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Communication Education in Mexico: Overall Trends

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A. Introduction

The teaching of communication in Mexico has taken surprising directions in recent years. Both a proliferation of different approaches to schools of communication and a decline in the quality of their programs has accompanied growth in the programs. We see this in the most recent statistics generated by the Research Center for Applied Communication (CICA) in its study, "Regional Map of Communication Education in Latin America," a study sponsored by the Latin American Federation Faculties of Social Communication (FELAFACS) and UNESCO. As an overview of communication education, we present the highlights of the report along with some thoughts about the direction that the teaching of communication in Mexico has taken.

The first question that comes to mind when one examines the outlook for teaching communication in Mexico is this: What is the universe of communication programs in Mexico composed of?

The world of education and training in communication in Mexico and elsewhere includes everything related to communication taking place in educational institutions. Furthermore, it involves training activities and instruction outside formal education that occurs in consulting firms or producers of integrated communication for organizations (advertising, public relations, and organizational communication).

The data reported here refer only to those activities that occur within educational establishments or in courses that occur as a part of school programs. All other training activities in communication (courses, seminars, or training) do not appear her but will be published in future investigations.

B. Communication programs in schools and universities in Mexico

Throughout almost 50 years of formal teaching of communication in the country (taking as reference the founding of the first degree in Communication Sciences in 1960), communication programs have grown in number. They have taken different names according to their approaches, with an emphasis or pre-specialization set according to their needs. This study identified 1,006 communication programs, with different names related to the discipline. These fall into four categories: Communication, Marketing, Design, and Journalism, with several subgroups:

- Communication includes communication study itself as well as communication joined with other disciplines related to broader social issues such as culture, education, social communication, and so on (75%).
- Marketing includes the areas of corporate or organizational communication, often marketing and advertising, organizational communication, marketing and public relations, corporate communication, image building, among others (19%).
- Design incorporates degrees such as audiovisual design, multimedia, digital imaging, and others (2%).
- Journalism includes itself, as well as related areas such as journalism and public image, journalism and public opinion, etc. (4%).

The vast majority (75%) of programs name themselves in a manner explicitly related to communication itself. Sometimes these appear with the name of anoth-

er discipline that often deals with broader social referents such as the mass media, social groups, cultural studies, education, among others. Another 19% employ names more directly related to businesses or organizations. This portion manifests a concern for the proper functioning of organizations and businesses in the country; with a fifth of the programs, this indicates a growing interest in organizatinonal communication.

One can conclude that Mexico remains at the beginning of training in digital design, with only 2% of communication programs using that term. However, many of the other, general communication programs most likely include specific materials designed to train young people in interactivity and digitization, whose importance continually increases in society. Finally, the category of journalism has only 4% of the total. The journalistic tradition in Mexico dates from 1949, when the "Carlos Septien Garcia" School of Journalism began as the first school of journalism in the country. However, the discipline of journalism as an exclusive area of concentration has not grown; communication as a discipline has taken the lead, at least in quantitative terms. It has incorporated teaching journalism among other areas of study.

C. The universe of communication programs in Mexico

This report presents statistics from a database developed by 33 researchers who collected data on 1,006 programs of communication, journalism, public relations, marketing and/or audio-visual design. In previous studies, the National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education [la Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior] identified 349 undergraduate programs with a total of 72,663 students (2005). More recently, in 2007, that number rose to 462 undergraduate programs and a total number of 72,224 students. The 2009 figure shows another drop in the total number of students. (See Table 1 for programs by state and region.)

The current database information produced by the Research Center for Applied Communication (CICA) shows that the distribution of communication studies programs is concentrated in three regions: nearly 20% in the Federal District, 13% in the State of Mexico, and 10% in Baja California Norte. Other significant percentages, approaching 5%, appear in the states of Coahuila, Puebla, and Veracruz, followed by 3% in Hidalgo, Michoacan, Nuevo Leon, and Queretaro (Table 1). The states mentioned above have a number of important programs; their concentration presents a

Federal entity	Number of programs	Percent of total
Aguascalientes	9	.89
Baja California Norte	97	9.64
Baja California Sur	10	0.99
Campeche	14	1.39
Chiapas	14	1.39
Chihuahua	6	0.59
Coahuila	56	5.56
Colima	2	.19
Distrito Federal	199	19.78
Durango	18	1.78
Estado de México	127	12.62
Guanajuato	50	4.97
Guerrero	11	1.09
Hidalgo	33	3.28
Jalisco	19	1.88
Michoacán	31	3.08
Morelos	20	1.98
Nayarit	11	1.09
Nuevo León	31	3.08
Oaxaca	9	0.89
Puebla	45	4.47
Querétaro	28	2.78
Quintana Roo	14	1.39
San Luis Potosí	14	1.39
Sinaloa	8	0.80
Sonora	29	2.88
Tabasco	6	0.60
Tamaulipas	25	2.48
Tlaxcala	8	0.80
Veracruz	48	4.77
Yucatán	8	0.80
Zacatecas	6	0.59

Table 1. Communication programs by location.

West Central	
Northwest	
Northeast	
Southeast Gulf	
Valle de Mexico	

problem of competition among the different institutions in their states. Information centers that provide the discipline of information or a related field compound that problem. We should also mention that the maximum number of programs in a given region is 199

(the Federal District), while the minimum, two programs, occurs in Colima.

As for the regions, we established five divisions for the country. Clearly, the Valley of Mexico region contains most of the programs, with 379 (almost 38%). Next comes the Southeast Gulf Region, 177 (almost 18%), followed by the West Central Region, 170 (almost 17%). The Northwest region contains 162 (16%), followed by the Northeast Region with the fewest programs, 118 (not quite 12%).

West Central Region

The West Central Region has nine states with almost one third of the programs in communication in the state of Guanajuato. Michoacan and Queretaro come next, followed by the state of Colima, which as already noted has the fewest number of communication programs.

Northwest Region

The five states of the Northwest Region (Sonora, Sinaloa, Durango, Baja California Norte, and Baja California Sur) present an area of high contrast in terms of communication programs. On one hand, we find Sinaloa with only eight programs and, on the other, we see Baja California Norte with 97 programs, the third highest in the country. Thus, more than half of the 162 programs in the region are concentrated in Baja California Norte. This state has the highest population of its group, 2,844,469 inhabitants. It is also the most urbanized with 93% of the people living in urban centers. Employment is mainly in trade, restaurants, and hotels; they produce a larger proportion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) than the other four states in the same region (3.6%). These factors, coupled with the closeness that they have to the United States, may explain the phenomenon of the explosion of communication schools in the state.

Northeast Region in Mexico

Of the four states in the Northeast Region, Coahuila has 56 of the 118 communication programs in the region. Of the four states Nuevo Leon is the most densely populated, while Coahuila is the least populated. As for economic activity the maquila provides the most important industry in Coahuila; in Nuevo León social, community, and personal services dominate. Nuevo Leon contributes the largest share to national GDP with 7.5%, while the others (Tamaulipas, Chihuahua, and Coahuila) contribute less than half of that (3.3%).

Southeast Gulf Region

The Southeast Region includes 10 Gulf states and has a total of 177 communication programs, of which over half are found only in two states: Veracruz with 48 and Puebla with 45. The most important components from a quantitative point of view, then, are these two states. Veracruz has many programs due to its high population (though more than 40% of its population live in rural areas). The dominant economic activities are the communal, the social, and personal; here the population figures possibly indicate people's desire for social mobility through education. Hence the proliferation of educational services.

Puebla also has a high percentage of rural population (almost 30%) with a relatively high level of non Spanish-speaking rural dwellers (12%). The labor market has a very different composition from Veracruz, making it prominent in manufacturing. The high population density in both states explains the need for having many educational institutions.

In contrast, the state of Oaxaca has an average population but with an indigenous population of 35%, with 5% non Spanish speakers. The low demand for educational opportunities can be explained by the fact that 35% of the population is rural. The also may explain the fact that this state has fewer communication programs.

Region Valle de Mexico

The region *Valle de Mexico* poses sharp contrasts with the Federal District and the State of Mexico having 326 out of the 379 communication programs in the area. This Region is highly centralized, with a large concentration of educational activities, which is also reflected in its economy, politics, culture, and other areas of national development.

The Federal District contains nearly nine million people (8.4% of the total population) virtually all urban dwellers. It also has the highest index of formal education in the nation with an average of 10.2 years of education (indicating upper secondary education). Community, social, and personal services give the District a 21.8% share of National GDP. This explains why they can afford the large number of 199 schools or programs in the territory.

On the other hand, the State of Mexico has a population of over 14 million people, and 13.6% of all communication programs in the country. Although much of the population lives in urban areas, still 13% live outside the urban areas. Their average level of schooling is 8.7 years of formal education (almost fin-

ishing high school) and 3% speaking indigenous languages. The main industry is manufacturing, specifically the manufacture of metal products, machinery, and equipment. It contributes 9.7% to the national GDP. These conditions, plus the proximity to the national center of Mexico City, make the state of Mexico a state that can support many communication schools or programs.

Communication Programs in Urban Areas

More than half of the communication programs identified in the survey are located in the capital cities of the states. The rest appear in cities of second and third importance. There are virtually no communication programs in rural areas. This urban concentration of programs points to the fact that training in communication, or any of its related disciplines, appears as a need arising from the concentration of populations and an increase in the professional activities that have to do with industrialization and services.

Universities/schools with communication programs

The system of universities or schools in which communication programs operate in Mexico is predominantly private. Out of 1,006 programs, 802 (80%) belong to the private sector, leaving only 204 in public universities. Communication education therefore arises mainly from private initiatives and, in quantitative terms, has achieved an exponential growth unmatched in other Latin American countries. Many of these initiatives have been established and developed outside the framework of educational laws and regulations and quality control by government agencies and academic accreditations. Proof of this is that the Accreditation Council of Communication (CONAC) has accredited only 16 programs in communication nationwide and that CONEICC lists only 74 school members of communication.

Indeed the figures we refer to throughout this essay reveal the level of quality that some communication programs have in Mexico. The proliferation of units or campuses with the designation *communication* and its affiliated programs in the country as well as the fact that they do not have any certification by the Ministry of Education are matters of high priority for the country.

D. Conclusion

This study of Mexico found 1,006 communication programs taught in the context of formal educational institutions. There are a variety of designations that apply to teaching the discipline of communication, including categories related to:

- Communication itself coupled with social issues such as culture, media collectives, or communication and education;
- Business or organizational communication that relate to disciplines such as marketing, public relations, advertising, and corporate communications;
- Design that has to do with digital audiovisual design, computerized moving images, the creation of video games, among others; and
- Journalism, the study of public communication, public opinion itself, and so on.

The regionalization of programs in Mexico indicates considerable concentration in some cities, with almost 40% of programs in the Valley of Mexico with an additional concentration in Baja California Norte, which has grown very significantly, setting it apart from the rest of country with 97 communication programs. One possible explanation for this may be the closeness of this state to the United States of America, as well as its population and the kind of economic activities carried out in addition to its high urban concentration.

The evidence for the presence of communication programs in urban areas points to the fact that they arise in the midst of population centers and from economic activities associated with industrialization and the provision of services of all kinds.

Finally, we should highlight the fact that 80% of these programs appear as private sector initiatives. While many of these are clear examples of success stories and offer high quality education, these constitute very few of the total. The vast majority of the programs have developed outside of legal and institutional frameworks, licensing and supervision by the Ministry of Public Education (SEP), and its quality control, both in their curricula and in their faculties, guidelines, managers, systems assessment, and certification. This marks the whole sprawl of an industry that best resembles a business formed to obtain easy profits, rather than strengthening education and training in communication for the country.

Researchers participating in this study

Below are the names and institutions that participated in this effort: Dr. José Eduardo Borunda Escobedo of the Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua Ciudad Juarez Campus; Dr. Casas Pérez Maria de la Luz of the Instituto Tecnologico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey Campus Cuernavaca; Mtra. Ivone Castro Cota at the University of the West, Unit Los Mochis; Dr. Chong Lee White at the

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Book Reviews

Cavelty, Myriam, Victor Mauer, and **Sai Felica Krishna-Hensel** (Eds.). *Power and Security in the Information Age: Investigating the Role of the State in Cyberspace*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2007. Pp. xiv, 167. ISBN: 978-0-7546-7088-9 (hbk.) $29.99 (online: $26.99 at www.ashgatepublishing.com).

In five central chapters, introduced by a lucid and far-reaching preface and a dense and ambiguous "conclusion," this co-edited, co-authored volume published in December 2007 raises the specter and the difficulty of analyzing the threats and risks in cyberspace to the relationship of the Internet with the notion of the cyberstate, particularly its ability to control information about its citizens, infiltrate enemy systems, monitor protections, and reach across borders to learn about new information. The role of countries in both overseeing and cultivating the range of information systems—financial, civil, governmental, and military—are, to understate the matter, of sufficient complexity that the best minds of the generation must address them. Despite the difficulties of a multiple edited, multiple authored text, involving professors from Switzerland, the U.S., and Ireland, this book advances the argument in important ways. It is best suited for a reference library, graduate students in political science and international relations, and less so for the undergraduate communication classroom.

In her preface, Auburn University Professor Sai Felicia Krishna-Hensel outlines the main challenges facing governments and policy professionals: (1) the Internet is being used in criminal modes; and (2) controlling criminality undermines the "freedoms" that informed the development of the web. The simultaneous tension between the free flow of information and the potential for terrorism is more than any one country can control or pretend to oversee, and as a result the need for cooperation among governments has never been greater, if mainly for their collective defense.

As chapters 1-3 outline, the debates and implications for public policy are interconnected, ideologically and technically, and challenging. While standardiza-tion of security initiatives is a given "good," integration of national, regional, and international security standards is a new imperative. Yet this is a complex and complicated business, both at the technical level, as the authors point out, and at the level of defense, especially as it pertains to terrorism, as the fourth to sixth chapters of the book detail. In a post 9-11 world, scrubbing defense secrets, and legislation such as the Patriot Act and the UN Security Resolution 1373 were designed to protect against terrorist threats. As the global culture of information exchange develops, a growing culture of cybersecurity in advanced countries cannot overlook the challenges that are simultaneously growing in the developing economies of the world as well.

The volume concludes that the central security policy today is to protect society from "asymmetrical" threats that arise from the information revolution. Security requirements are increased not only by the inseparability of basic civil systems such as transportation from the military; by the globalization processes that result from the opening up of the marketplace to liberal, democratic forces; and by the free exchange of news, information, opinion, private, and public data. All of these at once stimulate cross border exchanges and cross national infrastructures, but the widespread access to telecommunications networks exacerbates the need for security requirements globally. So where does that leave the State, the Nation accustomed to dominating the news, ideologically? It must position each state in a newly aggressive posture, at once defensive, self-protective, and pointedly into surveillance. New forms of warfare, as the authors point out, have emerged from the strategic minds that transcend the marketplace, commerce, information flow, and news. The complexity of the infrastructure and concentration of information thrusts the Nation State into a role of unprecedented importance. The question, it would seem, is for the democratic order to temper the urge to self-protect with the allure of collaborative, shared risk that might diminish the threats to any one international actor. At the same time, and from the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, precision militarism, based on precise information about the enemy, is the new world order that needs to be addressed by liberal democracies dedicated to the freedom of ideas, news, information exchange, science, and public opinion in the global mediated public square. It would seem that one or the other tide must prevail, but the irony and the interest of this book is to suggest that both might

co-exist: one system on the surface and readily accessible; the other hidden, surreptitious, and equally available.

The volume includes a reference list and an index.

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Malesevic, Sinisa. *The Sociology of Ethnicity*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. 2004. Pp. 200. ISBN 978-0-7619-4041-8 (hbk.) $106.00; 978-0-7619-4042-5 (pb.) $53.95.

Formulating a definition for the term "ethnicity" has vexed scholars across disciplines, resulting in a conceptual potpourri reeking of ideological factionalism. For example, a somewhat facile stance—bordering on the facetious—dismisses ethnicity as a social construct invented by anthropologists to ensure they find what they seek. One of the more radical definitions rejects classifying people along primordial racial lines in favor of viewing ethnicity as an "informal political organization." Thus, London stockbrokers constitute an "ethnic group" because they collectively strive for material spoils—and, for good measure, they also tend to marry into their own class. So thought Abner Cohen, whose much lauded anthropological field studies likened stockbrokers to Hausa traders—in cattle and kola nuts—in Nigeria because both groups derived their identity from commerce rather than from racial or tribal origins.

Cohen's theories are among the more salient surveyed by Sinisa Malesevic in *The Sociology of Ethnicity*, an attempt to systematize and critique the thicket of ideas grown dense around *ethnicity*—a term coined in 1953 by the sociologist David Riesman, best known for his treatise on conformity, *The Lonely Crowd*. Malesevic manages his task through selectivity, limiting his analyses to the eight research paradigms he deems the most influential. These he labels Neo-Marxism, Functionalism, Symbolic Interactionism, Sociobiology, Rational Choice Theory, Elite Theory, Neo-Weberianism, and Anti-foundationalism. This classification scheme structures the book. A chapter is devoted to each paradigm, which Malesevic unfolds by summarizing the seminal writings of like-minded thinkers. Malesevic does more than simply broker ideas, however. He critiques, adjudicates, and defends. Take Malesevic's defense of sociobiology, a favorite target of those "socially conscious" critics who fear implications that ethnic superiority is genetically determined:

Although sociobiological arguments have been occasionally used [as proof of racial inferiority] this type of criticism [of sociobiology] is not only analytically weak but is often very counterproductive. First, any systematic theoretical attempt to explain the motives of human behavior is open to misinterpretation, simplification, political manipulation, and general misuse. If we hold Darwin responsible for racism and sexism, we can, with equal vigor, hold Thomas Aquinas responsible for the Spanish Inquisition, Rousseau for the Jacobin Reign of Terror . . . . [It is] pointless to condemn or prevent academic inquiry on the grounds of its potential misuse. (pp. 86-87)

This is a good sample of the quality of the author's thinking and the fair-mindedness of his commentary.

Malesevic's chapter on Elite Theory—which features Cohen's work—is notable on two counts: (1) its pertinence to the present-day global crisis created by unregulated Wall Street machinations; and (2) its showing the difficulty of attempting to place certain thinkers in paradigmatic boxes; the ideas subsumed under Elite Theory—as in other chapters—are multidisciplinary. This is apparent in the adage "ethnicity is politics," which describes Elite Theory's foundational position (p. 111). States Cohen:

Ethnicity in modern society is the outcome of intensive interaction between different culture groups and not the result of a tendency to separatism. It is the result of intensive struggle between groups over new strategic positions of power within the structure of the new state places of employment, taxation, funds for development, education, political positions, and so on. (p. 116)

The writers classed as Elite Theorists discount nominal differences among political and social systems. Regardless of the appellation—democracy, monarchy, socialism—a minority always dominates the majority. Just as in pre-modern times, social order is shaped by an oligarchy's incessant attempt to impose its will upon the masses. Although technology and other factors have precipitated increased mass political participation, "in reality social structures remain resolutely hierarchical, and change is little more than a camouflage for the elite's tighter grip on political power" (p. 112). Essentially, power is acquired and held through a blend of symbol manipulation and brute force. Malesevic traces the roots of this stance to Machiavelli. By placing symbol manipulation at the

center of political and economic life, Elite Theory steers social analysis into the realm of psychology or the investigation of the "irrational."

A chief proponent of the irrational nature of social action was Vilfredo Pareto, the Italian thinker who formulated the "80-20 principle." The principle states that 80% of any given outcome derives from 20% of the possible causes. (Pareto had noticed that 20% of the Italian population owned 80% of the nation's land.) In explaining how the few manage to dominate the many, Pareto revived Machiavelli's metaphoric dictum that holding power requires the combined characteristics of the lion and the fox: The lion possesses determination and frightening brute strength, but is susceptible to the cleverly laid traps that the fox evades through natural cunning. Applied to the human domain, fox-like cunning represents the manipulation of symbols: slippery persuasive stratagems whose successful deployment plays upon the irrationality of human behavior. Pareto termed the "non-logical" motives that govern human beings "residuas." These "are deeply rooted sentiments and impulses" that "are the paramount and stable source of individual action" (p. 112). However, to maintain enough social order to enable societies to function, these irrational impulses or residuas must be given a rational veneer. This involves "encoding and formulating" residuas as "reasoned and rational." Thus residuas are transformed into intellectual constructs called "derivations," which are rational justifications

> for deeply irrational motives. Official elite claims, such that they struggle "to safeguard democracy," "to protect the Islamic way of life" or "to preserve socialism," amount to nothing more than justification of the personal or group drive to hold or acquire power. In this process more successful elites are able, through the use of supple derivations, to intensify mass residuas. The popular support of leaders is reflected in a ruler's ability to meet mass sentiments. (p. 112-13)

In agitating mass sentiment, the notion of ethnicity is a useful tool. The familiar ploy, as Malesevic explains it, involves dressing up particular interests as essential to universal well-being. This ruse becomes evident during power struggles between political elites who use ethnic rituals and symbols to mobilize the masses. "The emotional appeals to potent symbols such as the common ethnic ancestry or ethnic hero worship is the most expedient device for elites in achieving their ends" (p. 117). In *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*, Paul

Brass shows the flammability of cultural markers such as the Urdu language, sacred cows, and Shari'a law. These markers were manipulated by competing Hindu and Muslim elites. These factions, however, used only the most expedient symbols—rather than those central to each religion—subtly distorting their meanings. For example, the inversion of the statement "'Hindus revere the cow' into 'those who revere the cow are Hindus' illustrates an elite's power to transform the existing cultural markers into forceful political symbols for ethno-mobilization" (p. 119).

The weakest chapter in *The Sociology of Ethnicity* is Malesevic's concluding attempt to examine the 1994 Rwandan genocide through the lens of each of the eight paradigms. This exercise feels forced and lends itself to unwitting reification. For example, "The neo-Marxist explanation would focus on the colonial strategy of *divide and rule* pursued by both German and Belgian colonizers" (p. 160). This explanation, of course, is entirely Malesevic's hypothetical extrapolation, which he imputes to an imaginary and monolithic tribe called the neo-Marxists. Hence the reification.

Stumble though he might, Malesevic is always compelling. He evenhandedly fulfills his stated purpose of surveying the leading theories on ethnicity. In doing so, Malesevic introduces the reader to a vast range of first-rate thinkers. Implicitly, *The Sociology of Ethnicity* also demonstrates the artificiality of attempting to grasp the complexities of the social world through academic divisions.

The book includes references (pp. 185-194), a name index (pp. 195-196), and a subject index (pp. 197-200).

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Schiller, Dan, *How to Think about Information*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007. Pp. 288. ISBN13: 978-0-252-03132-8 (hbk.) $35.00; 978-0-252-07755-5 (pb.) $25.00.

It is a tribute to the power of this book's insights that when reading it you find yourself reverting to your dog-eared copies of other important books: *Empire and Communications* by Harold Innis; *Communication as Culture* by James W. Carey; and *The Political Economy of Media* by Robert W. McChesney. And to works by Herb Schiller, this author's father.

However, Dan Schiller, located like several of the above scholars at the University of Illinois, has a paper trail of his own to be proud of. His previous works

include *Digital Capitalism: Networking the Global Market System*; *Theorizing Communication: A Historical Reckoning*; *Telematics and Government*; and *Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism.*

So we embark on this culture and information technology journey guided by previous scholarship in the United States and abroad; Raymond William and Stuart Hall appear regularly in Schiller's writings. We are asked here to reflect on "how to think about information"—is it a *resource* for individual and global development or a product, a *commodity* to enrich corporate profits? Much of the book deals with examining commodification:

> [I]t is helpful to focus not on the commodity in itself but rather on the commodification process. An uneven but ongoing process of commodification is foundational to capitalist development; its historical generalization throughout the informational sphere constitutes a landmark of the contemporary political economy. (p. 21)

The Preface notes that "in this work, 'information' operates as a kind of shorthand to include the converging fields of culture, media, and telecommunications."

Chapter 1 is a slightly revised version of Schiller's essay in *The Political Economy of Information*, (edited by Vincent Mosco and Janet Wasko, 1988). Here he frames contemporary thinking about information in the context of political economy. "We suggest that the Information commodity has become the prime site of contemporary expansion—such as it is—within and for the world market system" (pp. 16-17).

Schiller examines the overlaps and differences between information and culture in Chapter 2. He emphasizes that "often supported by telecommunications infrastructures, Information has become an increasingly significant factor of production across all economic sectors, including agriculture and manufacturing as well as high-tech services" (p. 24). Moving beyond Daniel Bell and the postindustrial theorists, the author notes that "information-commodity theorists begin with capitalism . . ." where "a commodity is a resource that is produced for the market by wage labor." He calls upon Ithiel de Sola Pool, Raymond Williams, and Stuart Hall to enrich his analysis of the relations of cultural and informational production.

Chapter 3 tracks the expansion of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

During the 1980s and especially the 1990s, the largest and fastest reorganization of productive assets in world business history took place, loosely synchronized to make-over what had been a (typically inadequate) public service into a corporate-commercial function. (p. 41)

Schiller concludes, "The digital divide is, most profoundly about the distribution of social power to make policy for the production and distribution of Information resources. Unless the power is broadly shared, democracy itself is threatened" (p. 57).

Chapter 4 gives an informative and useful overview of U.S. telecommunication system development by business users, much of it for their own internal use. Colorful terms begin to appear such as "informationalized capitalism," "broadbandits," "cybernetic capitalism," and "Republic of information." Chapter 5 gives stark data about the telecommunications meltdown in 2001 and 2002, providing "a grim lesson in information-age economics." (It would be interesting to compare these data with the reality of the global financial crisis almost a decade later.)

In Chapter 6 Schiller explores the commodification of the culture industry—books, music, films, blockbusters, star personalities, mass publicity, wide distribution, and market tie-ins, for example. The battle is detailed between U.S. "cultural imperialism" and global struggles for diversity. Again, it would be interesting to have this story updated, especially in the light of a new President and administration and Federal Communication Commission in Washington.

Chapters 7 and 8 provide useful details about the impact of advertising and mobile telephone technology—with data that reach up to about 2005. Both fields have changed since those years, but the figures here are both informative and dramatic.

The final chapter of this valuable book focuses on "China, Information and the World Economy." With China v. Google headlines greeting us today, it's helpful to review recent data on China's reintegration into global capitalism, with emphasis on the ICT sector.

Many of these chapters are updated reprints of Schiller's work previously published elsewhere. However, it is valuable to have all these topics linked and integrated into this volume. Sixty pages of notes and an index add to its value.

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