 'Sexy, Sexy, Sexy, Mujhe Log Bole' ended up being re-recorded as 'Baby, Baby, Baby' even though all private television channels continued to broadcast the 'sexy' version.

Organisation that protested against 'obscenity and vulgarity' in film songs included the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the Centre for Media Studies, the National Commission for Women (NCW), the Parliamentary Standing Committee and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). Anurag Charuvedi of the Marathi paper Mahanagar and member of the examining committee constituted to look into these songs told the press that 'unless this trend is checked more songs will be written in the language of the Kamasutra. Eve-teasers will be singing them on the streets and there will be no one to stop them. Justice Ranganath Misrha, Chief Commissioner of the NHRC called film songs 'the worst violators of human rights'.

This outrage and panic around 'obscenity' received an impetus with the release of the Media Advocacy Group (MAG) report titled People's Perceptions: Obscenity and Violence on the Small Screen (1994). Targeting film songs as the 'worst offenders', the report claimed that parents are 'angry and disgusted' at the rising levels of obscenity in the media and are unable to control the viewing habits of their children. It identifies the 'low-income group male' as the most vulnerable to 'negative effects' and assumes that media 'impacts' directly on the audience.
Pressured by these groups and following a furore in Parliament, the Information and Broadcasting (I&B), Ministry recommended revision of the CBFC guidelines in order to curb 'obscenity and vulgarity'. The consequent 'revision' added to the already existing list of 'objectionable visual's under categories titled Violence and Vulgarity that merits being quoted in its entirety.

1. Selectively exposing women's anatomy (e.g., breasts, cleavage, thighs, navel) in song and dance numbers, through suggestive and flimsy dresses, movements, zooming particularly in close-shots (sic).

2. Double meaning dialogues referring to women's anatomy (e.g. breasts or apples or some other fruits).

3. Stimulation (sic) of sexual movements (e.g. swinging of car, cot).

4. Man and Women in close proximity to each other or one over the other and in close proximity and making below-the-waist jerks suggesting copulation.

5. Pelvic jerks, breast swinging, hip jerks, man and woman mounting on each other, rolling together, rubbing women's body from breasts to things, hitting/rubbing man with breasts, sitting on each others things and waist with entwined legs, lifting and peeping inside a women's skirt (sic) squeezing woman's naval and waist.

6. Vulgar kissing on breasts, naval, buttocks upper part of thighs.

7. Coins, etc, being put inside blouse and other types of eve-teasing as there is invasion of privacy of women's body.

8. Disrobing women.
The hosting of numerous post-choli seminars, meetings and revised CBFC guidelines notwithstanding, the anxieties around satellite broadcasting were not allayed. From 1992 onward moral panics recurred regularly. In 1994 a controversy around obscenity broke out over advocate-cum-model Anjali Kapur who had posed in the nude for Fantasy magazine. This controversy placed 'pornography' under scrutiny. Later that year, the CBFC stopped Shekhar Kapur's Bandit Queen for its depiction 'sex and violence' and recommended 10 major cuts and some general ones. Phoolan Devi herself filed a petition in the Delhi High Court demanding the film be banned as it had allegedly violated her sexual privacy.

The year 1996 saw a rapid succession of moral panics. In January, a controversy broke out around the Tuff shoes advertisement that showed a nude couple (model Madhu Sapre and Milind Soman) locked in embrace with a snake wrapped around their necks. In April 1996 another controversy took place over Mahesh Bhatt's statement that those who wished to watch pornography had a right to do so. This provoked social and women's organisations to demand his removal from the governing council of the Film and Television Institute in Poona. In a memorandum to the minister of I&B, prominent members of the women's movement demanded Bhatt's removal on the grounds that no citizen, particularly someone in an official capacity, can claim the right to watch pornography. Affirming the 'proven nexus' between 'violence', pornography and prostitution and concluding that pornography 'debased and commodified' the human body, it argued that while the constitutional provision of free speech and expression were important, imposing 'reasonable restrictions' were imperative to prevent practices that were 'derogatory to the dignity of women'. The memorandum also demanded a code of decency aimed at checking
vulgarity in the electronic media. Meanwhile, Global Internet Ltd, Chandigarh-based company proposed the launching of an adult channel called Plus 21. The mere announcement of the proposed launch provoked immediate censure and legal action. Responding to a petition filed by the National Commission for Women (NCW), the Delhi High Court asked Global Internet to submit a list of its subscribers. Indira Jaising arguing for the NCW expressed fear that the programmes would be 'obscene and indecent'.

The impact of the media is not direct, linear, unity, universal, absolute, predetermined or predictable. In fact, it may not be determined primarily by the text at all. Meaning is born at the intersection of a set of overlapping factors and within a specific socio-cultural context in which the viewer is interpellated. To better comprehend people's engagement with the media, a range of concepts have been deployed including cultural reading, cultural competence, decoding positions and so on. A useful way to re-think the inter-subjectivity of text and reader is to work with the idea of 'negotiation'. Negotiation implies the holding together of opposite sides in an ongoing process of give-and-take where cultural exchange occurs at the intersection of the process of production and reception.

**Representation of media effects in the print**

Newspapers and magazines have often caught the fancy of the public discourse on television and the issues that are being raised by people (or at least the feature writer/reporter perceived it to make a good story). The review section of the Times of India (June 21, 1998) carried a feature entitled *Serial Infidelity*. The sub heading
poses a question and a response: Is your TV making you unfaithful? Yes, say the marriage counsellors. No, say the serial makers. Rashmi Sehgal finds out.

She describes a crucial scene from the popular series Saans (directed by Neena Gupta)

The tears do not stop flowing down her cheeks. As an emotionally bruised Priya, played to understated perfection by Neena Gupta in the TV serial Saans, packs her bags to leave her marital home, her husband Gautam makes a few perfunctory noises to stop her. Priya is not listening. She may be a 'mere housewife' but she is a woman with a modern sensibility. Gautam has admitted to having entered into an extramarital relationship with another woman. Not willing to play second fiddle in the menage a trois, she locks her hands into those of her two teenage kids and walks out with them.

The response to her walk-out has been overwhelming. Gupta, who was directs the serial, has been inundated with thousands of letters and phone calls by viewers who empathise with Priya's dilemma and confess to being trapped in the same predicament. Facing this deluge of public opinion. It became obvious to Gupta that extra-marital relationships are tumbling out of the family closet with alarming rapidity. So is art following life or is it vice versa? Certainly, on the small screen, every second serial from Kabhie Kabhie, Hasratein, Shanti, Sailaab, Swabhimaan to Andaaz is exploring different facets of such relationships. Most of these serials enjoy high TRP ratings and despite the shrinking and pie manage to muster excellent and support. To cite one example, Hasratein's being telecast from 1995 and has helped Zee TV gross Rs. Two crores of ad revenue every month. Hasratein's storyline is more complex than Saans. Based on the novel by Jayawant Dalvi, considered the Premchand of
Marathi literature, it explores how its heroine Savi enters into an illicit relationship with a married man. Upset by this decision, her husband walks out of the marriage taking their son with him. The serial traces the convoluted journey of her life and that of her illegitimate daughter.

What is the impact of all this on those who are on the other side of the screen? Do serials which depict family quarrels, divorces, illicit relationships influence society to the extent that the man-in-the-drawing-room sees this as an endorsement of his intentions if not yet actual actions? Worse, is it planting new ideas into minds? Watching these serials afternoon and night, leaves you convinced that the great Indian family, traditionally considered an unshakable bulwark, is under tremendous pressure, and it is only a matter of time before it succumbs and disintegrates entirely.

To gauge the impact of the serial such as Hasratein, the Delhi-based Media Advocacy Group (MAG) organised an inter-face between its director, Ajay Sinha, marriage counsellors, psychiatrists and a group of 65 working women and housewives. It allowed the viewers to question Sinha on why he had chosen such a provocative subject. Defending his decision Sinha insisted. "Extra-marital relationships have been carrying on since time immemorial. My serial depicts the social reality around us. I wanted to make the point that even an illicit relationship can be dignified".

When questioned on what Sinha a serial on young people, he replied "I am not willing to be burdened with the responsibility of trying to save the morals of young people. Nor am I willing to be burdened with the consequences of showing such a serial to the general public. My job is to entertain".
In washing his hands off the consequences of this serial, Sinha is accused of shunning responsibility by Dr. Ameeta Parsuram, marriage counsellor and psychiatrist. Parsuram insists. "Even if he refuses to accept responsibility, we will still place it on his shoulders. Anyone in the public domain must take viewers are not as independent-minded as he would like to believe. The serials touch the lives of thousands of people who sublimate their fantasies while viewing them.

Her own experience as a marriage counsellor has led her to believe that "watching television has loosened people's inhibitions. In some cases, this can be positive. Women trapped in oppressive marriages can think of breaking free of their shackles. But at the same time watching all that extra-marital sex does make people insecure. No one knows who to turn to. It's a tricky situation. Leading a high-placed, high-pressured life leaves an individual feeling rootless. Such people feel they must have someone who they can shower their affection on, get attention from, however transient this may be".

Parsuram points out that while several studies have been undertaken to study the impact of TV violence on children and even adults, no attempt has been made to compute the extent to which our day-to-day behaviour patterns are affected by real life characters. Till such time that some definitive work is done, it will be difficult to gauge the co-relation between the two.

Dr. Shakuntal Dewefar, practising doctor and a marriage counsellor, feels she has witnessed a significant change in relationships from the time she started practicing 25 years ago. She says, "My experience has been that TV may not motivate in individual to act in a particular way but watching people behave in a certain manner helps them
find a justification to what they are doing I tell my patients they need to remember that a man wanting a relationship outside marriage is shirking his responsibility of total commitment to his own family. And this alone should provide insight into her personality.

T Mrinalini in her thesis Education and Electronic Media (APH, 1997) sees Television as a substitute to varied activities of all ages from the general observations and in general people's opinion about the television viewing, the time spent by various people. The similar findings were also found in a project report by the Institute of Culture and Anthropology (ICUA), Ahmedabad (1991). It states that:

(1) Substantial time was diverted from newspapers, books, journals, radios, libraries, parks and outings and was spent with television.

(2) A wide gap is created in the routine habits, like social contacts, visiting people and places.

(3) Interpersonal communication where there was exchange of views and feelings gave their place on Television.

(4) Television viewing habits in many lower middle class families has reduced conflicts considerably.

(5) Television has became a boom to the aged, both male and female. It is keeping them away from the feeling of isolation and neglect.

(6) Morning and afternoon transmission is occupying the rest time and leisure time activities of housewives.

The worst effected population or age group of the society is the children. This age group is adapting their habits around the television programmes. Child is spending as
much time as possible on viewing television. The child is trying to imitate all that he linked. He is involving in all that is attractive. He is almost glued to TV sets. A times the child sings what is listens. It is believed that every moment, every gesture is getting influenced by the television and it became explicit from the child's behaviour. The children know the schedule of a week's programme in advance. It is observed that the children are associating these programme with the days of the week and they keep waiting for them. Mrinalini's study focuses on "The impact of television on early childhood behaviour (2-8 years), with special reference to Affective Domain".

Is TV Altering Family Life?

Television is changing relationship, within the family and even outside it. On the one hand, the trend of families owning more than one television set and acquiring more viewing options suggests that people living in the same house are getting increasingly isolated from one another. Television has also become the focus of social interaction on a larger canvas.

Coming home to find everyone engrossed in The Bold and the Beautiful is not my idea of family life. Besides, if people can get so involved in what's happening in the lives of a handful of TV characters who are not even Indian, why can't they show more interest in what's happening in the lives of people around them. A young working mother who is away from home between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., outlined her normal evening routine. I get back, have my bath, then begin to help I the kitchen. We now have two TVs and are thinking to getting a third. You see, the men want to watch sports, while my mother-in-law and I want to watch serials like. The Bold and the Beautiful. My 5-year old daughter gets irritated if we switch channels from MTV and
Hindi film song programmes which she enjoys. Instead of having to listen to her constantly say, 'why aren't you letting me watch?', we may as well invest in another TV.

**Satellite TV and Children**

- Interaction with children gave the authors some indications on the role satellite and cable television plays, and will continue to play, in their lives. Among other things, the study reveals:
  - That satellite TV is offering children a viewing experience that is qualitatively different from what they have so far been exposed to on Doordarshan. Along with more child-specific programming, there is more crime, violence and adult programming, creating an entirely new dimension in the lives of growing up children.
  - That this exposure to foreign satellite TV is forging a whole new cultural identity for many children.

The authors then specifically take up the issue of advertising and its impact on children. These could form the basis of a debate on the subject in this country. We feel that these views should be considered bearing in mind that the Indian child is learning how to respond to the outside world as much from television and TV advertising, as from other influences. It would appear that advertising is charged with following missions:

- It has to get you to pay
- It has to provide a justification for spending on commodities which you may not need.
It has to, therefore, break down social resistance to new products and to consumption patterns, thereby changing the social ethic—from the need to work hard, save and live frugally to the need to work hard, spend and forget about the future!

Advertising achieves this by promoting the belief that gratifying individual, material desires is morally acceptable. In India, where 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and where, or decades, we have been taught to believe in the essential rightness of a frugal, unostentatious way of life, it is clear that in order for the new consumer culture to succeed, advertising must replace the old value system with a new one. We can see that it has already succeeded in this endeavour, insofar a frugality is increasingly giving way to uncontrolled spending and lavish life-styles.

Models, Role Models and Personal Image

A young girl from a middle class family said with a dreamy expression on her face: 'I want to be a VJ Sophiya'. This was more than wishful thinking. It was, at least for the moment, a serious career ambition. A few children said that their desire to imitate what they seen on television, creates conflicts within the family, perplexing and irritating parents who cannot understand or appreciate their 'get-ups'. Older children (especially teenagers) have an even worse time as they want to develop and test their newly-acquired identities but come up against parental disapproval of their dress code, their mannerisms and their activities. Many children from fairly Westernised homes said: 'Our parents don't like the way we want to be and they always tell us that MTV is responsible'. This growing unease at MTVs influence (and of music channels in general) seems fairly widespread: in a middle class home in Old Delhi, the parents
of a 14-year old girls told one of our researchers: '..... (our daughter) looks, walks and talks like a stranger. We don't recognise her as the daughter we had just a few years ago. What happened? Child this be a result of her addition to MTV? She watches 4 to 5 hours of MTV a day and will not take 'no' for an answer'.

Models are models. They look good and seem completely at home in glomorous surroundings. Television commercials are essentially fashion oriented and assiduously promote a new look through their products. In all these advertisements, the overwhelming importance of clothes is emphasised without being stated. The impact is evident. The more discerning children can now give you a low-down on what kind of dress is suitable for different occasions, clearly associating garments with behavioural patterns and situations.

If, in the past, boys seemed to have no particular fascination with clothes and were not really concerned about the texture of their skins or the cut of their hair, today many in the 11-plus group are obsessed with the way they look. A beauty parlor owner in Delhi told us that most parlours were opening 'exclusively male' sections to cope with the rush (older men are too sprucing up). These men and boys not only want to have their hair trimmed; they want everything—from perms and facials to bleaching, manicure and pedicures. Never before has the Indian male been so openly and joyously courted: from designer boutiques to accessory outlets, from body building salons to health clubs—everyone is after him!
Children Advertising and Consumerism

The fact that very young children were singing commercial jingles (and unlike the television set, they could not be switched off) indicated to advertisers that infants 'at no extra cost' could be used to prompt and remind adults about available products. The process by which advertising exposes children to a consumer ideology (which they unconsciously imbibe) thus includes the ritual incantation of popular jingles, a phenomenon to which we in India can easily relate today. They are far from immune to the lure of attractive good, clothes and food in sophisticated shops, to the glamour of opulent homes and the sleekness of imported cars. Day after day, they are educed by media hardsell and peer group pressures into a hypnotic state where the dictates of desire begin to override everything else - even reality. Slowly, we believe they are learning to redefine themselves and to judge their ability to succeed - or even to be happy - on the basis of the level of their material possessions. Here, in the capital of India, the consumer ethic has overrun the body now seems to take the lead. This has resulted in a visible change in attitudes. Poverty is no longer seen as insurmountable (without education, social access and requisite professional skills). A new set of values based on the ability to make money any way has begun to dominate our thinking. The social concern and 'guilt' at other people's poverty is also being overcome in the race for personal material advancement.

This is not a very charming account of what growing up in a consumerist society could mean for our children. The fact is, however, that teaching children to become consumers is a task which (a) consumerism as social ethic makes imperative; (b) TV carriers forward with tremendous success; and (c) advertising design a curriculum for,
working both on the content and form of a lifelong consumer orientation course which begins during infancy and is an enjoyable learning experiences.

**Impact Consumerism**

Advertising is commonly regarded as business of persuasion which sets about to alter our most basic patterns of consumption. Socially, it encourages the development of a new and different culture to uphold the changing needs of producers who must sell their wares. Often these contradict existing views on social behaviour, alter societal interaction and overturn guiding principles. In other words, the value system required by consumerism may need to push aside those values that do not fit the cut of its cloth. If, for example, we once considered the stem of the neem tree (may by products of the neem are today being widely marketed in the West) the beset toothbrush, then advertisers had to alter that perception and devalue the traditional stick in order to sell their array of toothbrushes and toothpastes.

In much the same way, the advertisers' deal of a consumption units varies from what might be socially the norms. For instance, the concept of sharing is definitely out. A few years, ago, a businessman in Delhi who was speaking to a group of wide-eyed students training for a challenging career, veered off into a discourse on advertising. He felt that advertising was the most important, creative and vital vehicle of change in India (as indeed it has proved to be). Advertising, he said, had the power to alter the course of the nation (India) and completely transform the way people thought. He then rationally and logically explained how advertising could achieve what seemed the impossible.:
1. The most ideal consumption unit, as advertisers and manufacturers, saw it, was the individual.

2. If the advertiser/manufacturer could sell to every individual a long list of household items and personal products, the size of the Indian market would be even more staggering than currently estimated.

3. Given this view, the joint family is not something that enamours of interest the advertisers. In such families there is too much sharing of commodities between too many people.

4. Therefore, the advertiser's first job is to promote the concept of nuclear families, though this has to be done gently and by projecting this unit through visuals which have layers of meaning and ostensibly leave viewers free to interpret the ultimate message as they choose. Eventually, the process would lead up to focussing on individuals, be they single parents or even unmarried persons.

As the study has found, children acquire knowledge about many things from advertising. Today, the most dramatic changes in their way of thinking are reflected in their approach to clothes, to concepts of beauty, to their commitment to certain lifestyle images of which are being constantly superimposed upon their minds through television. The point we wish to emphasise is that TV advertising reinforces certain patterns of consumption by presenting a visual, modelling perspective.

Consumerism tells these children different things, making the poor Consumerism tells the children different things, making the poor child desire so much more than can be had and reassuring the rich ones that as long as they are buying, consuming and wanting materials goods, they're doing just fine. By promoting this ethic, television
provides not just a way of thinking but also a series of images to conform to and identify with. It is this vision, this presentation of a value system and the negation thereby of other alternative viewpoints that we are concerned with. To the child who is watching and absorbing the messages that emanate from television and advertising, what do these images mean and how do they translate into models for behaviour, lifestyle and individual growth and development?

In this context, some of the fears related to the very technology of television (dealt with the first part of this book) stand out as particularly disturbing and it would be relevant to return to some of these. Given current trends, we are likely to find ourselves succumbing to the modern standards that appear to be evolving in a somewhat automatic, natural and impersonal manner around us - guided by forces that we cannot easily identity. These standard become visible in myriad forms within society, and are replicated and reinforced in many ways. The market has changed face - indigenous products are no longer the showpieces of shop windows; they have been replaced by the better packaged, multinational brands which, we are taught to believe, are superior to anything produced in this country.

The media send out millions of impulses to nudge the individual into focusing on personal benefit and private gain - entertainment programmes produced within and outside the country large measure the acquisitive and consumerist fashions of the day. And so it goes on. Nothing in this question the worth of this new thinking. With greater options for the use of television, more and varied programming available, it would seem that genuine competition is being encouraged just as it is in the
marketplace. But is this true? Or does all the competition related to programming options in fact concentrate on few chosen themes, and reflect a growing standardisation of content? Are the new stereotypes so strong as to deny the viability of many other images today?

In *The Power Elite*, C.Wright Mills expressed the view that 'The Media not only give us information; they guide our very experiences. Our standards of credulity, our standards of reality, tend to be set by these media rather than by our own fragmentary experience.' He argues that gradually people wait for confirmation and acceptance by the media of even those things that they have learnt from their own experience. They do not, in other words, trust their own experience until it is mirrored by the media.

**Culture as Commodity**

In attempting to classify TV commercials for their cultural expression we looked at elements such as the language, music, dress, lifestyle, behaviour, relationships and cultural symbols that today's ads choose to employ. From table 2.1 it is clear that Indian advertising was dominated by elements of 'Western culture'.

**Table 2.1: Elements of Culture in Advertising**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Western</th>
<th>Indian/Western</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Shailja Pajpai*

Increasing Westernisation (reflected in Indian advertising's choice of style, music and visual message) characterises the best of television commercials, while a predominantly upper class bias dominates and sets the tone for cultural images swiftly becoming popular and being internatilised despite being alien to the majority. One of
the problems that advertisers say they face is that since there are so many cultural variations in India, it's hard to choose which one to reflect. The easy way out is to deny all of them. But surely this infinite. The easy way out is to deny all of them. But surely this infinite variety should be a goldmine for the advertiser in search of ideas!

**Changing Values**

Up to the late seventies we were, as nation, guided by a set of values given to us by the Independence movement. These values are best ascribed to the fierce pride in 'being Indian, buying Indian'. We never failed to remind ourselves that our's was a poor nation and that there were millions of Indians who did not have the basics - roti, kapada aur makan (food, clothes and shelter).

This awareness did three things: (a) created a belief that citizens had a larger responsibility and that poverty was a collective concern; (b) stemming from a sensitivity to other people's poverty, a vulgar show of wealth was discouraged; (c) efforts were made to contain consumerism, protect the Indian market from being overrun by multinational companies and to let the flag of self-reliance fly high. The political justification for this was that India's hard-won freedom could not be allowed to be pilfered away by permitting dependence on foreign manufacturers. It has, of course, been argued that this protectionism, be it of industry or even television, served the interests of a small group of people.

However, the fact that we produced a wide range of products and ran our own heavy industry was, at the time, reason enough to be proud of the country. In sharp contrast to us, some developing countries were staggering under the burden of economic debt.
In the mid-eighties, liberalization became the new philosophy and the swift changes in the commodity market completely altered the priorities in the nation's shopping list. It replaced the old approach, the cult of protectionism and the politics of 'third world unity' which had harped on the 'threat from Western nations' and even warned against attempts at 'cultural imperialism'. This fiercely independent spirit had made India one of the few nations that did not depend, for instance, on imported TV programming to fill in transmission time.


The idea of television as a discursive field, in relation to which viewers situate themselves to generate meanings and identities, differs from the instrumental definition of the institution of television in the earlier formulations (for instance, intended message, targeted impact). The concept of the 'spectator-subject' emphasize that television offers, for the first time, a technology of power which intimately binds the constitution of identity with the act of seeing. This technology gets enmeshed in the rhythms of everyday domesticity, emerging in viewers' accounts variously as a window on the world, a mirror for self-reflection, a resource for self-improvement and an alien cultural imposition. The 'spectator-subject' is a product of the dividing practices and technologies of the self invoked by viewers range from resistance to negotiated acceptance to complete incorporation of the subject positions offered by televisual discourse. Both the resistance and the incorporation tend to be local and sectoral. For instance, a Goan Catholic viewer in Kamgar Nagar, while resisting being
a subject in civic matters, might negotiate an and fully incorporate the consumer
identity. Likewise, a woman might relate to familial, consumer and ethnic identifies,
ignoring the discourses on citizenship and the state. This does not mean that ethnic,
religious origin, gender and age determine the identities constituted; it means that
these categories, enmeshed as they are in specific relations of power and cultural
prescriptions, limit the range of interpretative and constitutive strategies available to a
viewer.

The concept of the 'spectator-subject' emphasizes the contradictions inherent in the act
of identity constitution. The 'subject' is both a spectator who feels powerless and an
agent, who uses television as a resource. The two are not separate positions that a
specific viewer might adopt, but inextricably linked. An unemployed Goan Catholic
father, who feels helpless in a system where everything, including television, is
controlled by 'them', constructs an ethnic identity, premises on the superiority of his
culture and language, and a familial identity, based on the exercise of power over his
wife and children. A child, who is subject to the discipline of home and school and
silenced by his parental authorities, talks back to televisual advertisements,
constituting him/herself as smart, active and humorous. A woman, feeling confined
by the expectations of humorous. A woman, feeling confined by the expectations of a
patriarchal culture, wields power in convert ways and is drawn into televisual and
cinematic narratives of the avenging angle. In other words, resistance is an essential
features of the exercise of power, which emanates not from some monolithic source
but is wielded at every level of the order. To some extent, every subject wields power
and resists power.
Text and Socialisation

Krishna Kumar, in Social Character of Learning (1994) attributes to the story a 'socialising' function. It is important to discuss how a text might socialise, for in norms usage, socialisation results from encounter between children and the adults around them, first the parents and other members of the family, and later, the members of the larger community. A story forces us to see the world from viewpoints other than our own. It forces us in the sense that it leaves us with no choice once we agree to pay attention to it. We would fail to see the point of an action narrated in it if we do not at least momentarily take on the position of the persons engaging in the action. Narrative texts, engage us in a sequence of symbolic participation in the world. By agreeing to participate in this way, we place ourselves in the roles attributed to the characters and thereby extend our acquaintance with these roles. The experience of these characters becomes our experience.

The process of involvement in a text differs from that of involvement in a social situation mainly because it permits us a safe distance from the emotional tangles facing the characters depicted in the text. The distance protects us from the responsibility of taking decision of acting; it allows us to be 'spectators' in the sense in which Britton (1970) uses this term. As spectators, we are both in the situation and out of it/our emotions are stirred by it, and at the same time we can appreciate, if we care to, the means by which our emotions are being stirred. This aspects of encounter with texts, however, does not prevent the formation of collective patterns of response. Recurrence of certain types of characters, styles of narration, choice of incidents, and choice of locations in texts may act as a pattern forming force on individual readers' responses. In principles, each reader may be free to reflect upon texts as a unique
spectator, with his own repertoire of experiences; yet, readers may act as collectivities whose responses are similar and predictable. This may be the result of accretive exposures as through the presentation of texts in the modern media and in institutions of mass education. These systems specialise in the preparation, assembling and transmission of texts in a systematic manner. Patterning of symbols under the auspices of mass education is not altogether different from what happens in the folklore of a culture; it is only more accentuated because formal educational arrangements involve conscious and carefully monitored organization of symbolic resource.

Modern media like television require an even greater measure of organisation of symbolic resources. This is partly because of the extraordinary reach of these media, and the act that their reach is not dependent upon prerequisites such as literacy or education. The potential audience of each programme prepared for television is many times larger than that of a successful literary text. This is one reason why the preparation of television texts is fraught with extra caution exercised by those involved in text-preparation in response to the demands and conditions imposed on them by the owners of telecasting technology. In India, the owner is the state whose bureaucrats are acutely aware of the role that television plays in the creation and maintenance of a political climate. Choice of symbols and their patterning is understood to have immediate as well as far-reaching implications for the political order. Hence, artistic freedom and spontaneity are held as inconsequential in comparison to the need to follow orders from above.
Like textbooks, television texts need to be studied related to the actual conditions prevailing in a society. But first we need a method of analysis which permits us to study television data in terms of dramatic interaction. We must ensure that our analysis does not isolate language, argument, or image from the drama in which it is placed by the creator of the televised text. Thus, the problem of analysing televised texts is similar to that of analysing school texts. The problem is to study data within the symbolic structure in which they appear in the text. It is necessary in the case of televised texts too to go beyond typical content analysis which breakup the data into quantifiable, interpretable categories, but largely ignores the structural relationships within which the data originally appeared. To go beyond this limitation of conventional content analysis, we require a model which parallels the structure of relationships represented in a programme. Once we have such a model, we can place the content data, whatever form they might be in, within it in order to classify and interpret them.

Text And Values

Krishana Kumar conducted studies to analyse the relationship of text and values. These studies were inspired by the idea that educational texts are powerful media and therefore deserve close analysis. The idea is quite common but is seldom critically examined. It does appear as if popularity endows texts with a certain power, but it is not easy to say precisely what this power is and how it acts. Do texts influence us directly, in the sense that they 'tell' or 'suggest' to us which values, attitudes, and courses of action might be better for us? Or do they influence us by creating an ethos in which certain behaviours and values acquire popular appeal? Studies of readers' response to literature offer no clear-cut answer even though a very large number of
such studies have been conducted. One finding which is shared by several studies is what that response to literature is a person-specific process. It involves highly individual capacities, associations, and projections. True, but there are widely shared patterns of response in any society. Publishers of books often seem to know these patterns, and so do many authors. How do these patterns arise? Answers to this question can be found in the writings of scholars such as Burke (1945) and Lesser (1957) who, among many others, reflected on the problem, but empirical studies of response to literature suggest no clear, solution.

In the context of television as well, researchers have been extremely reluctant to attribute viewers' behaviour to the impact of what they watched. There are indeed few choices in terms of methodology to prove such an impact through empirical research. On the other hand, the belief that television influences people is very widespread indeed. Why else would advertisers pay the high prices they do get a few seconds to beam their 'message'? and why would governments bother to keep television under their control? But apart from this kind of logical evidence, the fact that television is related to rise of violence in society is becoming increasingly hard to refute.

Defining Influence

In everyday life, we come across any number of people who express their appreciation of an article, book or film by saying, 'It made a great impact on me'. Students often tell their teachers how the readings is a course they took 'influenced' them. The influence may not last long, but we cannot say that all of it necessary withers away. The real problem is to define the nature of this influence. Our choices are:
(a) what we read tells us or suggests what to do;
(b) what we read shows us what others do in given situations:
(c) what we read creates a fraternity between us and others who have read the same thing, thus creating a common experience and understanding.

Reading that come under (a) are very few. Literary writings rarely 'tell' us what to do the way medicine wrappers and job manuals do. Some kinds of writings, those which aim specifically at moral reform, do make 'suggestions' about desirable behaviour. Such writings are seldom treated as serious or high-quality literature, but it is true that serious works of advice fairly directly. Tulsidas' *Ramcharitmanas* is an example of this kind of literature, and we can find such instance in similar works associated with the religio-cultural traditions of different societies. The Bible, for instance, tells us what to do with our lives in fairly explicit terms. But even other kinds of works, those which do not have religious associations, may contain passages that tell us what to do with our lives, or which suggest preferable ways of acting. Novels by Premchand, Maugham, Exupery, and Hemingway, for example, could give us dozens of such passages. One could find many readers who would have pondered on such passages and underlined them in order to return to them some day. If one went beyond fiction, into discursive literature, many writings by Russell, Fromm and Barthes would fall into the category of literature that tells or suggests to us what to do.

Possibility (b) is far easier to support. The process it describes occurs all the time. Children and adults alike find in literary writings, particularly fiction, a credible extension of their ordinary life. We read about people we have never seen, yet we treat them as if they were real. Howsoever hard a school of literary criticism may have
hit Bradleyan characterology, the common reader does think of characters as if their existence were not confined to the printed text. Research on response to literature gives us plenty of evidence that readers deal with characters in fiction as if they were real people. In order to make sense of fictional characters we use our own life experiences as a reference point. We 'approve' or 'disapprove' of characters and relate to them emotionally. Several studies show that children do not differentiate between fictional characters and real people in the manner in which they discuss their motives and pursuits. But it is not just children who 'suffer' when the hero of the story suffers, or feel pleased when the hero's problems are satisfactorily resolved. Fiction forces us to get involved in affairs quite removed from our own life. It 'generalisers' the characters' concerns the way an ancient Indian school of aesthetics pointed out in the case of drama.

How does the emotional involvement we experience with one or more characters become the source of 'influence'? Or does it? Quite a few people have discussed the vicarious experience that fiction offers as a liberalising influence.

The third above (c) is somewhat different from the other two in that it transfer our attention away from the text and to the people who read it. Basically, it says that texts contribute to the wealth of symbolic forms that people use to bind themselves together. The fact that several people have read the same text or watched the same televised text builds a community among them. The more popular a text, the wider the community it creates. The more popular text simply enhances the role that language performs all the time, that of giving people a symbolic form with which to size up reality. The popularity of a text strengthens this symbolic capacity. A text such as
Ramcharitmanas, about which several million literate as well as literate people in north-central India have known for about four hundred years, has a great symbolic capacity precisely because it is shared so widely. The case of educational texts is similar. The fact that they are used so widely, under the auspices of a system which reaches out to a very large leadership, gives them an enormous symbolic capacity of the kind we are discussing.

Functions of Form

So far the discussion of 'influence' has been confined to the content of texts—the world portrayed in them. Let us now consider another source of influence that texts have. It lies in the 'form'. This term may be less specific than 'genre', but it serves our purpose better. The purpose is to look at features such as length, pacing, and medium. Depending on features such as these, different kinds of texts make very specific demands on us. They force us to organise our time, spaces, and relationship differently. The audio-visual character of televised texts, for example, demands that we sit in front of the TV set in a room at a certain hour. The demand has in it the hidden set of values that place a premium or private, family space. However communication the content of a televised text may be, it must surrender to, or at least confront, the message of its hardware which demands and endorses the architecture of the typical middle class urban home. Watched in a community centre capable of accommodating a crowd of 50 or 100 people, the little screen becomes a pathetic toy. In this role, it is altogether incomparable to its predecessor, the cinema, which negated the privacy of recreational space. We cannot associate cinema with private space simply because it forced people to come out of their house. Even women in backward
district towns were no exception; they too were brought out of their homes. The cinema screen created a socially shared space in front of it.

The impact of form on people's routines and on the mode of community is no less evident in the context of the written medium. The English novel emerged as a prominent literary genre at the time when an urban middle class was establishing itself. In the formation of the attitudes of this class towards privacy, leisure, and individuality, the novel as a genre had no small role to play. The conditions for the novel to become a popular form were created by changes in the economic organization of society, but the translation of these conditions into commonly held perceptions, into a style of life, must be attributed to cultural forces, such as the novel as a genre (Watt 1957). In a different context, we can trace the popularity of Tulsi's epic, the *Ramacharitmanas*, to form it provided for poorly interconnected villages and hamlets of the Gangetic belt and the Vidhyas to forge a durable cultural repertoire. The leisurely pace of Tulsi's poetry and its dependence on metaphor as a means of exposition are among the features which make the *Ramacharitmanas* so characteristic of the oral yet highly literate culture of rural Uttar Pradesh rural Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar.

School texts, offer an interesting example of the values associates with form. The dominance of the short story in the typical reading text book for elementary grades is clearly related to the time available for each lesson. The Indian education system demands strict adherence to a daily scheme of 35-minute periods for each subject. In such a system it is indeed convenient to have a short story as the basic reading and exercise material. Novels, even short novels are rarely included in the syllabus for
school, and when they are taught, the teacher deals with them episode by episode. Since Indian school culture revolves around the prescribed text, neither the teacher nor the students can think of organising their time without the text. Hence the preference for short pieces that can be independently reach in 35-minute slots. Even in those system where the daily time-table is not a rigid as it is in India, the short story continues to be the preferred form lessons in school readers. It provides a manageable length of content for the teacher, who chooses to work with the school reader (for it is not compulsory to use it as it is in India) before going on to organising other activities.

**Synthesizing the discourse on Television**

Although the debate and discussion on Television has been quite fierce and critical, it almost seems to be a like a initial reaction to something which came all of a sudden. Most of studies are in the early 90s which try to look at the immediate reaction to change in the content as well as the exposure. The concern there are more in terms of what is Television doing to our children and culture. There is discussion which relates to certain other aspects of the television such as gender issue and the modernisation and developing angle. As is normal, once the content and exposure time become routinised as well as Indianised, the concerns seem to feeble down. The focus shifts to call for the quality of programming and indigenous productions. The channels also realising this, strategically respond by Indianising the programmes and focusing more on the Indian scenario. This not only satisfies the viewer but also silences critics. But it is not difficult to see through the façade of the apparent change. And again the issue is not the content or the exposure time but the nature of the content and the nature of interaction. This happens irrespective of the content and irrespective of the exposure time, although both factors are important.
From this study’s point of view, the contemporary discourse on television does not touch upon the basic issues of interaction and structure. The concerns largely remains external and superficial and run almost a parallel to the west in television’s early days there. The discourse in the West has moved much beyond the issues and concerns which we are facing today. Besides the basic social, cultural and economic paradigm which the western society is based on is fundamentally from ethos of East. In particular, the question of locating and measuring change in terms of variable like consumerism is not very useful or productive. This is just the tip of the ice burg. The changes which a change in nature of the interaction produces is far more serious and fundamental. Weber talked of the Protestant ethic which changed the course of later history. Sometimes, the change in an ethic does not happen for several reasons and the fundamentals remain strong. But a system, a technology and an institution like television is just the catalyst which has the potential for changes for basic ethic of the Indian people. People who believe in Karma and Dharma and the social agencies which help maintain the status quo as well as allow for dynamic change in self and society now face another agency which has power and technique which not only combines their own but has much more to offer. Does power and capacity of television in terms of text, technique, and technology has as the potential of competing with the traditional social agencies and may be substituting them. Is the ‘socialisation’ by Television similar to the one effected by social agency? Is television a social agency? Some of these aspects have either been ignored or have not been explored by the contemporary studies.