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A THREAT TO FREEDOM: THE IMPLICATIONS OF ELITE THEORY  
" WHEN APPLIED TO THE AMERICAN MASS MEDIA

A Thesis

by

DANIEL SEAN DUNLOP  
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Submitted to the Graduate School

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MASTER OF ARTS

December 1985

Major Department: Political Science

A THREAT TO FREEDOM: THE IMPLICATIONS OF ELITE THEORY  
WHEN APPLIED TO THE AMERICAN MASS MEDIA

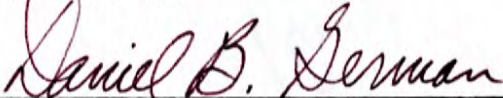
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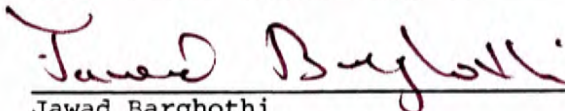
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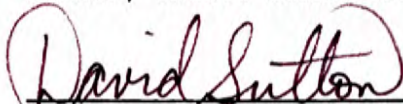
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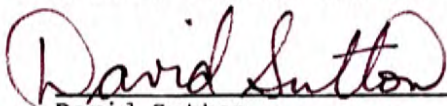
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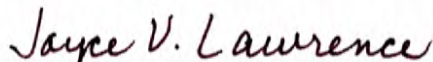
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ABSTRACT

A THREAT TO FREEDOM: THE IMPLICATIONS OF ELITE THEORY  
WHEN APPLIED TO THE AMERICAN MASS MEDIA. (December 1985)

M.A., Appalachian State University

Thesis Chairperson: Daniel German

A basic premise of American government is that the citizenry participates in the policy-making process. In order for the citizenry to participate intelligently and in its best interest, it must be well informed of the issues involved. Most Americans rely on the various forms of the mass media for that information. Recently, a great deal of the literature in the area of communications has dealt with the topic of conglomeration and concentration within the media. However, political scientists have been slow to consider the consequences of this conglomeration on our political system.

For over a decade political scientists have been studying the effects of the media on elections and to some degree on the political socialization process. However, these studies have failed to recognize the potential power of the mass media in the socialization process and its possible replacement or reduction of the traditional socialization agents. This study attempts to bring the concept of political socialization into not the 20th Century, but the 21st Century. We look at the implications of this conglomeration of the media, and the corresponding growth in corporate control of the media.

In Chapter One, we provide an introduction to elite theory and contrast it with several other models of policy-making, laying the foundation upon which the rest of this work shall build.

In Chapter Two, we present our version of the elite model of policy-making, which incorporates the mass media into the power structure in America. We introduce the owners and controllers of the media as the media elite who play a vital role in the policy-making process. We detail the conglomeration and concentration within the media demonstrating the pervasiveness of the media elite's power.

In Chapter Three, we demonstrate how the media elite use the mass media in order to further their economic and political power. We particularly concentrate on the news business and its susceptibility to control by the ruling elites.

In Chapter Four, we provide proposed courses of action for the future which might counter this domination of the media by the power elite. Our main suggestions include the development of alternative sources of information and the development of a media curriculum in public schools. Finally, we conclude our arguments and recommend continued research in the area, providing our study and its bibliographies as a point of departure.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study could not have been possible without the support of several friends and colleagues, who are too numerous to list individually. However, there are a few who cannot go unmentioned. Above all is my friend James Bason whose continued support and friendship has been invaluable. I would also like to thank Eric Sass, Vice President of PBS, for his friendly advice and information; Larry Grossman, President of NBC News, for his guidance and suggestions; Joseph Lorfano, Assistant Manager Public Affairs of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, for the many volumes of information he provided; Dr. Daniel German for his friendship and constant criticism; Chancellor John Thomas for creating an atmosphere where this analysis could take place; Dr. Jawad Barghothi for making graduate school interesting; Dr. Joel Thompson for making graduate school challenging; Janet Richardson for her instruction on the use of word processors; the ladies in CID for the use of their facilities; and all of the others to whom I owe my unending thanks.

Finally, the content and conclusions of this thesis, while influenced by many, are the author's alone. Any errors, and all contained within, must be attributed to him solely, as he is responsible for the work therein, and must take the blame for any and all criticisms.

DEDICATION PAGE

The completion of this project is dedicated to my mother, Patricia A. Dunlop, my father, John W. Dunlop, and my fiancée, Alyson P. McKenzie. My mother is responsible for my liberal character, my father for my conservative nature, and Alyson for giving balance and meaning to my academic pursuits. Combined, they made this project possible. Combined, they share in my accomplishments and defeats.

Daniel S. Dunlop

December 1985

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## CHAPTER 1 - ELITE THEORY REVIEWED

There is an elusiveness about power that endows it with an almost ghostly quality. It seems to be all around us, yet this is "sensed" with some sixth means of perception rather than with the five ordinary senses. We "know" what it is, yet we encounter endless difficulties in trying to define it. We can tell whether one person or group is more powerful than another, yet we cannot measure power. It is an abstract of time, yet as real as a firing squad. (H. Kaufman and V. Jones, "The Mystery of Power." Public Administration Review XIV (1954): 205.)

In the 1800s a man named Jay Gould was immortalized in a popular song of that period. One of the verses from that song follows:

We'll hang Jay Gould from a sour apple tree and bring to quiet  
the plotters of a base monopoly.

The lyrics to a well known rock song of the 1980s, by a group called Pink Floyd, include the following:

By the cold and religious we were taken in hand  
Shown how to feel good and how to feel bad  
Tongue tied and terrified we learned how to pray  
Now our feelings run deep and cold as the clay  
And strung out behind us the banners and flags<sub>2</sub>  
Of our possible pasts lie in tatters and rags.

What do these two songs, written over 100 years apart, have in common? And how do they relate to a discussion of elite theory? The first song was written as a reaction to the ownership of a communications monopoly by Jay Gould who at that time controlled Western Union. Elite theory is highly concerned with the ability of a single man to control an entire industry or a large segment of a particular enterprise. In this case, Jay Gould was, through his monopoly of railroads, telegraphs, and newspapers, able to control much of the flow of

information during the late 19th century. Information was then, as it is now, a highly valued resource.

Today we live in what is commonly called the "age of information." This is the age where the production and processing of information will possibly dominate where once manufacturing and the production of goods led our industrial society. Our second quote, the lyrics to a song by Roger Waters, is addressing one very important aspect of information as a resource: the socialization process. The song writer is discussing the result of manipulation of the masses by those who dominate society and determine our societal norms. At one time these were our parents, the church, peers, and the schools. Today the socialization process might be taking on a new look. The importance of the traditional socializing agents has been reduced by the arrival of a new, more powerful 'socializer' into our homes. This socializer is available 24 hours a day, may reach people of all ages from pre-school to the elderly, and entertains us while we are being socialized. What is this powerful new socializing agent? It is the newspaper which is delivered directly to your home each morning, the evening news program on your television set, the weekly news magazine which summarizes the major events of the last seven days, and so much more. It is the movie you saw last week at the theatre, it is the textbook your child reads from the first day of kindergarten to the last day of college, it is your favorite radio show, and it is the most innocent children's books on your shelf. They are the American Mass Media.

According to Waters, all of the great accomplishments and creativity which were once our "possible pasts" now "lie in tatters and rags." This is because society, through the socialization process,

tells us what to think, who to be, or in Waters' words, "how to feel good and how to feel bad." This lack of creativity and individuality in society as seen by Waters is supposedly the result of the effort of the various socialization agents: the schools, the family, peers, the church, and the media.

When one takes into account the impact of the mass media on the American people, most importantly the impact of television, it must surely be considered one of the most influential and pervasive elements in our culture today.

In only two decades of massive national experience television has transformed the political life of the nation, has changed the daily habits of our people, has molded the style of the generation, made overnight global phenomena of local happenings, redirected the flow of information and values from traditional channels into centralized networks reaching into every home. In other words, it has profoundly affected what we call the process of socialization, the process by which members of our species become human.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Ted Turner, a man renowned for his innovative work in the field of communications, makes the same point but in a more succinct manner:

I really believe that the three networks - I know because I am in the television business, have a dramatic effect on society. The educational system, our government do not have as great an influence on the people of this nation and our young people that these three television networks do, and I can tell you they do not care what they put on.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that television and the mass media in general have such an effect on society should not be surprising. Some of the available statistics are more than convincing:

Television consumes the second largest amount of time in life next to sleeping, and by age six, many children have been exposed to 3,000 to 4,000 hours of television and by high school graduation, from 15,000 to 20,000 hours of television programming.<sup>5</sup>

We are told that the average American watches somewhere around 1,200 hours of television yearly, yet spends only 5 hours a year reading

books.<sup>6</sup> This places even more emphasis on the importance of television as a socializing agent.

When one takes all of this into consideration, the potential power of the mass media is overwhelming. If it were to be monopolized, as the new industry of communications was in the 1880s, the implications would be staggering. This points out the importance of studying the ownership and control of the mass media. However, before going on to look at the specific questions involved with the ownership and control of the media, it is important to look more generally at the policy-making process and the various models of policy-making.

Now the question arises: How does the policy-making process tie in with political socialization and the American mass media? Specifically, the American mass media are at least partially responsible for the flow of information in the United States and it is a basic assumption of this thesis that reliable information is necessary for individual citizens to contribute intelligently to the policy-making process. Americans need to be informed of the various factors involved in different policy areas. They also need to know about the operations of government, corporate America, and other powerful groups within society. The ability of an elite, whether it be economic or political, to control the socialization of the masses has severe political and economic implications. If an economic elite were in control of the media, it could be used to help generate certain attitudes in the masses in favor of capitalism or free enterprise which might benefit those in control of the media. Or perhaps the masses could be persuaded to support certain foreign or trade policies which might also benefit those in control. (This is as opposed to the masses possibly considering viable



alternatives to our current system.) The possibilities are limitless. Upon first glance the realities of these possibilities are questionable, yet they deserve analysis if only because they exist. We are often slow to examine, and even slower to believe, what runs counter to our image of reality. However, strange and unpredictable things do happen in this world and just because we do not believe them, or just because they do not fit our stereotypical image of the world, does not mean that they do not exist and that they do not deserve scholarly analysis. One must remember that Americans were slow to believe the stories of atrocities coming out of Nazi Germany in World War II. Our disbelief did not change the truth of the matter. These atrocities did occur.

Primary to any analysis of the media themselves is a brief review of the policy-making process and of some of the actors involved. This study looks at three general models of policy-making: the systems model, the power elite model, and the pluralist model. We will show the development of elite theory in general and contrast it with the other two alternative models. This will lead into Chapter 2 which will entail a discussion of elite theory as applied to the American mass media. It is believed that an understanding of elite theory is essential and proves highly enlightening when reviewing the ownership and control of the media. Once we have thoroughly reviewed the policy-making process and elite theory, we attempt to apply elite theory to the owners and controllers of the American mass media.

#### Elite Theory Reviewed

The method through which public policy is made is an essential element of any governmental system. Often the public policy-making



process is used to define the particular system being discussed. In American, we are generally taught very early on in either our civics or history classes that our form of democracy, representative democracy, is characterized by equal access to government by all citizens. In other words, all citizens have an equal opportunity to provide input into the decision-making process. This is a key element of what is often referred to as the systems model of policy-making. In the systems model citizens provide input into the policy-making process through the use of 'supports' and 'demands.' Demands are what the people ask of their government such as improved health care benefits for the elderly. Demands may take the form of a letter to the constituent's Congressman or Congresswoman, voting in an election, taking part in a demonstration, or one of many other methods. Supports on the other hand are more difficult to measure even though their effects may be just as great. they involve the symbolic elements of a citizen's life within society. Singing the National Anthem or saluting the flag are both supports. Other related supports such as feelings of nationalism or patriotism are important to those in government. A President who feels that he or she has the people on his or her side might be more apt to take on the Congress on an important or controversial issue. Therefore, supports, as well as demands, play an important role in the policy-making process and enable the masses to become participants rather than merely observers.

After the policy has passed through the political process, the second stage of the systems model, where the key decision-makers take into account the various demands and supports of the public, new policy is created. This new policy is called the policy output and might take

the form of new legislation, a court decision, the deployment of troops, or quite possibly no action at all. Probably the most common reaction by the political process to the inputs of the masses is no action. However, no action is just as important as would be a new law or the deployment of troops; it just is not always as noticeable.

Eventually this policy process must have some effect, whether it is the intended effect or not, and this effect is called the policy outcome. Often there will be many policy outcomes for each new policy, most of which were unforeseen. These policy outcomes could range from lowered unemployment, improved housing for members of the lower income stratum, to greater national security. In what is called the feedback loop, the policy outcomes are examined by the key decision-makers and the public, and new demands and supports are generated. Perhaps, in the case of a key military victory, a greater sense of national pride might be a result. In the case of new legislation for improved low income housing, perhaps the public reacted negatively when they found that these new housing developments were to be built adjacent to their neighborhoods. Congressional offices might be suddenly flooded with letters and petitions (inputs) from constituents demanding that the legislation be revised or repealed. Regulatory issues, such as the question of whether or not passive restraints should be required in automobiles, are often times controversial and generate all types of demands upon the key decision-makers within government.

The political process must take these new demands and supports into consideration and decide whether or not to act and if so, in what manner. In this fashion the systems model is cyclical and never ends. It is a dynamic system of policy-making and generally is the text book

approach to the policy-making process. More often than not, it is the approach used in college level American Government textbooks.<sup>7</sup>

Today, more than ever, people are questioning the validity of the systems model of policy-making and of classic democratic thought as applied to the United States system of government. Some theorists claim that Americans are clinging to a myth rather than to reality. They claim that there is a sentimental need among Americans to feel that they have control over the functioning of their government; that they need to believe the old myth of democracy by the people, for the people.

In all countries and cultures men dwell on lore about the State: What it is and does and should be. The lore includes much that is vague, yet comes to have a powerful emotional pull. It includes much that is plainly contrary to what we see happen, yet the myth is all the more firmly believed and the more dogmatically passed on to others because men want to believe it and it holds them together.

And so, according to these theorists, Americans cling to their textbook ideal of representative democracy where government is responsive mainly to "the will of the people" and where all men have equal opportunity of access to the decision-making process, thereby controlling their own destiny. This thought process continues on even when prominent political and social theorists such as Peter Bachrach come forth to claim that

The concept of equality of power in decision-making ... is completely at odds with the existing practices in modern democracies, where key political decisions must of necessity be made by a small minority.

There is a growing suspicion among many social scientists that our political system serves primarily the interests of a small minority of Americans, a privileged few who represent the interests of corporate America and who are called the power elite.

The elite model of policy-making is one which points toward government by the few rather than the many. C. Wright Mills, in his classic work The Power Elite, described the elite as those

whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of men and women; they are in positions to make decisions having major consequences. For they are in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society.<sup>10</sup>

Writing six years earlier, Raymond Aron identified the elite in a method very similar to the one Mills would choose in The Power Elite.

The elite in a modern society is subdivided into five groups: political leaders, government administrators, economic directors, leaders of the masses and military chiefs.<sup>11</sup>

The elite model of policy-making begins with the majority of power and influence flowing downward from the aristocracy, or put in a more modern context, the corporate rich. (We have included Thomas Dye's version of the elite model of policy-making in the Appendix for comparison.) Through this power and influence the power elite are able to guide the course of the policy-making process. Within this discussion of elite theory there are two main types of theorists that we will deal with. The first are the traditional elite theorists who believe that it is the ideal situation to have a rule elite in control of government. The second group of theorists are those who cite elite control of various institutions but do not feel that elite control is ideal. These are sometimes referred to as conspiratorial thinkers. They often feel that the elite intentionally control and manipulate society. The third group is comprised of those whose work simply happens to be useful in the analysis of elite theory but was in no way meant to be conspiratorial in nature.



The study of elites and the extent of their influence bring new meaning to the once thought of non-political, unbiased elements of the policy-making process such as foundations, think tanks, and major policy planning groups. Probably the most influential theorist in this area is G. William Domhoff whose analysis has served to highlight the extent of elite involvement within the policy-planning groups and organizations. According to Domhoff, the arms of the corporate rich are far reaching and extend into the heart of major foundations, policy-planning groups, think tanks, Presidential Commissions, and the Cabinet.

The foundations should serve well to demonstrate this point. Only a few of the largest have enough money and influence to play an active role in determining policy. Sociologist MaryAnna Culleton Colwell conducted an extensive study of foundations in 1980. She started with a sample of the 77 largest and found 20 which were actively involved in the formation of public policy. These were the foundations which "gave 5 percent of their total grants, or over \$200,000, to public policy grants in either 1972 or 1975."<sup>12</sup> One of the major areas she studied was the cross membership between various foundations. Her findings were illuminating:

The Rockefeller Foundation had the largest number of trustee interlocks with other foundations (34), followed by the Sloan Foundation, The Carnegie Corporation, the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the Russell Sage Foundation.<sup>13</sup>

These trustee interlocks involve situations where a trustee of one foundation served as a trustee of another foundation. The purpose of establishing this type of connection between foundations is to demonstrate the overbearing presence of a socially cohesive elite in all phases of the policy-making process.

Colwell's study also dealt with other aspects of foundation membership. Not only did she find cross membership between foundations, she also found members of foundations belonging to policy-planning groups.

The Rockefeller Foundation had the largest number of trustee connections to the policy groups it finances (14), followed by the same five foundations named in the previous sentence (Sloan, Carnegie, Ford, Rockefeller Brothers, and Russell Sage). Moreover, all six of these foundations tended to be involved with the same policy groups.<sup>14</sup>

In particular, members of the foundations tended to be members of the Council on Foreign Relations and the committee for Economic Development. Other more conservative foundations such as the Pew Memorial Trust, the Smith Richardson Foundation, and the Lilly Endowment donate funds to "policy groups and think tanks identified with ultra-conservative programs."<sup>15</sup> This further establishes the link between the foundations and the policy groups, and further demonstrates the proposed cohesiveness of the ruling elite.

A brief look at the biographical sketches of several of the trustees of the Ford Foundation might help to clarify the points made in Colwell's study. The reasons for looking at the current board of trustees of the Ford Foundation are three-fold: 1) It is important that we look at the most recent information available, rather than base our findings on a four-year-old study; 2) The Ford Foundation was chosen specifically because it was not the top foundation in either of the categories of interlocks given by Colwell (foundation with foundation or foundation with policy-planning group); 3) A brief look at the biographical sketches of the members of the board of trustees of a major foundation should graphically demonstrate Colwell's point. Information on the membership of the board of trustees was found in The Foundation Directory (9th edition supplement). It was the most recent source



available, having been published in 1984. The biographical information came from the 1985 edition of Who's Who in America.

For the sake of space, time, and effect, listed below are only the most graphic examples from the list of the 18 trustees of the Ford Foundation. Admittedly, those not listed were not so spectacular in their conformity to our elite model. Certain information available to the author, but not pertinent to this study, was deleted. This includes much information about trustees' membership on the boards of charitable organizations and other such causes. Educational information is included to stress the point that there is social cohesion within this group, i.e., they all attended or are affiliated with the same upper-class schools which are traditionally associated with the preservation of the ruling class in America. Directorships are shown to demonstrate their ties with corporate America. The reason for the inclusion of the rest of the information should be obvious. Similar biographical information for the board of directors of several large communication conglomerates is available later on in this work in order to further demonstrate the involvement of the elite in the policy-making process, as well as to demonstrate their ties with corporate America. CBS is examined in Chapter 2 and ABC and RCA/NBC may be found in the Appendix.

#### Selection Members Of The Ford Foundation

##### Board of Trustees

Alexander Heard - A.B., U.N.C., 1938, LL.D., 1968; M.A., Columbia University, 1948, Ph.D., 1951, LL.D., 1965. Chairman President's Campaign Costs, 1961-62; Special Advisor to President of the United States on Campus Affairs, 1970; President, board of directors Citizen's Research Foundation, 1958-71; member U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 1967-69; trustee Ford Foundation 1967 to present; trustee Robert A. Taft Institute of Government, 1973-76;

public trustee Nutrition Foundation, 1976-82; member of the Commission on U.S. Policy Toward South Africa, the Foreign Policy Study Foundation, 1979 to present. Member Council on Foreign Relations, Center for Inter-American Relations.

Hedley Donovan - A.B. magna cum laude, University of Minnesota, 1934; B.A. Rhodes Scholar, Oxford University, 1936; editorial director Time, Inc., 1959-64; editor-in-chief, 1964-79, director, 1962-79; senior advisor to the President of the United States, 1979-80; fellow faculty of Harvard University, 1980 to present; director Aerospace Corp.; trustee Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Ford Foundation, National Center for the Humanities; Member Council on Foreign Relations.

A. Bartlett Giamatti - B.A., Yale, 1960, Ph.D. 1964; LL.D., Princeton University, 1978, Harvard University, 1978; current President Yale University. Member of the Council for Financial Aid in Education, Commission of Humanities, Council on Foreign Relations, and the National Commission of Excellence in Education.

Donald McHenry - With the Department of State, 1963-73, international affairs officer, 1963-66, officer-in-charge dependent area affairs, 1966-68, assistant to the secretary, 1968-69, special assistant to counselor, 1969-71; international affairs fellow Council on Foreign Relations, guest scholar Brookings Institution, 1971-73; U.S. deputy representative U.N. Security Council, 1977-79; Ambassador to U.N., 1979-81; President of International Relations Consultants, Inc.; director International Paper Corp., Coca-Cola, Co., First National Bank Boston, Smith Kline Beckman Corp., First National Boston Corp., board of governors American Stock Exchange. Trustee Mt. Holyoke College, Brookings Institution, Phelps-Stokes Fund, Ford Foundation; board of director Institute for International Economics, Ditchley Foundation; Member Council on Foreign Relations.

Robert S. McNamara - M.B.A. Harvard, 1939. Secretary Defense, 1961-68; president World Bank, 1968-81; director Royal Dutch Petroleum, The Washington Post, TWA, Corning Glass Works, Bank of America; Director Ford Foundation, Brookings Institution, California Institute of Technology; special consultant to War Department, 1942.

Paul F. Miller, Jr. - Director Yarway Corporation, Berwind Corporation, Mead Corporation, Enterra Corporation, Bohm & Hass Co.; Chairman Board of Trustees University of Pennsylvania; Trustee Ford Foundation, member National Association of Business Economists.

Irving S. Shapiro - With E.I. Du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc., 1951-81. Partner firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, N.Y.C., 1981 to present. Director IBM, Continental, Hosp.

Corp. America, Boeing Corp.; Member the Business Roundtable, the Business Council, trustee Ford Foundation.

Glenn E. Watts - Member of secretaries advisory council U.S. Department of Commerce, 1976-77; member President's Committee on Mental Health, 1977-78; President's Commission on the Holocaust, 1978-79. Trustee Human Resources Development Institute, 1974, George Meany Center for Labor Studies, Inc., from 1976, Ford Foundation, from 1974; board of directors Initiative Committee for National Economic Planning, 1976-79; member Commission on a National Institute of Justice, 1976 to present, Trilateral Commission, 1977 to present.

Thomas H. Wyman - B.A. magna cum laude, Amherst College, 1951. Director AT&T; Trustee Amherst College, Museum of Broadcasting, National Executive Service Corps, Lincoln Center for Performing Arts, Ford Foundation; Charter Trustee Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. Board of Directors United Negro College Fund; member Presidential Commission on World Hunger, 1978-81, President's Task Force for Private Sector Initiatives. Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer, CBS, Inc.

After reviewing the biographies above and comparing them with the elite model of policy-making as shown in Figure P.1, there is some connection between the major corporations, the corporate rich, the foundations, the policy planning groups, the Presidential Commissions, and the Cabinet. Note the prevalence of membership on the Council on Foreign Relations. This is a policy-planning group which has helped to determine American foreign policy for decades. There also seems to be an overwhelming amount of membership on Presidential Commissions on the part of the trustees. It should be noted that these people, the trustees of the Ford Foundation, are members of what Domhoff, Mills, and Aron call the Power Elite. These are, as demonstrated by the facts above, key players in the policy-making process. Their membership in these various organizations demonstrates their interest in trying to influence the outcome of public policy. Potentially, we have here a socially cohesive elite who are interested in the formation of public policy and who take an active role in the policy-making process.

Before going on, we feel that this study's claim of unity within the ruling elite deserves some further clarification. The unity which we see is on the fundamental level of belief in the merits of our capitalist system, a desire to maintain our system (the status quo) at all costs, and if possible, the placement of more power in the hands of the private industrial sector. Certainly there are ideological differences and conflicts between members of the ruling class. This is why some (the more conservative) support the Heritage Foundation, while others (the less conservative) support the Institute for Policy Study. In fact, the trend is moving toward membership and funding of the more conservative foundations and think tanks. Even some of the traditionally moderate and liberal institutions are shifting to the right. This is partially because they see the nation shifting to the right, following the lead of the Heritage Foundation and the Reagan Administration.

However, the point is, whether conservative, moderate, or liberal, the elite still favor, on some higher plane of thought or loyalty, the values which are traditional to members of the corporate elite.

In fact, the new movement toward more conservative policy initiatives from the foundations and think tanks tends to create policy "which favors less government involvement and more reliance on private enterprise."<sup>16</sup> The result of this is a more powerful private industrial sector. This is right in line with the goals and motivations of the corporate elite. It is possible that the elite might have discovered that it is in their best interest to move to the right and have found a willing partner in the Reagan Administration. An example of this is the fact that the conservative think tank, the Hoover Institution, has over 30 of its members serving on federal advisory committees, including its



chairman Dr. W. Glenn Campbell, who serves as chairman of the President's Intelligence Oversight Board.<sup>17</sup> Also, the Hoover Institution's book, The United States in the 1980s, "was widely regarded as a blueprint for the Reagan Administration."<sup>18</sup> And according to Sidney Blumenthal, in his article "Building a Conservative Elite," the Heritage Foundation has served to provide the screening process for employment in the Reagan administration. "During the first term, Heritage collected thousands of resumes that were regularly carted over to the administration's personnel office."<sup>19</sup> Heritage only recommended those who were ideologically desirable, those who fit in with the right wing and will further the interests of corporate America. Even traditional republicans who served under Nixon and Ford were shunned, because they were not ideologically correct.

This movement, and the role of the elite, in no way detracts from our main thesis. In fact, it reinforces our arguments. The elite are placing ideologically correct people in key government positions, forming government policy, and directing the course of our nation. The ideological shift to the right makes sense in their terms. They seek power and influence and if it is to be found on the right, then that is where they will be. However, when policy can no longer be carried out successfully by working with the conservative republicans, for example when we next elect a moderate or a liberal, they might revert to their old channels of power and the more moderate foundations and think tanks might once again dominate.

Where did the idea of elite influence in society originate? It certainly did not begin with American society or with the corporate rich of the 20th century. According to one source:

The word appears to have come into common use (at Geneva, Switzerland for instance) as a means of designating choice merchandise.<sup>20</sup>

In 19th Century Europe the word found wide usage and came to be associated with

the concept of class and a collection of terms used to identify impersonal institutions (especially the state, bureaucracy, the economy, and the market).<sup>21</sup>

Before this the word elite was used to refer to people chosen through some type of social process--the elect. In a theological sense, those chosen by God--the chosen people. It also could refer to choice merchandise as was earlier stated.

However, long before this, the idea of an elite in power had been established. Plato's guardians are just one example. Most of these elites were "conceived as possessing the ability to transcend selfish interest in ruling for the well-being of the community."<sup>22</sup> It only made sense to these early philosophers that an intellectual and spiritual elite should govern the unruly and for the most part uneducated masses.

George Marcus, in his contemporary analysis of elites, contrasts for us the early image of elites with the more modern image. Whereas early on the term 'elite' was often associated with the State, the concept of class, and other institutions, the modern usage tends to be more specific.

What distinguishes elite from such alternative concepts as class and the state is that it focuses one's imagery at a much lower level of abstraction than do the latter terms. It evokes the image of specifiable groups of persons rather than impersonal entities such as formal organizations and mass collectivities. Furthermore, the concept of elite carries



with it the notion that such groups are the major source of change within relevant levels of social organization--local, regional, societal, and international; they are the force behind institutional processes in which others--the masses, nonelites--participate with them.<sup>23</sup>

Not far from the modern definition of elite theory was the work of the French nobleman, Claude Henri de Rouvroy, Count of Saint-Simon. Central to Saint-Simon's theory of elites was the presence of an industrial elite.

Revolutionary in Saint-Simon's thought was his anticipation of the importance of industrial producers, an elite group which he viewed as holding a more strategic position in the new social order than had the political leaders of old.<sup>24</sup>

Other elite groups mentioned by Saint-Simon were the scientists, economic organizers, and cultural-religious leaders.

Another phase of Saint-Simon's work which showed incredible foresight was his emphasis on the importance of economics and its ties to politics. This would eventually lead modern theorists to tie the private industrial sector of American society to the political system of the 20th Century. The importance of corporate giants as both an elite and a key policy-making group could not have been understated. According to modern theorists, "the corporation is now, essentially, a nonstatist political institution."<sup>25</sup> Drucker, in The Future of Industrial Man, expressed a similar sentiment when he said that "the corporation is now, essentially a monostatist political institution, and its board of directors are in the same boat with public office holders."<sup>26</sup> In fact, when it comes to an analysis of public policy-making, often times the corporations receive more attention than does the government. This is particularly true with regulatory issues involving interests such as the automotive industry. Sheldon Wolin, in his book Politics and Vision, provides us with an excellent example of this.

No longer do legislatures, prime ministers, courts, and political parties occupy the spotlight of attention in the way they did fifty years ago. Now it is the "politics" of the corporations, trade unions, and even universities that is being scrutinized. This preoccupation suggests that political has been transferred to another plane, to one that formerly was designated "private" but which now is believed to have overshadowed the old political system.<sup>27</sup>

And the effectiveness of the corporations in the political sphere should not be underestimated. According to Wolfgang Freidman:

That they have a direct and decisive impact on the social, economic, and political life of the nation is no longer a matter of argument.<sup>28</sup>

Generally, most of the early elite theorists such as Saint-Simon were responding to the 19th Century capitalist societies of Europe. They were trying to provide an alternative way of viewing what was taking place at that time. In this vein, Karl Marx, although not usually labeled an elite theorist, did contribute to and influence the writings of later theorists such as Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto. Marcus, in his study of elites, describes the foundation which Marx laid for later theorists to build upon.

Marx conceived the sociological implications of capitalist economic process in terms of the abstract social entities which they generated--class.<sup>29</sup>

Marx dealt with elites on the more abstract level of social class.

Pareto and Mosca tried to improve upon his work by attempting to

transmute the Marxian concept of class, as found in the relations of production, into essentially political differentiation between those "who rule" and those who "are ruled"--a transmutation which was, indeed, in part made possible by Marx's failure to specify in a systematic fashion the modes whereby the economic hegemony of the capitalist class becomes "translated" into the political domination of the ruling class.<sup>30</sup>

Several of the authors in the area of elite theory refer to the influence of Machiavelli on Pareto and Mosca. This is generally due to

Machiavelli's emphasis on the importance of proper strategy in the maintenance of power and its relation to the principle of a ruling class. Both Pareto and Mosca agree with Machiavelli that domination by a ruling class can be a good thing and should benefit the masses.

In their emphasis on elites as rulers, Pareto and Mosca can be seen as heirs to a tradition in Italian political theory that had been well defined from the time of Machiavelli.<sup>31</sup>

This tradition and concept would later be adopted by the fascists of the early 20th Century.

Mosca, in his classic work originally titled Elementi di Scienza Politica (1896), and Vilfredo Pareto in his work Les Systemes Sociolistes (1902), greatly advanced political theory. Their concept of the rulers and the ruled provided a new way of looking at classifications of governments. These classifications, prior to the works of Mosca and Pareto, had existed unchanged since their creation by Aristotle, and generally separated systems into three distinct types: Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy. Mosca and Pareto believed that all political systems could be explained by their concept of the ruling class. The formal labels of Democracy, Monarchy, and Aristocracy, lost most of their significance in their minds. From this point on political theorists would have to look beyond the formal governmental structure of power within a given system in order to truly grasp the real, underlying basis of power.

First, no matter what the dominant political ideology or the manner organizing the state, every society can be divided into the small number who rule and the larger number who are ruled.

Second, the character of society and the direction it is taking can be understood in terms of the composition, structures, and conflicts of the ruling group.<sup>32</sup>

And the elite are not without conflict. In fact, central to elite theory is the presence of conflict. However, this is not to dispel the

concept of a socially cohesive, dominant elite group within society. Rather, this conflict comes from sub-elites who are continually trying to gain power by competing with the dominant elites. The following quote from Pareto diagrams the dynamics of the elite system:

Let A be the elite in power, B the social element seeking to drive it from power and to replace it, and C the rest of the population, comprising the incompetent, those lacking energy, character and intelligence: in short, that section of society which remains when the elites are subtracted. A and B are the leaders, counting on C to provide them with partisans, with instruments. The C on their own would be impotent: an army without commanders. They become important only if guided by the A or B. Very often--infact almost always--it is the B who puts themselves at the head<sub>3</sub> of C, and A reposing in a false security or despising the C.

This quote brings up several of the important characteristics of classic elite theory, vis-a-vis, Mosca and Pareto. First, there is always fresh blood trying to break into the ranks of the dominant elite group. Second, this fresh blood is essential to the survival of the elite class because it forces the elite to remain responsive and keeps them from becoming stagnant. By remaining responsive the elite are able to keep the masses pacified and thereby suppress any potential problems which they might have otherwise had to encounter. Some call this system incrementalization--a very deceptive title. Third, the masses are portrayed as ignorant and passive--unable to rule themselves. Therefore, the elite are really doing the masses a favor by assuming the position of power.

In essence, what we find in a elite system as described by Mosca and Pareto, is an open system where some, perhaps the cream of the crop, may aspire to one day gain elite status. This competition, or threat of competition, from subelites is what keeps the "democratic" system somewhat responsive to the needs of the masses. Even though this might

not be the intended function of this competition, it should at least be considered a byproduct.

As he (Mosca) envisaged it, the concept of openness was intended not to encourage the communication of ideas and programs and the expression of demands but to promote the revitalization of the elite<sup>34</sup> by encouraging men of sign and talent to rise to the top.

This was thought necessary because the aristocracy, the big wealthy families of power, tended to die out leaving large gaps in the ruling elite. Mosca felt that it was important for the elite to remain strong in order to keep the system stable and therefore advocated an open system which would accommodate only the strongest, best-suited of those aspiring elite status. In Mosca's words:

To be sure, majority government and absolute political equality, two of the mottos that the century inscribed on its banners, were not achieved, because they could not be achieved, and the same may be said of fraternity. But the ranks of the ruling class have been held open. The barriers that kept individuals of the lower class from entering the higher have been either removed or lowered, and the development of the old absolutist state into the modern representative state has made it possible for almost all political forces, almost all societal values, to participate in the political management of society.<sup>35</sup>

The inability of the masses to rule themselves, another central theme of elite theory, is still a popular sentiment of the late 20th Century. E.E. Schattschneider, in his book The Semisovereign People, wrote that the popular view of the educated citizen as a participant in government is unrealistic when applied to the modern American system of government.

The image implicit in the schoolbook definition of democracy is that of a mass of people who think about politics the way a United States Senator might think about it.<sup>36</sup>



According to Schattschneider, this just is not so. The average citizen does not have the interest or the knowledge which is necessary for that type of informed participation.

Therefore, according to elite theory, it is the duty of the educated elite to lead the masses who are incapable of leading themselves. (For the elite theorist this is thought to be both easier than improving the education of the masses and more desirable. An educated mass might not need to rely so completely on the elite for guidance. Our discussion of education and elite theory will be continued in somewhat greater detail in Chapter 4.) It is not the privilege of the elite, but rather their duty as the enlightened members of society to guide their flocks. It is their burden for being superior. This concept has its origins far back in history. Early creation myths expressed the notion of an elite which would lead the masses.

It is the elect who lead the people from darkness, chaos or slavery into a new and better social order. This elect is then entrusted with the responsibility of preserving the moral and material gains thereby acquired.<sup>37</sup>

Another reason given by elite theorists for keeping power in the hands of the few is the lack of liberal values among the masses. According to this view, it is the

illiberal propensity of the masses which is the overriding threat to the free society, which, if it does survive, will do so because of the wisdom and courage of established elites.<sup>38</sup>

This idea will be discussed in greater detail later on in this paper. The use of this concept by elites as a tool for maintaining power is highly applicable to the main subject of this thesis.

One final argument for the lack of participation of the masses in their own rule is the lack of desire on their part. In other words, they do not want to participate and simply enjoy their position of



subjugation. Robert Lane, in his article "Fear of Equality," states that in avoiding power the masses are actually avoiding putting themselves in a very stressful position.

Many members of the working class do not want equality. They are afraid of it. In some ways they already seek to escape from it.<sup>39</sup>

Most theorists who adhere to this proposition feel that the masses are better off letting the elite handle the overwhelming responsibility of running a political system. In fact, they say that the masses are lucky not to be burdened with such responsibility and if given the choice would rather not have it. However, there are those, this author included, who would attempt to point out that these very concepts which elite theorists use to justify their domination over the masses are actually myths which are put forth in order to manipulate the masses. Obviously, if the masses can be made to believe that it is in their best interest to let an elite rule, those in power can act much more freely and with little outside interference. (Once again, this will be discussed in more detail later on in this study.)

There is a difference of opinion within elite theory as to whether the rulers manipulate and exploit the masses for personal benefit and material gain, or whether the manipulation of power by the elites is necessary in order to benefit society. Whose interests do they represent? Their own? Societies? Or possibly both? Supporting the view that rulers rule for their own benefit, Karl Marx called the executive of the modern state nothing "but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."<sup>40</sup> Contrary to this, and expressed earlier on, is the view that the elite must rule on the behalf of the

ignorant masses and that this is out of a sense of responsibility not out of a desire for political or economic power. According to Prewitt:

In these differing views is one of the enduring paradoxes of politics: that these two views can be so divergent and at the same time correct.<sup>41</sup>

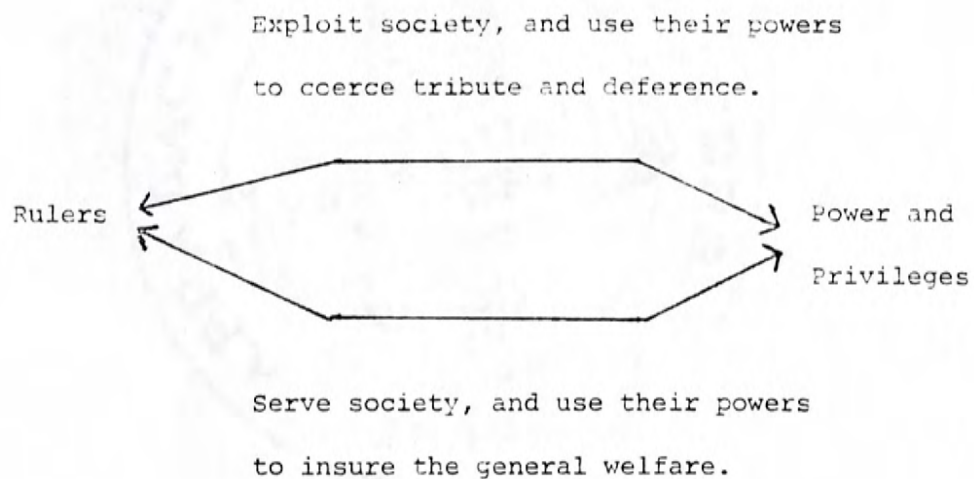
In other words, we should refrain from using absolutes and gross generalizations. There can exist members of the elite who rule for personal gain and at the same time there can be members who rule with the best interest of society at heart. This paradox is demonstrated in Figure 1.3 below.

Of course, there are those who dislike elite rule at any price. These are the people who want the masses to have input into the decision-making process even if they don't have the intellectual character and education of a U.S. Senator. P.F. Drucker expressed this view when he stated

The important fact about 'enlightened despotism'--also the one fact 'enlightened despots' always forget--is that, while it appears as enlightenment to those<sup>42</sup> in power, it is despotism pure and simple to those under it.

Along with Mosca and Pareto, Robert Michels was also influential in the development of elite theory. He, together with Pareto, developed the "Iron Law of Oligarchy," a theory which "propounds the impossibility of democracy in practice because of the tendency of elite groups to dominate and control the majority."<sup>43</sup> This is not to say that one can't call his or her particular system of government a representative democracy, or for that matter, anything else. The simple fact is that, according to Michels, beneath the fancy title one will find elite groups dominating the policy-making process.

Figure 1.1

A Dichotomy of Elite Leadership

\* Adopted from Kenneth Prewitt and Alan Stone, The Ruling Elites,  
Harper and Row Publishers, 1973, p. 6.

Another interesting addition to the circles of elite theorists was Charles Beard who first published his text, An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States, in 1913. Although not an elite theorist and by no means a conspiratorial thinker, his work is elitist in nature. His book was met with wide-spread and vehement disapproval upon its publication. However, today it is generally accepted as a scholarly and revealing study into the motivations behind the authors of the Constitution of the United States. Primarily, Beard demonstrates how these men were motivated on behalf of economic interests. This, according to Beard's study, had an influence on the way in which these men structured the Constitution of the United States. This is not to say that there were not other influences as well.

In his book Beard asks the following questions:

Did the men who formulated the fundamental law of the land possess the kind of property which were immediately and directly increased in value or made more secure by the results of their labors at Philadelphia? Did they represent distinct groups whose economic interests they understood and felt in concrete, definite form through their own personal experience with identical property rights, or were they merely under the guidance of abstract political science?<sup>44</sup>

Beard answers his own questions through a revealing biographical and financial analysis of each member of the Constitutional Convention.

According to this analysis:

The overwhelming majority of the members, at least five-sixths, were immediately, directly, and personally interested in the outcome of their labors at Philadelphia, and were to a greater or less extent, economic beneficiaries from the adoption of the Constitution.<sup>45</sup>

In fact, Beard recognizes five groups which were adversely affected under the Articles of Confederation and who because of this originated the movement for the Constitution: those vested in money, public securities, manufacturers, trade, and shipping.<sup>46</sup>

Sounding very much like those elite theorists who talk about the ruling class and the masses, Beard states that the major conflict in the ratification process was between "substantial personality interest on the one hand and the small farming and debtor interest on the other."<sup>47</sup> The latter of whom had little input in the forming and ratification of the Constitution but did have the representation of a few of the elite who felt a responsibility to look out for the interest of the masses. Although not an elite theorist by self-proclaim, Beard contributed a great deal to our understanding of the role of an economic elite in the creation of the United States Constitution.

Thomas Dye and L. Harmon Zeigler, in their text The Irony of Democracy, built upon Beard's thesis that the Constitution is, at least in part, an economically inspired document. Dye and Zeigler are two figures who have been instrumental in the efforts to apply elite theory to American Government of the modern age. In their work, they put forth the following:

The text of the Constitution, together with interpretive materials in The Federalist Papers written by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay, provides ample evidence that elite in America benefited both politically and economically from the adoption of the Constitution. Although both elites and nonelites--indeed all Americans--may have benefited from the Constitution, elites benefited more directly than did non-elites. And we can infer that the elites would not have developed and supported the Constitution if they had not stood to gain substantially from it.<sup>48</sup>

And if the elite had not supported this Constitution, it might never have come to be. After all, it was not the common man who wrote this document. It was written by a select group of men who were members of the economic and political elite of the time. This analysis by both Beard and Dye and Zeigler, demonstrates that it is nothing new to try to apply elite theory to American Government, it is just not in vogue at



the present time. This is especially true with popular literature which is most readily available to the general public. What little we do find about the elite nature of American Society usually comes out of scholarly journals and rather obscure texts to which the public is not usually exposed.

Signaling the coming of what we will call the modern age of elite theory, Raymond Aron wrote an article entitled "Social Structure and the Ruling Class." In this article Aron was able to capture the essence of the power elite which C. Wright Mills would describe five years later in his book The Power Elite. According to Aron,

The elite in modern society is subdivided into five groups: political leaders, government administrators, economic directors, leaders of the masses and military chiefs.<sup>49</sup>

This leads into a brief discussion of one of the most well known and prominent elite theorists: C. Wright Mills.

Mills, sometimes known as a conspiratorial thinker, differed from most of the early elite theorists in that he did not advocate elite leadership so completely and saw many dangers in it. Yet, neither did he discard the possible merits of a ruling elite. As is common among elite theorists, he calls upon an intellectual community of elites to save the masses from the ruthless rule of the self-serving power elite.

In somewhat the same vein as the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Mills' men of knowledge must direct society's destiny until conditions exist when ordinary men are able to discern the truth.<sup>50</sup>

Mills is one who would more than likely have advocated trying to educate the masses so that they would not have to depend on an elite to guide them. Mills' intellectual elite are to keep the power elite in check and yet are themselves an elite. According to Mills:



Who else but intellectuals are capable of discerning the role in history of explicit history-making decisions? Who else is in a position to understand that now fate itself must be made a political issue?<sup>51</sup>

Once again we see an elite theorist claiming that only an elite group can lead the masses to the promise land. In the case of Mills' intellectuals they must first "cease being intellectual dupes of political patrioteers."<sup>52</sup>

A.A. Berle, another man who contributed to modern elite theory, also relies on an intellectual group to check the ruling elite. Berle calls the result of this group's action "public consensus" and claims that it should be composed of "conclusions of careful university professors, the reasoned opinions of specialists, the statements of responsible journalists, and at times the solid pronouncement of respected politicians."<sup>53</sup> This is Berle's version of the intellectual elite who will keep tabs on the policy-makers and help to keep the masses informed. The irony of much of this has already been pointed out in the previous paragraph and will be dealt with in greater detail in later chapters, particularly in regard to the media and their function of informing the masses.

Other theorists claim that the elite have a vested interest in keeping our political system functioning well and therefore need no checks, such as those proposed by Mills and Berle, to keep them in line.

Being more influential, they are privileged; and, being privileged, they have, with few exceptions, a special stake in the continuation<sup>54</sup> of the political system on which their privileges rest.

However, it would seem that the interests of the elite do not always correspond with that of the masses. And if one proposed that the elite are in the business of trying to maintain their status and influence as

elites, this would seem to be saying that they would be willing to go against the best interest of the masses in order to maintain their position of privilege. It is possibly naive to suggest that the desire of the power elite to maintain their status within society should correspond with what is in the best interest of the masses.

Probably the most current view of the elite theory as applied to modern democracies is called "democratic elitism." Peter Bachrach, in his study entitled The Theory of Democratic Elitism, provides an excellent analysis and critique of modern elite theory. Far from being an advocate of democratic elitism, the author uses his study to argue against democratic elitism and to provide suggestions for alternatives to elite rule. Bachrach describes democratic elitism as

A theory which reflects, on the one hand, a receptiveness toward the existing structure of power and elite decision-making in large industrial societies, and on the other, an impatience with the old myths and sentiments associated with phrases such as "will of the people," "grass roots democracy," and "the dignity of the common man."<sup>55</sup>

He continues by saying:

It is an ideology which is closely attached to and protective of the liberal principles embodied in the rule of law and in the rights of the individual to freedom of conscience, expression, and privacy. While embracing liberalism it rejects, in effect, the major tenet of classical democratic theory--belief and confidence in the people. The suspicion that liberalism and classical theory are fundamentally incompatible is manifest in the key explanatory concepts of democratic elitism.<sup>56</sup>

Although we might have an elite ruling the masses, the democratic elitists feel that there is still accountability on the part of the ruling elite to the people. Accountability is a central theme in our representative democracy. Many social scientists would not be as intense in their dislike of elite theory if they felt that the elite could be held accountable. It almost seems rational to have the more

knowledgeable people in society making the important decisions. (But why not make the masses more knowledgeable?) In the Comparative Study of Elites, Harold Lasswell, Daniel Lerner, and C. Easton Rothwell, stated that:

To confuse the percentage of leaders at any given moment with the test of democracy is to make an elementary mistake, since a society may be democratic and express itself through a small leadership. The key question turns on accountability.<sup>57</sup>

And according to democratic elite theorists there is accountability in our system of government.

The system is characterized by the accountability of elites to non-elites. And in being held accountable, the former, owing to the phenomenon of anticipated reactions, normally rules in the interests of the latter.<sup>58</sup>

However, the validity of this is often questioned. Certainly the accountability of the elite who control education, policy-formulation, the media, and more generally the entire socialization process, should not be taken for granted. The type of subtle socialization which occurs in our society is hard to detect and even harder to counter. How can the elite be held accountable if the masses are not even aware of what they are doing? Can we rely on intellectuals to keep us informed? And is not it possible for the elite, through this kind of subtle manipulation, to control the reaction of the masses to possible controversial policies by controlling their knowledge about the issues involved?

The subject of manipulation of the masses is dealt with widely throughout the literature on elite theory, by both its proponents and opponents, and deserves at the very least a brief account. Harold Lasswell, in his book World Politics and Personal Insecurity, states that "the elite preserves its ascendancy by manipulating symbols, controlling supplies, and applying violence."<sup>59</sup> Sheldon Wolin, in his

book Politics and Vision, points out that what we have in America today is not responsible representation by an intellectual, benevolent elite, but rather manipulation of the masses by a self-serving, power hungry elite.

The form of elitism expressed in this literature has certain superficial affinities with, say, Platonism: it believes that those few who have the qualifications for exercising the highest social functions should be in the position of highest authority. Fundamentally, however, contemporary elitism is indebted to a far different concept; namely, that an elite is a group<sup>60</sup> whose superiority rests on its excellence in manipulation.

As shown earlier, even the forefathers of the United States might have had their own economic interest, and that of the members of their own social class, at heart when they wrote the constitution.

Finally, according to democratic elite theory, participation by the masses in the policy-making process is no longer an important part of the system; rather, it is an inconvenience. The masses should be happy to not have to bother with that troublesome task.

The less the individual has to participate in the politics on the "input" and demand side of the system in order to<sup>61</sup> gain his interests on the output side, the better off he is.

According to this school of thought, as long as the people get what they need and want everything is all right. They are better off having an elite making their decisions. We have already spoken of the utility of such a belief. The elite would be thrilled if they thought that everyone believed this. It certainly would make life easy for them. But not everyone accepts this school of thought. A great many questions come to mind when discussing the merits of elite rule: Who defines for the masses what they want or need? Who tells the masses when their needs have been met? Can these sources be trusted? And who controls the

institutions which inform the public? These are some of the questions we will attempt to answer in the following chapters.

#### Pluralism: An Alternative to the Elite and Systems Models

One school of thought, which goes contrary to elite theory, one which we have not as yet addressed and one whose proponents are generally violently opposed to elite theory, is the pluralist model. Carol Greenwald, the author of Group Power: Lobbying and Public Policy, refers to pluralism as "the thinking man's democracy."<sup>62</sup> By this she means that classic democracy as characterized by the systems model of policy-making is realistically unthinkable and nonfunctionable whereas pluralism

tries to reconcile the existence of a large, modern heterogeneous technocratic society with democratic notions of individual self-development through participation in civic decision that affect the quality of one's life.<sup>63</sup>

Greenwald is describing what this study will call "democratic pluralism." In this concept, the masses are able to participate in the policy-making process through their membership in various groups and organizations. These interest groups, political parties, and other organizations, serve as the mouth piece for their constituents (their membership). Editors of newspapers have the American Society of Newspaper Editors to represent their views. Newspaper publishers have the American Newspaper Publishers Association. The news advertising, business, and circulation employees of news services are represented by the industrial labor union called the Newspaper Guild. The point is that there is a group for everyone, representing nearly every interest one can imagine. And usually there is more than one group to represent the needs of each person and interest.



Ideally, one of the greatest benefits of a pluralist system is that power is decentralized. Various groups are always struggling to have their viewpoints heard and no one group ever dominates. According to Morton S. Baratz, this ties in very well with our concept of freedom which holds that power "be decentralized, that influence over the process of decision-making be diffused."<sup>64</sup>

There is currently a conflict between those who adhere to the pluralist school of thought and those who adhere to the elite model of policy-making. Part of this is due to the fact that pluralist theorists at times fail to differentiate between theorists such as Mosca who advocate an Elite structure and Bachrach who does not. Part of the pluralists desire to have a more democratic nation might lead them to a denial of the presence and influence of elites within our system. Generally speaking, there are three conflicting, yet related, schools in the elite/pluralism debate. For the sake of this discussion we will call these the democratic pluralists, the pluralism of elites theorists, and the power elite theorists.

The democratic pluralists we have already referred to. The main criticism of this model is that it is far from being realistic. Membership in organizations is limited and policy within these organization is often made by a small elite group. According to E.E. Schattschneider, "the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent."<sup>65</sup>

The pluralism of elites model takes the elite nature of organizations into account. Its proponents state that even though policy is greatly influenced by elites, we still have a democratic nation because these elites are constantly fighting for power. Each interest wants to

be heard above all of the others. This constant struggle is supposed to guarantee that no one group dominates in the policy-making process. In other words, there is no one homogeneous elite group in power. However, what if the many special interests of these various elites all had one common, overriding element or interest such as the survival of capitalism or put another way, economic success and preservation of the status quo?

The power elite theorists feel that there is a homogeneous elite group which rules America. This is by far the least democratic of the three models.

It has become the trend in public administration and the study of bureaucracy to criticize the democratic pluralist model. Authors such as Ripley and Franklin in their text Congress, The Bureaucracy, and Public Policy and Nachmias and Rosenbloom in Bureaucratic Government USA, use a Michelian (Robert Michels) approach to the creation of public policy. They feel that policy is the result of personal relations of a triangular nature between interest group leaders, high level career bureaucrats, and Congressional staff members. They see this type of subgovernment as removing the policy-making process from a position of accountability to the electorate. Ideally, according to Nachmias and Henry, in their text The Practice of Policy Evaluation, if all

citizens participated in such groups, the interactions of the countervailing groups will produce public policies that serve the general public interest rather than any single private interest.

However, they go on to state that

leaving the conceptual validity and the desirability of having a pluralist system, the reality is that pluralism has not worked to enhance the public interest. Some groups have a cumulative advantage over others in matters of public policy; many citizens are not members of any active interest group;

groups are governed by oligarchies; and many societal concerns and interests are not articulated and registered because they are not regarded as legitimate or important<sup>67</sup> by members of the oligarchies, and in turn, by policy-makers.

To paraphrase Morton Baratz, is the American political system truly pluralist or is it more nearly a pluralism of elites of which the corporate giants are one? According to Baratz, the movement toward corporate bigness in America "has moved us away from a pluralist toward a structure of power best described as a pluralism of elites."<sup>68</sup> This argument is taken even further, applying it to the corporate elite, by Bachrach who states that

It is common knowledge that corporate elites, who regularly make decisions affecting social values<sup>69</sup>, are accountable largely, if not solely, to themselves.

Therefore, according to this outlook, what we have is a network of elite groups competing with each other in order to influence the outcome of the policy-making process. Many theorists feel that this is still an acceptable form of democracy because we still have a decentralization of power. In this model the elites determine the policy and the masses are reactive rather than proactive. Bachrach states that there

is a group awareness that non-elites are, in large part, politically activated by elites. The empirical finding that mass behavior is generally in response to the attitudes, proposals, and modes of action of political elites gives added support to the position that the responsibility for maintaining "the rules of the game" rests<sup>70</sup> not on the shoulders of the people but on those of the elite.

Therefore, the elite set forth the alternatives upon which the electorate acts. The proponents of this model of policy-making claim that this is still democratic because the electorate is offered alternatives and the elite are still competing and supposedly acting in the best interest of the masses.



But what about the conflicts of this model with classic democratic thought? Can this really be democratic government or is this elite domination a crisis of democracy? According to E.E. Schattschneider,

The crisis is a purely theoretical one because operating democratic political systems have in fact already accomplished what is theoretically impossible and are doing it every day. It is only the theory that has broken down.<sup>71</sup>

In other words, the theory of democracy has not been dynamic and has failed to grow with its actual application. Democratic theorists have tried to hang on to an outdated theory rather than try to adapt it to the new reality. What we have is a "theoretical crisis," not a crisis of democracy.

And what about the third school of thought which says that we have a socially cohesive power elite ruling America? This elite group might compete at times as General Motors might compete with Ford Motor Company, but generally they all come from the same social stratum, go to the same universities, and belong to and endorse the same organizations. (And even when they don't, as was demonstrated earlier, they still work toward a common end.) There is a oneness to this power elite. The studies of William Domhoff, C. Wright Mills, and Ferdinand Lundberg are all geared toward demonstrating that this group exists and that it uses its power and influence to form public policy which will work on its behalf. Whether this oneness is the result of an intentional effort to maintain their status as the ruling class, or rather a simple fact of life, is of little significance. The fact is, that according to the hard core power elite theorist, these people are not separate. Our earlier example of the Ford Foundation and its board of trustees should give some support to this point of view. Mary Colwell's study, also mentioned earlier, should also lend support to this school of thought.

For even further information in this area, in Chapter 2 we provide a biographical sketch of the board of directors of Columbia Broadcasting Service (others may be found in the appendix) which might also be useful. The studies in this area are numerous and many of these arguments between pluralists and elite theorists are addressed in later chapters. However, this is not the main purpose of this study.

A brief glance at these various viewpoints was necessary only as a background to the major thrust of this analysis which is the application of elite theory to the ownership and control of the American mass media. In order to address the question of whether or not an elite controls the media, and in order to understand the implications of such a situation, a review of some of the fundamental arguments within the policy-making area of analysis is valuable. If in fact there is a media elite, as we will propose in Chapter 2, this elite does not operate in a vacuum. It operates in a dynamic system with government, interest groups, and the masses--the result of which we shall examine in the following chapters.



## Chapter 2 - Elite Theory and the American Mass Media

We forget that, although freedom of speech constitutes an important victory in the battle against old restraints, modern man is in a position where much of what "he" thinks and says are the things that everybody else thinks and says; that he has not acquired the ability to think originally--that is, for himself--which alone gives meaning to his claim that nobody can interfere with the expression of his thoughts. (Erich Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 105.)

The mode of production of material life determines the social, political, and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but rather it is their social existence that determines their consciousness. (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p. ix. Originally from Marx's Critique of Political Economy, 1859.)

Try to imagine someone coming home from a hard day at work, an average American, if you will. After a nice filling dinner he or she turns on the television and relaxes in the most comfortable seat in the house. At the appointed time, the network anchorperson appears on the television screen and announces that the evening news will not be shown because nothing of importance has happened in the world within the last 24 hours. In the place of the news the network runs an old episode of "Gilligan's Island" or "Leave It To Beaver." Is this a likely scenerio? Is ABC going to cancel "World News Tonight" because they don't have anything critical to share with us? Aren't there ever slow days in the news business, as in any business, where they just close up shop and go home early? How come it takes the same amount of time every night to report on what has happened in the world? Isn't there ever more or less news? Isn't news just as important on weekends as it is during the

week? What is it about the nature of the news business that keeps it filling that same time slot night after night? Are we being entertained, informed, or controlled by Joe Anchorperson's nightly jaunts into our living rooms?

Americans have come to depend heavily upon the nightly newscasts of ABC, CBS, NBC, and to some extent CNN. They provide for us a routine source of information, a degree of certainty about our world, and an element of entertainment. Americans have a need to know that after a hard day at work their image of the world, their world, is still intact. Politics, economics, and social problems are all brought into our homes and presented to us in a neat, entertaining package. For many of us, the only exposure we get to these types of issues comes to us through television. As Murray Edelman stated in his book The Symbolic Uses of Politics,

For most men most of the time politics is a series of pictures in the mind, placed there<sub>1</sub> by television news, newspapers, magazines, and discussions.

Television is one of the important factors which helps shape and focus our most basic political and economic attitudes. And the attitudes we receive from television reinforce our traditional values in favor of the status quo in America. Any good viewer can tell you that the evening news will rarely, if ever, challenge those basic American values common to most of us, such as the fundamental belief in the merits of capitalism and the belief in the representative nature of our democratic government.

This symbolic language which is brought to us by the media, and its effect upon society, have been a popular subject for analysis in the last couple of decades. With the growth of the media and of their many

technological advances, the need for studies of this nature was obvious. The unknown element of the potential power of the mass media was frightening to many.

Fortunately, psychologists, anthropologists, and philosophers have learned a great deal about this subject, and the application of this body of knowledge to government leads to some exciting pathways,<sup>2</sup> some fruitful speculations, and even a few firm conclusions.

One such man, Carlos Castaneda, anthropologist and cult philosopher, while doing his graduate work at the University of California at Los Angeles, put his philosophies down in the form of a series of discussions which take place between himself and a Yaqui Indian Sorcerer named Don Juan. In these numerous discussions they critique American society and its many symbols. This Indian sorcerer tells Carlos that life was determined for him by society and through the use of symbols. The following is Don Juan's advice to Carlos and to every media consumer:

You see, we only have two alternatives; we either take everything for sure and real, or we don't. If we follow the first, we end up bored to death with ourselves and with the world. If we follow the second and erase personal history, we create a fog around us, a very exciting and mysterious state in which nobody knows where the rabbit will pop out, not even ourselves. When nothing is for sure we remain alert, perenially on our toes. It's more exciting not to know which bush the rabbit is hiding behind than to behave as though we know everything.<sup>3</sup>

Whether intentionally or not, the American mass media keep us perenially off our toes and lull us to sleep with certainty and security of the world we live in. C. Wright Mills described the same process in his book The Power Elite. Mills stated that what he had in mind was "a sort of psychological illiteracy that is facilitated by the media."<sup>4</sup> Mills went on to state,



The media not only give us information; they guide our very experiences. Our standard of credulity, our standards of reality, tend to be set by these media rather than by our own fragmentary experiences.

Don Juan, in his discussion with Carlos Castaneda, points out to us that the mistake in being absolutely sure of anything is that through this certainty we are dulled and controlled. We begin to take things such as freedom for granted. When one becomes secure in freedom and government, then the danger exists that abuses might take place. One might no longer do the little things which at one time helped to preserve that freedom, such as protest, investigate government actions, or use more than one news source. According to Murray Edelman,

It is accordingly useful to look searchingly at every unquestioned or widely taught assumption about how government works, for it is a key characteristic of myth that it is generally unquestioned, widely taught and believed, and that the myth itself has consequences, though not the ones it literally proclaims.

Buried within the philosophies of Carlos Castaneda, and revealed to us in the earlier quote by Don Juan, is the message that Americans are, indeed, falling victim to this type of symbolic manipulation by societal forces. We allow these popular myths about our political and economic system to go virtually unquestioned. We have, unknowingly, begun to lose the realities of our individuality and personal choice. What remains is partly myth. Once we enter this 'great melting pot' which is American society, we are indeed melted down into a liquid state and then poured into the All-American mold. If one resists this cloning process, and most do not because it usually happens without them even knowing, then he or she is quickly told by the schools, the mass media, the government, and other good Americans, that he or she is a deviant and that they should not be allowed to enjoy the same freedoms that a good,

self-righteous American enjoys. Again, this is done with great subtlety through tracking in education, discriminatory admission processes in colleges and universities, and discriminatory hiring practices.

Some have even gone so far as to suggest that Americans are becoming fascist in nature, citing our extreme racism, male dominance, and militaristic tendencies as examples. By our militaristic tendencies, these critics are referring to the movement toward taking dollars away from social programs and putting them into the most massive military build-up the world has ever seen. Americans are becoming intolerant of other people and cultures. We do not want foreigners coming into our country and using up our resources. We do not want to have to hire teachers who are bilingual and spend extra money educating those "damn foreigners" who haven't even taken the time to learn our language. After all, why can't they speak "American" like the rest of us? And God help us if we have homosexuals teaching our children.

According to Roy C. Macridis, in his book Contemporary Political Ideologies, fascism would involve the "doing away with competition, individualism, the quest for profit and material gain, divisions, fragmentations and particularisms."<sup>7</sup> Although American society does not embrace all of these characteristics (we will always strive for profit and material gain), intolerance of individualism and particularisms is highly applicable. Ironically, it is just at this time, when individualism is declining in America, that the private industrial sector has risen to its defense. (Even more ironic is the role which corporate America has played in eliminating individualism on every level including the corporate level.) It is partially through abuses of the concepts of individualism and personal choice that the private industrial sector, of



which the mass media are a member, has been able to manipulate American society. The development of the media has closely paralleled the decline of individualism in America. It has played a fundamental role in the preservation and strengthening of our capitalist system. Speaking on the subject of mass media, Horkheimer stated that

In America it collects no fees from the public, and has acquired the illusory form of disinterested, unbiased authority which suits Fascism admirably.

Horkheimer is pointing out the ability of the mass media to pass on culture values, to socialize the masses, while appearing to be a neutral and disinterested party. This makes them very useful and potentially dangerous tools in the hands of a group with interests which run counter to what is in the best interest of the American people.

Through the media we are told that in capitalism, and only in capitalism, can the 'individual' rise to a state of well-being (individuation). In the case of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it is in capitalism that the individual becomes self-actuated. "This tendency might be phrased the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming."<sup>9</sup> By creating this link between individualism, personal choice, and private enterprise, corporate America may have been able to further its economic gains, with help from the media, with a type of manipulation that has gone virtually undetected by the American people.

Herbert Schiller, in his book The Mind Managers, says that in order "for manipulation to be most effective, evidence of its presence should be nonexistent. ... In short, manipulation requires a false reality that is a continuous denial of its existence."<sup>10</sup> Who better to carry out this manipulation than the American mass media, itself a vital part

of corporate America. According to Schiller, another aspect of this manipulation is the myth of neutrality. This myth assumes that institutions such as the media and government are beyond reproach. Any corruption or deceit which occurs is due to human weakness, not institutional failures.<sup>11</sup> Once again, when one thinks of portraying an air of neutrality and nonpartisanship, the American mass media, particularly the news business, must come to mind. Every week night millions of Americans watch the evening news on one of the three major networks and they feel informed. Until this information is proved otherwise, it is accepted as the gospel. So, who better to carry out this manipulation?

News reporters are supposed to be accurate and unbiased in their coverage of the facts. We rely on the media for our news of the world. Surely they haven't been manipulating us all this time? This must be a far-fetched scenerio and certainly does not reflect reality. The news business cannot be part of an intentional effort on the part of the private industrial sector to control the masses? Or can they? Is there really an elite in America which manipulates the flow of information, thereby controlling our images of the world and directing our actions? If so, who is this elite group and just what exactly is their influence on the news organizations and the news making apparatus? And what is it about the nature of the news business that would allow this manipulation? These are some of the questions which we will attempt to answer in this and the following chapters. In this chapter we shall identify the media elite, demonstrate their ties with corporate America, and show that they take an active role in the policy-making process of our political system. In Chapter 3 we will demonstrate how this elite might

possibly use the media to further its economic and political interests by exercising their control over the flow of information in America.

### The Media Elite

The power elite model of policy-making, as was demonstrated in Chapter 1, is nothing new to the social sciences. In the 1930s theorists such as Robert Brady, Harold Lasswell, and Charles Beard all published work of an elitist nature. Probably most importantly, in 1956, C. Wright Mills published The Power Elite which would permanently place elite theory on the maps of social scientists. Nearly a century ago, Gaetano Mosca was able to capture the essence of the power elite model of policy-making: Domination of the masses and of the policy-making process by a ruling elite.

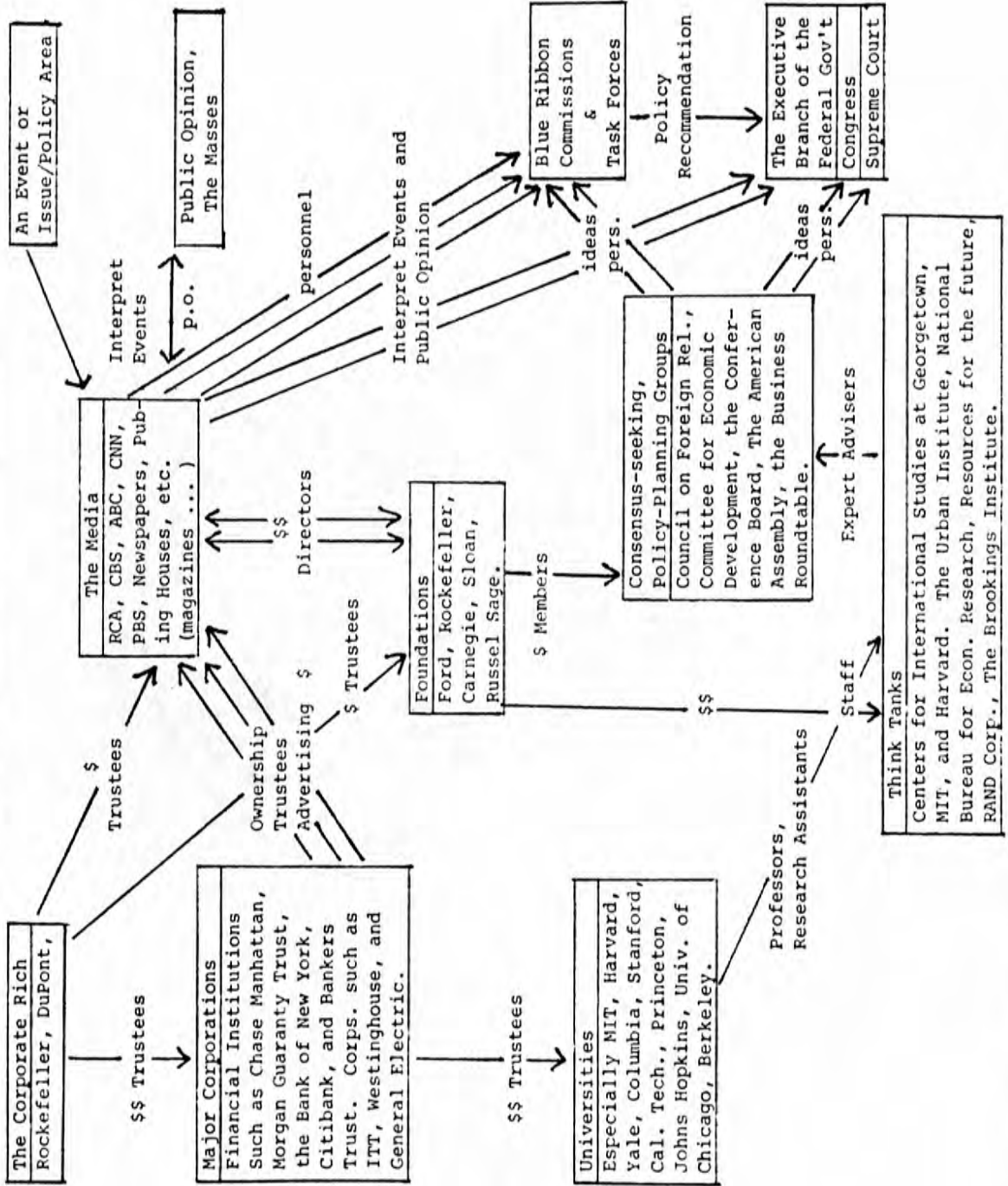
In all societies--from societies that are very meagerly developed and have barely attained the dawning of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies--two classes of people appear--a class that rules and that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the <sup>12</sup>more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first.

Contemporary scholars such as Robert Cirino in Don't Blame the People, Herbert Schiller in The Mind Managers, and Michael Parenti in Democracy for the Few, have applied this same concept to the American mass media of the 20th Century. Each of these men suggests that a small group of corporate elite intentionally control the world-wide flow of information and knowledge in an effort to manipulate the masses. In other words, what we know to be important in the world we live in has





Figure 2.2 DUNLOP'S POWER ELITE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS.



(Adapted from William Domhoff, *Insurgent Sociologist*, 4, 3, Spring 1974, p. 3-16.)



been and is to this day determined for us by this media elite in an effort to gain and maintain economic and political power.

Gaye Tuchman, the author of Making News, says that she continues to suspect that

news is an interchange among politicians and policy-makers, newsmen and their organizational superiors, and that the rest of us are eavesdroppers on that ongoing conversation.<sup>13</sup>

Our conversation now turns to focus even more sharply on the main target of this work: the media elite--or what Walter Lippman once called "The magnates of the new media of mass communications."<sup>14</sup>

The major difference between classic elite theory (as shown in Figure 2.1) and the version of elite theory which is proposed within this study (as shown in Figure 2.2) is the role of the mass media. Generally, the media have not been considered an important factor in elite theory. This is primarily due to the fact that it was not until very recently that the media developed fully as a force in our political system. Only within the last 20 years have the media become an influential element within the policy-making process in America. Although the classic theorists did not include the media as one of the primary elements of elite control of the masses, they did make references to the role of the media. It is obvious by many of their observations that they anticipated the media to rise to a position of power.

However, G. William Domhoff, one of the key figures in Elite Theory, had the current state of the mass media in full view when he stated that the media are not important as shapers of public opinion. According to Domhoff,

it seems more likely that they have a much more secondary role, reinforcing existing viewpoints and helping to set the outer limits of respectable discourse.<sup>15</sup>

Surprisingly, this was written in 1983 by one of the leaders in the development and refinement on modern elite theory. Yet, as far back as 1956, C. Wright Mills characterized "public opinion as a mere reaction ... to the content of the mass media."<sup>16</sup>

However, even Mills qualified his criticism of the media. He noted the importance of competition within the media and felt that this was the key to countering misinformation.

So long as the media are entirely monopolized, the individuals can play one medium off against another; he can compare them, and hence resist what only one of them puts out.<sup>17</sup>

Mills, showing great foresight, also noted the propensity of the masses to rely on a limited base of information. People generally do not compare sources or seek out alternative sources of information "No one seems to search out such counter-statements as may be found in alternative media offerings."<sup>18</sup> And with greater conglomeration of the media the variety within alternative sources is reduced.

As far as the elite nature of the media in America, Mills noted that "some of the higher agents of these media are themselves either among the elites or very important among their servants."<sup>19</sup> Leo Rosten also recognized the upper-class nature of those in the media in his 1937 text The Washington Correspondents. This book was the result of an intensive study in the 1930s of 127 members of the Washington Press Corps. At that time, this was a substantial portion of the leading journalists. Among Rosten's findings was the fact that most of the journalists came from economically favorable backgrounds and from professional families.<sup>20</sup> Another study which suggested that the majority of journalists in America are members of an socio-economic

elite, was done by Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman in 1981. According to this study,

Most of the leading journalists that we interviewed at the Times, the Post, and the networks, and elsewhere, were drawn from big cities in the Northeast, they tended to come from families well off, they were the children of professional parents, the upper middle class, they have adopted primarily a secular outlook.<sup>21</sup>

The backgrounds of those who direct the major media conglomerates will be discussed in the next few pages.

The question of how the elite use the media was also discussed by Mills who claimed that the media are

among the most important of those increased means of power now at the disposal of elites of wealth and power.<sup>22</sup>

In this single line Mills helped to establish the concept of the media as the tool of the elite. As we have already noted, the elite might then use media to dull or pacify the public, control public opinion, and manipulate the masses. The pervasiveness of their potential power is virtually unlimited. Some feel that it has even gone to the extent that the media define for us who we are. As Mills put it,

They have provided us with new identities and new aspirations of what we should like to be, and what we should like to appear to be.<sup>23</sup>

At approximately the same time that Mills wrote this, the mid- 1950s, there were only 199 TV stations in America, 2,458 AM radio stations, 686 FM radio stations, 688 publishing houses, and 1,785 daily newspapers. In 1983 there were 1,127 television stations, 4,720 AM radio stations, 4,532 FM radio stations, over 1,200 publishing houses, and 1,762 daily newspapers. The ability of the controllers of the mass media to reach the general public with their messages is much greater today with this overwhelming expansion of the communications industry.

Central to the media elite model represented in Figure 2.2, is the link between corporate America and the media. More than a simple linkage would imply, the media are themselves members of corporate America. Many doubt this fact because of the occasional abuse corporate America suffers at the hand of the media. Louis Banks reflected this school of thought when he commended in his Harvard Business Review article that

The news industry--television, radio, magazines, newspapers--stands as the principle arbitrator of social attitudes toward business (and all institutions). Broadly speaking, mass media news selection and interpretation feeds the public's suspicions about corporate practice (with a certain amount of help from the corporate malefactors), and interprets corporate affairs with a negative bias. This situation has prompted the choruses of antimedia hates that dominate many business panel sessions and conversations ...<sup>24</sup>

Mr. Banks' review of the relationship, like that of so many others, falls short of the reality of the matter. In rebuttal to his claims, Thomas Griffith, in his June 1974 Fortune article, put forth the opinion that the perceived bias of the media

involves nothing more than a conscientious reporter trying to deal with some large and sensitive issues.<sup>25</sup>

More simply stated, the corporations overreact when the press occasionally bothers to question their motives and practices. If anything, this periodic criticism of corporate America by the media helps to keep secure the veil of non-alignment under which they operate. However, the media, like corporate America, are very sensitive to criticism of any nature. This sensitivity nearly reaches the point of paranoia. Both applaud criticism of government of any type, but when the critical finger turns and points at them, they act as if their feelings have been hurt and that they should be beyond reproach.



Regardless of the media's occasional criticism of corporate shortcomings, it is a distinguished and fullfledged member of the society called corporate America. According to G. William Domhoff,

As highly profitable companies whose primary goal is to sell advertising, their allegiance is to the corporate structure.<sup>26</sup>

Michael Massing, the contributing editor of Columbia Journalism Review, expressed a similar sentiment when he discussed one of his fears in regard to the growth and conglomeration of the media.

What is the basis of the fear that I have? Well, on the one hand, I think the refining that the media lead, rather than becoming more anti-business, more critical of business, as is claimed in the studies, it is becoming more similar to business, I believe. We are becoming<sup>27</sup> wealthy and powerful as vested interests in the status quo.

Our biographical listing of the members of the board of directors of Columbia Broadcasting Service (CBS) should serve to demonstrate, as was stated earlier, the extent to which the media are a member of corporate America and the extent to which their members are involved in the policy-making process. The biographical listing for members of the board of directors for other major media conglomerates may be found in the appendix. Certain information available to the author, but not pertinent to this study, was deleted. This includes much information about the directors' memberships on boards of charitable organizations and other such causes. Information was gather from the 1985 edition of Who's Who in America.

#### Biographies of Select members of the CBS Board of Directors

Thomas Wyman - B.A. magna cum laude, Amherst College, 1951. V.P. Polaroid Corp., Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965, sr. v.p. general manager 1972-75; pres. Green Giant Corp., 1975-79; vice-chairman, director The Pillsbury Co., 1979-80; director AT&T. Trustee Amherst College, Museum of Broadcasting, National Executive Service Corps, Lincoln Center for Performing Arts, Ford Foundation. Charter trustee Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts; board of directors United Negro



College Fund; member Presidential Commission on World Hunger, 1978-80, President's Task Force for Private Sector Initiatives.

Michel Bergerac - B.A., Sorbonne University, Paris, M.A. (economics) 1953; M.B.A. University of California, Los Angeles, 1955. Chief executive, v.p., then president ITT Europe, Inc., 1966-74; president, chief executive officer, chairman of the board, Revlon, Inc., 1974 to present; director Manufacturers Hanover Corp., CBS, Inc.; board of directors World Wildlife Fund - U.S.; board of overseers Cornell Medical College and Graduate School of Medicine.

Harold Brown - A.B. Columbia University, 1945, A.M., 1946, Ph.D. in Physics, 1949; director defense research and engineering Department of Defense, 1961-65; secretary of Air Force, 1961-69; president California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, 1969-77; Secretary of Defense, 1977-81; director AMAX, CBS, IBM, Hoover Universal; member Polaris Steering Committee, 1956-58; consultant, member Air Force Science Advisory Board, 1956-61, President's Science Advisory Committee, 1958-61, senior science advisor Conference on Discontinuance of Nuclear Tests, 1958-59; U.S. delegate SALT, Helsinki, Vienna, and Geneva, 1969-77; chairman Technology Assessment Advisory Council to U.S. Congress, 1974-77; member executive committee of the Trilateral Commission, 1973-76. Member of National Academy of Engineering, American Physics Society, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, National Academy of Sciences, Council on Foreign Relations, N.Y.C. (director 1983 to present). Currently distinguished visiting professor of national security - School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, and consultant.

Walter Cronkite - University of Texas, 1933-35; LL.D. Rollins College, 1966, Bucknell University, Syracuse University; C.H.D., Ohio State University; managing editor CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite, 1962-81.

Roswell L. Gilpatric - A.B. prima academia honoris, Yale University, 1928, LL.B., 1931; LL.D., Franklin and Marshall College, 1962, Bowdoin College, 1963. Chairman board trustees Aerospace Corp., 1960-61; Sterling visiting lecturer law school Yale, 1945-46; assistant secretary material Air Force, 1951, undersecretary, 1951-53; deputy secretary Department of Defense, 1961-64; director CBS, Eastern Airlines; chairman board Fairchild Camera & Instrument Corp., 1975-77, Federal Reserve Bank, N.Y., 1973-75; director emeritus Corning Glass Co., member council Yale, 1957-63; member Rockefeller Brothers Special Studies Project, 1956-57; trustee, vice chairman Metropolitan Museum Art; trustee N.Y. Public Library, 1963-76; member Council on Foreign Relations.

James R. Houghton - A.B. Harvard University, 1958, M.B.A., 1962. Chairman board, chief executive officer Corning Glass

Works, 1983 to present; director Corning International Corp., Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., J.P. Morgan Co., Inc., Dow Corning Corp., CBS, Inc.; trustee U.S. Council of International Business; member of Business Committee for ARTs, N.Y.C., Council on Foreign Relations. Trustee Corning Glass Works Foundation.

Newton Minow - B.A., Northwestern University, 1949, J.D., 1950, LL.D., 1965; LL.D., University of Wisconsin, Brandeis University, 1963, Columbia College, 1972. Law clerk to chief justice Fred M. Vinson, 1951-52; administrative assistant to Illinois governor Stevenson, 1952-53; special assistant to Adlai E. Stevenson presidential campaign, 1952, 1956; chairman FCC, 1961-63; trustee, former chairman board Rand Corp.; former chairman Chicago Educational Television; chairman pub. review board Arthur Anderson & Co., 1974-83; director, general counsel Aetna Casualty and Surety Co. Ill., Aetna Life Insurance Co. Ill.; director Foote, Cone & Belding Communications, Inc., CBS, Inc., Chicago Pacific Corp., Encyclopedia Britanica, Inc., member of the international advisory board Pan Am World Airways; trustee Northwestern University, Notre Dame University, 1974-77, 1983 to present; trustee William Benton Foundation, 1981-83; co-chairman presidential debates League of Women Voters, 1976, 1980; board of governors Public Broadcasting Service, 1973-80; chairman board, 1978-80; chairman board of overseers Jewish Theology Seminar, 1974-77.

William S. Paley - President CBS, Inc., 1928-46, chairman board, 1946-83, consultant, 1983 to present. Trustee Columbia University, 1950-73, trustee emeritus, 1973 to present, also director; partner Whitcom Investment Co., 1983 to present; member of Committee for White House Conference on Education, 1954-56; chairman President's Materials Policy Commission, 1951-52; member executive committee of Resources for the Future, 1952-69, chairman, 1966-69, honorary board of directors from 1969 to present; president, director William S. Paley Foundation, Greenpark Foundation, Inc.; trustee North Shore University Hospital, 1949-73, co-chairman board of trustees, 1954-73; member of the Commission on Critical Choices for America, 1973-77; Commission for Cultural Affairs, N.Y.C., 1975-78; life trustee for the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of N.Y. Served as deputy chief of psychological warfare division of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces; member Council on Foreign Relations, Academy of Political Science, and National Institute of Social Sciences.

Henry B. Schacht - B.S., Yale University, 1956; M.B.A., Harvard University, 1962. Chairman Cummins Engine Co., Inc., Columbus, Indiana, 1977 to present; director AT & T, CBS, Chase Manhattan Bank; member Council on Foreign Relations; advisory committee Yale school organization and management; trustee Brookings Institution, Committee on Economic Development, Conference Board, and the Business Council.

Franklin Augustine Thomas - B.A., Columbia University, 1956, LL.B., 1963; assistant U.S. attorney for so. district N.Y., 1964-65; deputy police commissioner Charge Legal Matters, N.Y.C., 1965-67; president chief executive officer Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp., Brooklyn, 1967-77; president Ford Foundation, 1979 to present; director Citicorp/Citibank, CBS, Aluminum Co. America, Allied Stores Corp., Cummins Engine Corp.; trustee J.H. Whitney Foundation, Columbia University, 1969-75.

Marietta Peabody Tree - Student, La Petite Ecole Florentine, Florentine, Italy; 1934-35, University of Pennsylvania, 1936-39, LL.D. 1964; L.H.D., Russell Sage College, 1962; U.S. representative to Human Rights Commission of U.N., 1961-64; member U.S. delegation U.N., 1961; U.S. representative Trusteeship Council of U.N. with rank of ambassador, 1964-65; partner Llewelyn-Davies Assoc., 1968-80; director Llewelyn-Davies, Sahni, Inc., Pan Am Airways, N.Y.C., CBS, Lend-Lease Corp. Ltd (Australia), International Income Properties; trustee U.S. Trust Co. N.Y.; member Council on Foreign Relations.

When the information within these biographies is compared to flow chart in Figure 2.2, the findings are quite revealing. Seven members of the board of directors of CBS are members of the Council on Foreign Relations. This is reminiscent of our finding in regard to the board of trustees of the Ford Foundation. The Council on Foreign Relations is a body which plays a key role in determining the direction of American foreign policy. The membership of the board of directors also included a former secretary of defense and a former deputy secretary of defense, a U.N. ambassador, another with rank of U.N. ambassador, an aid to a Supreme Court Justice, a former FCC chairman, and a former secretary of the Air Force. It was not unusual for members to serve on Presidential Task Forces or Commissions. Major corporate connections involved names such as Chase Manhattan, AT&T, ITT, IBM, Citicorp/Citibank, and Manufacturers Hanover. Nearly all of the members were either graduates or somehow affiliated with prominent universities such as Johns Hopkins, Columbia, Yale, Harvard, Cornell, and Notre Dame. Major organizations

and foundations include the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Resources for the Future, the Conference Board, the Business Council, and the Brookings Institution. Once again, note the ties between these data and the flow chart in Figure 2.2. This clearly demonstrates the influence of the media elite in the policy-making process and their membership as an integral part of the corporate/power elite in America today. Does it not seem peculiar that the board of directors of a major broadcasting company would have so many members involved with national policy-planning? The same picture may be painted for other major media conglomerates which are represented in the Appendix. CBS was by no means an extreme case.

Those who control the media are members of the corporate elite in America. They are members of key policy-planning groups, presidential commissions, and themselves have served as cabinet members. This seems to demonstrate a desire on their part to influence the policy-making process within the United States. However, to say that the members of the board of directors of CBS are members of the power elite is not to say that they use CBS to further the position of this elite.

What remains is for us to demonstrate whether or not the media elite use the media as a tool for influencing, directly or indirectly, the policy-making process. This evidence will be presented in Chapter 3. For now we will continue with the discussion of the conglomeration, concentration, and ownership of the media in order to show the pervasiveness and potential power of this media elite.

Still the question remains, how far can one take this application of elite theory to the American mass media? Can it be true that the media are the mouthpiece of corporate America? Is what we know about



the world decided ahead of time in the corporate board rooms? Perhaps we can bring this situation closer to home.

Let us take the example of America's attitude toward the ideology of communism. One of the things which capitalist America dislikes the most is communism. This is one of the fundamentals of our system. An interesting series of pamphlets entitled A Citizen's Course in Freedom vs. Communism: The Economics of Survival, is useful as an example in this discussion. This series of pamphlets was published by the United States Chamber of Commerce in 1961. As questioning people who do not take their freedom for granted, we should ask ourselves why the Chamber of Commerce, representing the businesses interests in America, would feel it necessary to put out this program of study designed to inform the public of the evils of communism? In these pamphlets we are told not to be fooled by communists posing as liberals, progressives, social reformers, or good patriotic Americans. Again, as intelligent consumers of information, we should ask ourselves, why this attack upon communism?

Obviously, we are led to believe that communism is a bad thing. In theory and in some people's minds, communism poses a threat to small businesses and big corporations alike. According to C. Wright Mills in The Causes of World War Three,

The American elite is becoming aware that the political economy of communism may very well outcompete, in their own terms of production, the political economy of capitalism.<sup>28</sup>

He goes on to state that communism is viewed by industrial America as "An economic and a political threat to the capitalist political economy of the U.S.A."<sup>29</sup> In a true communist world there would be no place for private enterprise or a corporate elite. (According to Mosca there would still be a dominant ruling class.) Ownership of the means of



production would fall into the hands of the people. Therefore, communism threatens the very existence of these businesses and corporations--it threatens the status quo. In order to fight this "spread of communism," the Chamber of Commerce published this piece of propaganda hoping that it would turn 'good Americans' against communism by establishing a link between the citizen's feeling of freedom and the survival of our capitalist system. It is similar to the situation mentioned earlier where the corporations try to establish a link between capitalism and the well-being of an individual. The real point here is not that communism poses a threat to capitalism, but that the private industrial sector is trying to insure its vitality by establishing this link between itself and the freedom of the citizen. This use of symbolism is a very subtle way to protect the future of private enterprise, whether the threat of communism is real or not. The symbol of evil communism serves a useful purpose which the media then transmit to the general public. And who questions the motives of the media?

Corporate America feels the same way about communism, or at least portrays itself as feeling the same way, but according to elite theorists has greater resources available to battle communist growth in America. Or, looked at another way, it has greater resources available to perpetuate the symbolism mentioned above. If elite theorists are right and the mass media are controlled by the corporate elite, as we shall examine in the next few pages, then the media would serve as the perfect tool in turning public opinion against communism and to form that symbolic bond between an individual's freedom and the success of capitalism. Remember, it is only through capitalism that we, as individuals, may reach a state of well-being. If this holds true, it would

make sense that these controllers of the media would highlight news items which portray communist countries in a negative way. After all, why is there seldom anything good said about the Soviet Union or Cuba on the evening news? Why are communists always portrayed as the bad guys? Why when we talk about Cuba do we only hear about people leaving the country due to political intolerance? Why is it that the American mass media has never told us about the great social reforms that have taken place in Cuba since Castro came to power: the great battle against illiteracy and the vast increase in health care benefits for the common man? Perhaps Mills had the answer in his book Listen Yankee: The Revolution in Cuba.

If U.S. business adversely affected by the revolution do not coordinate your news of Cuba, business as a system of interests (of which the media is a part) may nonetheless be a controlling factor in what you are able to know about Cuba today.

Americans are generally intolerant of communism. Why is it that we dislike communism? What makes us feel the way we do about communism? Have most of us ever had bad experiences with communists first hand? Have most of us ever even met someone from a communist country? How many communists does the average American meet in a lifetime? When did we first begin, as individuals, to dislike communism? Gaye Tuchman might say that the combination of corporate elite, government elite, policy-makers, and newswriters made up our minds for us. After all, were we ever given the opportunity to look at communism objectively as an alternative to capitalism?

As early on as grade school we are indoctrinated or socialized to believe that capitalism is the "right way" and that communism is "wrong." The schools, as agents of the power elite, tell us how to feel

about communism. Later on, in movies, cartoons, books, television programs, and even on the evening news the media continue with this socialization process until we finally believe that communism is inherently bad. And all we really know about communism is that it is a different way of life, but we are sure that it is evil. What is even worse is that we think we came by this decision on our own when in reality we have never met a communist, never visited a communist country, never read any communist literature, and theoretically all we know about communism is what the power elite has allowed us to hear, see, and read through their control of the media. And it appears as though corporate America is not going to let us see the good side of communism. Through the entire life of an individual the elite decide how he or she will look at the world. They have the potential to shape the parameters of our reality and beliefs. In the words of David Brinkley, "News is what I say it is. It's something worth knowing by my standards."<sup>31</sup> It is something worth knowing by the standards of those who control the flow of information in America. And obviously these people have a vested interest in maintaining the unpopular image of communism.

However, this type of bias, perpetuated by the media, can be very dangerous. The example of new coverage of the Soviet Union should demonstrate this point. The Soviet Union is the country which Americans are probably the most concerned with. Martin Kriesberg, a Social Science Research Council fellow at Harvard University, conducted a study on "Soviet News in the New York Times." He found that news which places the Soviets in a bad light was given more attention than positive news about the Soviets. It seems that our news agencies, in this case the New York Times, reinforce this symbolism put forth by the private

industrial sector. They portray the Soviets as our enemies and the bad guys in the international arena. Kriesberg found four effects of this biased coverage:

First, readers would tend to acquire, or to have reinforced, an attitude of esteem for American values and goals. Secondly, readers would tend to acquire, or to have reinforced, an adverse opinion toward Soviet Russia. Thirdly, readers would tend to feel that conflict with the Soviet Union is a likelihood. Finally, readers would tend to feel that conflict with Soviet Russia would be justified.<sup>32</sup>

Obviously, perpetuating a bias such as this could have some very dangerous and frightening consequences. Shouldn't the media be advocating greater international understanding and cooperation instead of open conflict? Whose interests are the media representing by perpetuating this bias? Perhaps they are looking out for the short term interests of the corporate elite rather than the long term interests of the American people.

Who really does control the American mass media? On the one hand we have elite theorists telling us that the media are simply a tool of the elite--used to manipulate the public in order to gain and maintain economic and political power, while on the other hand we have government commissions and respected authorities in the field of communications praising the media as "one of the bulwarks of a free society." Most agree that our society depends upon the media to keep us informed.

Its commerce, its education, its politics, its spiritual integrity, and its security depend upon an unimpeded and unsubservient exchange of information and ideas.<sup>33</sup>

And many, such as the Executive Editor of the Washington Post, Mr. Ben Bradlee, feel that we have this in America today. He describes the newspaper business as being

On the cutting edge of society, where injustices could be found and put right. Where justice could be helped along,

with persistence and energy. Where truth could be pursued against tough, tough odds. And every so often could actually emerge and set men free, just like the Bible says. Where the brave could be immortalized, where the pompous could be deflated, where the arrogant could be held to account, where the innocent could be warned, where the difficult could be explained, and where just maybe you had a shot at leaving the world a little better than you found it.<sup>34</sup>

Can these two view points be compatible? If, as this study claims, they are not, then which of them comes closest to reality? Are we blessed with a free and independent press which protects us from the excesses of the powerful, or are we unknowingly manipulated by a seemingly fair and neutral press in order to further the interests of those whom it is supposed to defend us from? The following information should help answer these questions.

#### Who Owns the Media?

The information available to the general public about the ownership of the American mass media is often misleading. What accurate information which does exist is most often found in scholarly journals or rarely read texts, and even these are often toned down or contradictory. Estimates on the degree of centralization of ownership are at best only blind shots in the dark. In fact, even government is not quite sure who owns what and how much. Appearing before the Senate Small Business Committee's Subcommittee on Monopoly, U.S. Senator Lee Metcalf testified to that effect:

Collection of data on financial concentration is so inadequate that the government becomes ludicrous in its feeble efforts to determine the facts and enforce the laws and regulations. Last month, for example (May 1972), when the Federal Communications Commission liberalized its rules on bank ownership of broadcasting companies, it admitted that banks were violating the old rules, and that the Commission did not know the extent of the violations because it did not have the current data.<sup>35</sup>



The one fact that is rarely debated is that ownership and control of the media are concentrated in the hands of a few corporate conglomerates. It was A.J. Liebling who once said that "freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one," a statement well worth considering.

What exactly constitutes control over a particular network or broadcasting company? In Peter Borsnan's article "Who Owns the Network?," he discusses the role of the FCC in controlling the development of monopolies in the media. Originally, the FCC limited financial institutions to ownership of only 1 percent of the stock in a particular broadcasting company. However, in 1972, as was mentioned above by Senator Metcalf, due to universal violation of this rule, the FCC raised the limit to 5 percent. According to Brosnan, "so many banks were violating the 1 percent rule that, to comply with it, nineteen of them would have been forced to divest of nearly \$1 billion in stock."<sup>36</sup> Rather than force the banks to divest, the FCC simply changed the regulation to accommodate the power elite. And this type of action by the FCC is not uncharacteristic of those forces within society which are supposed to protect us from the excesses of the corporate powers.

We can show that many business regulation and other law enforcement policies confer tangible benefits on the regulated businesses while conveying only symbolic<sup>37</sup> reassurance to their ostensible beneficiaries, the consumers.

Today the FCC allows ownership of 10 percent or more by financial institutions provided they sign a relatively meaningless disclaimer stating that they do not intend to try to control the broadcasting. Quoting from the FCC Report issued on April 30, 1984:

The name, residence, citizenship, and stockholding of every officer, director, trustee, executor, administrator, receiver, partner, member of an association, and any stockholder which holds 5 percent or more of the votes of the corporation, except that investment company, insurance company, or bank

trust department need be reported only if it holds stock amounting to 10 percent or more of the votes, and the licensee certifies that such an entity has made no attempt to influence, directly or indirectly, the management or operations of the licensee, and that there is no representation on the licensee's board or among its officers by any person professionally or otherwise associated with the entity.<sup>38</sup>

After reviewing this, it comes as no surprise when people such as Murray Edelman make comments like the following:

Nowhere does the FCC wax so emphatically in emphasizing public service responsibility, for example, or in decisions permitting greater concentration of control in an area, condoning license transfers at inflated prices, refusing to impose sanctions for flagrantly sacrificing program quality to profits, and so on.<sup>39</sup>

It also comes as no surprise when Walter Cronkite, one of the most respected men in America, tells a Playboy interviewer, when questioned about the power of the news medium, just how powerful they really are:

That's right. We're big. And we're so powerful enough to thumb our noses at threats and intimidation from government. I hope it stays that way.<sup>40</sup>

And they are big enough to deter government from doing its job in trying to insure diversity in the communications industry. And it will stay that way as long as the FCC continues to roll over and play dead whenever it is challenged by the powerful conglomerates of the world. This is not to say that the American mass media should be weak and subservient, rather, it is simply that a financial institution, through its control of a particular network, should not be allowed to control the flow of information and knowledge in America. Even if abuses do not take place, should we have to take the risk? The potential is there and it should be enough to generate concern on the part of the American people and those who represent us in government. The question now arises, what is the effect of the media becoming increasingly

concentrated and business-like? As ownership of the networks becomes more concentrated,

'bottom-line' consciousness increases, and the business school graduates with their demographics and pocket-calculator mentalities gain more and more say on the choice of material, certain types of programs just don't get on the air. Documentaries, or responsible, indepth news reports, for example, usually earning poor ratings and, if controversial, risk the loss of sponsors or audiences. Thus, in a very real way, bottom-line responsibility to stockholders becomes a form of censorship.<sup>41</sup>

Since banks must declare ownership of 10 percent or more of a particular broadcasting company, they may easily avoid disclosure through the use of nominee accounts. A nominee account is

basically a technique of convenience, a discretionary agreement with an underlying owner by which the trustee (the bank) votes the stock assigned to the trust, thereby exercising control since it holds the shares in trust agreement.<sup>42</sup>

According to the report put out in March of 1974 by the Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, and Budgeting, Management, and Expenditures of the Committee on Government Operations, United States Senate, titled Disclosure of Corporate Ownership,

Use of multiple nominees by the same investor could result in a preeminent position within a company by an investor whose nominees are not even listed among the "top 10."<sup>43</sup>

Therefore, a bank holding 15 percent of the stock of a company, by having 6 percent of that stock divided up between nominee accounts, could conceal its ownership of a particular broadcasting company from the FCC, despite the possession of a great deal of control over the company's policies. This is one factor which has led to the wide speculation of who actually owns the networks. However, within the government and the FCC there seems to be a lack of concern over the use of nominee accounts. Congressman James T. Broyhill, the ranking minority member on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, in a

letter to the author of this study, stated that he was not concerned with the use of nominee accounts.

I do not feel that the use of nominee accounts is out of the ordinary.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, the use is not confined to broadcasting.

In Michael Parenti's Democracy for the Few, he speculates that control of the American mass media rests largely in the hands of five New York based banks: Chase Manhattan, Morgan Guaranty Trust, Citibank, Bankers Trust, and the Bank of New York. According to Parenti,

These banks have representatives on the boards of the three networks and control all network fiduciary and debt-financing functions.<sup>45</sup>

Peter Brosnan also lists several institutions which hold stock in all three networks. These include: Chase Manhattan, Prudential, Chemical Bank, Citibank, and Bankers Trust. He says that combined they hold 15 percent of ABC, 12 percent of CBS, and 8 percent of RCA/NBC.<sup>46</sup> Others make similar projections. The point is, no one knows for sure who owns how much of what.

In George Gerbner's article "Communication and Social Environment," he observed that "the real question is not whether the organs of mass communication are free but rather: by whom, how, for what purposes and with what consequences are the inevitable controls exercised?"<sup>47</sup> The answers to these questions are difficult. The answer to the question of who owns the media, as has been demonstrated, is partly speculative - for both the scholar and the FCC. However, this study maintains that an economic elite owns the media. How does this elite gain and maintain control appears obvious: they pull the wool over the willing eyes of the FCC and then use their financial power to direct the focus of the broadcasting company. Profit motive becomes more important than quality



broadcasting. And, despite popular belief, the two are not related. For what purpose and with what consequences does this elite exercise its controls? The answer may be found in two words: "power" and "profit." The elite wish to maintain their position of economic and political power through the use of the media. The consequences are preservation of institutions which benefit the power elite and thus, maintenance of the status quo. For the public the consequences are misinformation, a false perception of reality. The earlier example of the media's treatment of 'communism' should provide some idea of the consequences of having a media controlled by the power elite.

Corporate control of the media is not just confined to the three major radio and television networks. Independent publishing houses have recently fallen into the grasp of major corporations; Bobbs-Merrill, Simon and Schuster, and Putnam are respectively owned by ITT, Gulf and Western, and MCA.<sup>49</sup> Programs shown on PBS are often sponsored or produced through grants from major corporations and foundations (Ford, Mobil, Exxon) which, in turn, are controlled by an economic elite. Although the quality of programming on PBS is often considered to be of a superior nature, corporate contributions imply the same type of silent censorship as was discussed earlier. This might lead to the elimination or the toning down of controversial programming (as we shall examine in Chapter 3).

It is at this point in our discussion that it is appropriate to take a closer look at one of the more important trends within the mass media: the trend toward greater conglomeration and concentration of the print medium which has generally taken the form of group (chain) ownership of newspapers. Within the industry, there is a great debate over

the merits of group ownership. The next few pages will address this debate and attempt to come to some conclusion. First, we will briefly examine the trend more generally as applied to the entire print medium.

In Ben Bagdikian's article "Conglomeration, Concentration, and the Media," corporate ownership and the concentration of the print medium are detailed. According to Bagdikian,

twenty corporations, each with a chief executive officer, control 52 percent of all daily newspaper sales....50 percent of all periodical sales....52 percent of all book sales....76 percent of all record and tape sales. If one counts the three networks and the ten corporations whose sponsorships dominate prime time, 13 corporations control two-thirds of the audience in television and radio. Seven corporations control 75 percent of movie distributions. ... thus these 100 executives constitute a private ministry of information and culture for the United States.<sup>49</sup>

Is this type of ownership and control characteristic of a free and independent press? One might ask, free and independent of what? Certainly not from corporate control and possible manipulation.

One sign of the growing conglomeration of the newspaper business is the growth of group ownership. Originally, in our nation's history, newspapers were individually owned and diverse in content and message.

At the outset of the American experience, newspapers were plentiful, diverse, and cheap to publish. Each had a special personality reflecting the disposition of its owner or patron - a Jefferson, a Hamilton, or, at time went on, a Pulitzer or Hearst.<sup>50</sup>

Today, chain ownership is a fact of life in the newspaper business. According to Dennis Hale, in his paper Chains Versus Independents: Newspaper and Market Characteristics,

by late 1981, 155 chains controlled 1,136 of the 1,730 daily newspapers in the United States, representing 72 percent of weekday circulation and 75 percent of Sunday circulation.<sup>51</sup>

In January of 1983, there were 26 newspaper chains which controlled 10 or more daily papers each. By 1984, daily circulation under the control of group ownership had reached 49,212,465 or approximately 79 percent of the total daily circulation in the United States of 62,611,741.<sup>52</sup>

There exist two main schools of thought in the group ownership debate. The first, the school which opposes group ownership, claims that group ownership limits editorial vigor, raises advertising rates, and creates a homogeneous society of newspapers. The second, the school which favors group ownership, claims that it allows for greater editorial flexibility, financial stability, increased resources, and long needed management reforms. Both provide convincing arguments on their behalf.

In support of group ownership,

A case can be made that chain ownership can render a paper more independent of the local pressures which reduce most small and medium-sized dailies, and many large ones, to anemic, blithering boosterisms.<sup>53</sup>

Group ownership usually allows for improved recruiting of quality staff members. Groups are usually able to pay higher wages and to acquire higher quality, more technologically advanced equipment. Obviously, there are some advantages to chain ownership.

In opposition to chain ownership, media mogul Rupert Murdoch states:

I think legion to the problem in this country we do have very much a monopolistic press. You can't blame the press for that, you can't blame the journalists for that. But the vast majority of America served is in one newspaper cities, and I think that highlights the problem, because people do not have the choice of two daily papers in most places.<sup>54</sup>

According to U.S. News and World Report, January 24, 1977, in 1976 there were only 61 cities in the United States which had two or more separately owned newspapers. And of these 61, many are owned by the major chains. Judy Erola, the Canadian Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, stated a basic premise of this study when she said that

Democratic societies . . . are committed to the proposition that their free institutions depend on an informed citizenry. This<sup>55</sup> requires access to a diversity of information and opinion.

If this is true, as this study assumes, then this trend toward group ownership and its results -- one newspaper towns -- greatly jeopardizes the ability of the citizenry to have access to diverse sources of information. This is of particular importance when one considers the conglomeration in other sectors of the media along with this.

Even advocates and practitioners of this conglomeration at times express their doubts. Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, the chairman and president of the New York Times Company puts it this way:

I like little, independent papers. I think its a strength of America....If somebody were to blow the whistle on newspaper acquisitions and say that its enough, I, for one, would applaud it. But if those are not going to be the rules of the game, I'm<sup>56</sup> going to keep the New York Times in the acquisition business.

Similar sentiments were expressed in A Survey of Group and Independent Editors which was produced by the Ethics Committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in April of 1980.<sup>57</sup> The study included the results of 647 returned mail questionnaires: 398 from group editors and 249 from independent editors. The survey asked the editors for their opinions on questions related to group versus independent debate. Independent editors (84%) and group editors (61%) express concern over the current trend toward concentration of newspapers into a limited



number of groups. Only 34 percent of the group editors and 27 percent of the independent editors felt that the newspaper industry is very competitive. Of the group editors, 79 percent believed that freedom of the press is more likely to be threatened by government if the press is owned by a few people rather than many. Fifty-one percent of the group editors and 83 percent of independent editors felt that groups are more concerned with profits than with the communities they serve. However, the survey also revealed those positive aspects of group ownership already mentioned. Generally, the message was that although groups can improve the overall operations of a newspaper, they threaten competition, limit diversity of opinions, put the press in jeopardy of increased government regulation, and remove the paper from local concerns. The message in these views of newspaper editors as expressed in this survey carries even more weight when one considers that these are people coming from within the industry and the majority of whom work for newspaper groups. Also, the fact that the poll itself was handled through the Ethics Committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors lends it authority. This is not just some academician criticizing group ownership and conglomeration of the media, it is the newspaper editors of America.

There is also a concern that group owned papers tend to avoid controversial, boat-rocking editorializing and investigative reporting. The lack of investigative reporting is particularly important as a check against abuses of power within society. According to investigative reporter Bob Porterfield of the Anchorage Daily News, after the paper was taken over by the McClatchy chain its emphasis on investigative reporting declined.

They said they want to build advertising before rocking the boat. I think that kind of philosophy slips over into a lot of these other chain acquisitions.<sup>58</sup>

This appears to be one of the hazards of group ownership and of conglomeration of the media in general. Once again we can see the application of what was earlier labeled the "bottom-line" consciousness which puts profit margin above all else. Pressure for conformity in the media is coming from within the media themselves rather than from the more traditional source of pressure--government.

Historically, the nation's writers, editors and publishers have been able to transmit information relatively free of government pressure. Now, costs keep going up in a technological age, they are increasingly under another kind of pressure: for bigger profit margins at the expense, in some instances, of quality and their primary mandate to keep the public informed.<sup>59</sup>

This is the price we pay for greater conglomeration and concentration of the media.

Cross medium ownership is also gaining in popularity. It is not uncommon for a communications conglomerate to own newspapers, magazines, TV stations, and radio stations all at the same time. Once again quoting Bagdikian,

Time, Incorporated owns magazines, 17 weekly newspapers, five publishing houses, a film company, and has interests in cable and in records. PCA owns the National Broadcasting Company, a record company, and the book publishing houses of Random House, Ballantine Books, Alfred Knopf, Pantheon, Vintage, and Modern Library. The biggest newspaper conglomerate, Times-Mirror, owns the Los Angeles Times, the Dallas Times-Herald, Long Island Newsday, and other papers, four magazines, TV stations, cable systems, 50 percent of a news service, and New American Library. CBS is one of the three companies who captures two-thirds of the prime time audience, owns 20 magazines, three record companies, and the book publishing houses of Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Popular Library, and W.B. Saunders Co. ....<sup>60</sup>

Whether you are listening to the radio, watching TV, sitting in a movie theatre, reading a newspaper, enjoying a novel, or just flipping through

your favorite magazine, the odds are that this 'ministry of information and culture' has played a role in its production and transmission. This includes college textbooks and other traditionally valued sources of information. Figures 2.3 and 2.4 demonstrate this point. The media elite have created their own reality which we all now live in and are governed by. And the foundation of this reality is the false perception that the media are free and independent with only the best interest of the public at heart. The example of ABC, with its accompanying flow chart, should further demonstrate this point. We also supply CBS in Figure 2.6 for comparison.

Although the organizational flow chart (Figure 2.5) clearly demonstrates the extensive reach of ABC, a brief description will clarify the extent of this reach. Generally speaking, in the words of Frederick S. Pierce, the president and chief operating officer of ABC, American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. is in the business of "information and entertainment - its acquisition, licensing, production, marketing and distribution."<sup>61</sup> He goes on to say that

ABC Television in 1984 was the dominant force in attracting advertising revenues. ABC Radio was the largest radio advertising medium and the clear leader in audience and revenues. ABC Publishing ranked among the leading magazine publishers in readership, advertising pages and market scope. ABC Video Enterprises became the primary supplier of basic cable programming. We continued to develop our expertise in the motion picture industry,<sup>62</sup> and accelerated our internal television production plans.

Needless to say, ABC is a major force in the communication industry.

The ABC Television Network, which handles distribution and sales, has a total of 212 affiliated stations which reach over 99 percent of our nation's television homes of which there are over 84.9 million.<sup>63</sup>

Figure 2.3 A Sample of Media Conglomerates**GULF & WESTERN**

1976 Fortune 500  
rank: 57  
1976 Total Sales:  
\$3.39 billion

**PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS:**

Manufacturing (25% of total sales)

**Leisure Time:**

Paramount Pictures—motion picture production & distribution; TV exhibition & series production. Owns: Oxford Films (distribution of non-theatrical films).  
MAGICAM, Inc. (rents camera systems), Future General Corp. (research, special effects services)  
Cinema International (49% interest)—owns or operates four theaters in London, one in Amsterdam, two in Egypt, 17 in Brazil, 10 in other parts of South America, 19 in South Africa

Famous Players Ltd (51% interest)—owns or operates some 300 theaters in Canada, one in Paris, and owns 50% of a French company operating 35 theaters in France

Sega Enterprises, Inc.—coin-operated amusement games

**Publishing:**

Simon and Schuster—includes Fireside and Touchstone quality paperbacks; and mass-market paperbacks from Pocket Books. Washington Square Press, Archway (14% of total sales)

**Other:**

Natural Resources—zinc and cement (5% of total)

Apparel Products—apparel, hosiery, shoes

Paper and building products (11% of total)

Auto replacement parts (8% of total)

Financial services—consumer and commercial financing, life insurance, casualty insurance (19% of total)

Consumer and agricultural products

—sugar; Minute Maid (citrus);

livestock; Consolidated Cigar;

Schrafft Candy Co. (14% of total)

**TIME INC.**

1976 Fortune 500  
rank: 217  
1976 Total Sales:  
\$1.038 billion

**PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS:****Publishing:**

*Time*, *Fortune*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Money*, and *People* magazines account for 35% of total revenue

Time-Life Books

Little, Brown

New York Graphic Society

(Alva Museum Replicas)

Minority interests in publishers in Germany, France, Spain, Mexico, and Japan

**Films and Broadcasting:**

Time-Life Films

TV production and distribution,

multimedia, TV books

Home Box Office

Manhattan Cable TV

WOTV—Grand Rapids, Mich.

**Newspapers:**

Pioneer Press, Inc.—17 weekly newspapers in suburban Chicago

Selling Areas-Marketing, Inc. (distributing marketing information)

Printing Developments, Inc. (printing equipment)

**Other:**

Forest Products:

Temple-Eastex, Inc. (pulp & paper-board, packaging, building materials, timberland)

AFCO Industries, Inc. (interior wall products),

Woodward, Inc. (bedroom furniture)

Lumberman's Investment Corporation

Sabine Investment Company

**TIMES MIRROR COMPANY**

1976 Fortune 500  
rank: 232  
1976 Total Sales:  
\$964.7 million

**PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS:****Newspapers:**

*Los Angeles Times*, *Newsday*, *Dallas Times Herald* (Tex.), L.A. *Times-Washington Post News Service* (joint)

**Magazine and Book Publishing:**

New American Library  
Signet, Signet Classics, Mentor, Meridian paperbacks

Abrams art books

Matthew Bender law books

Year Book medical books

C.V. Mosby medical, dental, and nursing books and journals

*Outdoor Life*

*Popular Science*

*Golf*

*Ski*

*The Sporting News*

*Ski Business*

*How to*

*The Sporting Goods Dealer*

**Television:**

KDFW-TV, Dallas, Tex.

KTBC-TV, Austin, Tex.

Owns two newsprint mills, 10 wood products mills, and 320,000 acres of timberland

**Other:**

Information Services

Cable Communications

Directory Printing

(\*Adapted from Kevin Phillips, "Busting the Media Trusts,"

Harper's, July 1977, pp. 28-29.)



Figure 2.4 Media Conglomerates Continued**THE NEW YORK  
TIMES COMPANY**

1976 Fortune 500  
rank: 394  
1976 Total Sales:  
\$451.4 million

**PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS:****Newspapers:**

*New York Times*  
*International Herald Tribune* (33.3%)  
Six dailies and four weeklies in  
Florida:

*Gainesville Sun*  
*Lakeland Ledger*  
*Ocala Star Banner*  
*Leesburg Daily Commercial*  
*Palatka Daily News*  
*Lake City Reporter*  
*Fernandina Beach News-Leader*  
*Sebring News*  
*Avon Park Sun*  
*Marco Island Eagle*

Three dailies in North Carolina:

*Lexington Dispatch*  
*Hendersonville Times-News*  
*Wilmington Star-News*

**Magazines:**

*Family Circle*  
*Australian Family Circle*  
*Golf Digest*  
*Golf World*  
*Tennis*  
*US*  
(Sold some eight professional  
magazines to Harcourt Brace  
Jovanovich in 1976)

**Broadcasting:**

WREG-TV, Memphis, Tenn.  
WOXR-AM/FM, New York City

**Books:**

Quadrangle/NYT Book Co.  
Amo Press, Inc.  
Cambridge Book Co.

**GANNETT**

1976 Fortune 500  
rank: 426  
1976 Total Sales:  
\$413.2 million

**PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS:****Newspapers:**

*Pacific Daily News* (Agana, Guam)  
*Sunday News, Enquirer and  
News* (Battle Creek, Mich.)  
*Bellingham Herald, Sunday Herald*  
(Bellingham, Wash.)  
*Evening Press, Sun-Bulletin,  
Sunday Press* (Binghamton, N.Y.)  
*Idaho Statesman* (Boise, Idaho)  
*Courier-News* (Bridgewater, N.J.)  
*Burlington Free Press*  
(Burlington, Vt.)  
*Courier-Post* (Camden, N.J.)  
*Public Opinion* (Chambersburg, Pa.)  
*"Today"* (Cocoa, Fla.)  
*Commercial-News* (Danville, Ill.)  
*Star-Gazette, Sunday  
Telegram* (Elmira, N.Y.)  
*El Paso Times* (El Paso, Tex.)  
*Fort Myers News Press* (Fort Myers,  
Fla.)  
*News-Messenger* (Fremont, Ohio)  
*Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Star-Bulletin  
& Advertiser* (Honolulu, Hawaii)  
*Herald Dispatch, Huntington  
Advertiser, Herald Advertiser*  
(Huntington, W. Va.)  
*Ithaca Journal* (Ithaca, N.Y.)  
*Journal and Courier* (Lafayette, Ind.)  
*State Journal* (Lansing, Mich.)  
*Marietta Times* (Marietta, Ohio)  
*Chronicle Tribune* (Marion, Ind.)  
*Nashville Banner* (Nashville, Tenn.)  
*Valley News Dispatch*  
(New Kensington-Tarentum, Pa.)  
*Niagara Gazette* (Niagara Falls, N.Y.)  
*Daily Olympian* (Olympia, Wash.)  
*Pensacola Journal, Pensacola News,  
Pensacola News-Journal*  
(Pensacola, Fla.)  
*News-Herald* (Port Clinton, Ohio)  
*Times Herald* (Port Huron, Mich.)  
*Palladium-Item* (Richmond, Ind.)  
*Times-Union, Democrat & Chronicle*  
(Rochester, N.Y.)  
*Morning Star, Register-Republic,  
Register-Star* (Rockford, Ill.)  
*Capital Journal, Oregon  
Statesman* (Salem, Ore.)

*Sun-Telegram* (San Bernardino,  
Calif.)

*New Mexican* (Santa Fe, N.M.)

*Saratogian* (Saratoga Springs, N.Y.)

*Daily Citizen* (Tucson, Ariz.)

*Daily Press, Observer Dispatch*  
(Utica, N.Y.)

*Daily Times* (Mamaroneck, N.Y.)

*Daily Argus* (Mount Vernon, N.Y.)

*Standard-Star* (New Rochelle, N.Y.)

*Citizen-Register* (Ossining, N.Y.)

*Daily Item* (Port Chester, N.Y.)

*Journal-News, Nyack* (Rockland, N.Y.)

*Daily News* (Tarrytown, N.Y.)

*Reporter-Dispatch* (White Plains, N.Y.)

*Herald-Statesman* (Yonkers, N.Y.)

*Review Press-Reporter* (Bronxville,  
N.Y.)

*Suburban Newspaper Group* (10  
weeklies) (Cherry Hill, N.J.)

*Fairpress* (Fairfield, Conn.)

*Times* (Melbourne, Fla.)

*Butler County News, North Hills News*

*Record* (semi-weekly) *Herald*

(New Kensington, Pa.)

*Commercial News* (Saratoga Springs,  
N.Y.)

*Taos News* (Taos, N.M.)

*Star Advocate* (Titusville, Fla.)

**Broadcasting:**

WBRJ (Radio) (Marietta, Ohio)

WHEC-TV (Rochester, N.Y.)

WKFI (Radio) (Wilmington, Ohio)

**Other:**

Louis Harris & Associates and Louis  
Harris International

(\*Adapted from Kevin Phillips, "Busting the Media Trusts,"  
Harper's, July 1977, pp. 28-29.)

ABC also owns five VHF television stations in five key national markets. These stations reach a

potential audience of one-fifth of all U.S. television homes, and are particularly effective in reaching the demographic group most sought after by the stations' advertisers: adults 25-54.<sup>64</sup>

ABC Radio consists of seven FM, five AM radio stations, and seven radio networks. Over 1,800 affiliates nationwide are provided with programming from the satellite-delivered messages of the ABC Radio Network.

The ten operating units of ABC Publishing publish over 100 magazines and book titles every month. They also release over 25 records a year.

ABC Video Enterprises was established in 1979

to supply and market programming to the new communications technologies, including cable television, home video and other new means of distribution.<sup>65</sup>

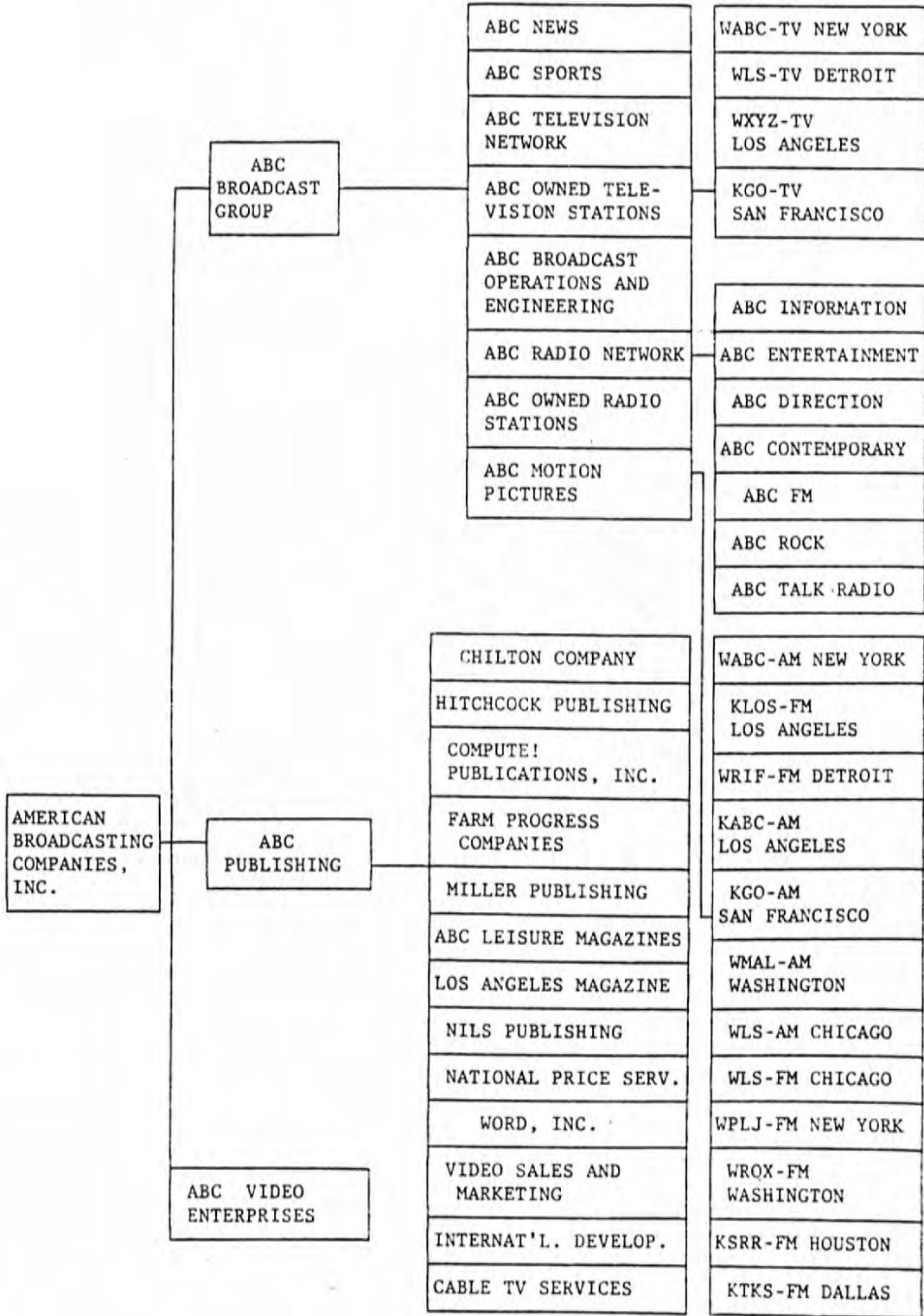
The division also serves the home video market in the U.S. and overseas.

In summing up the objectives of ABC for the future, Frederick Pierce states, "In television our objective is to remain the most profitable of the broadcasting companies." He goes on to say that "In evaluating investment opportunities we are mindful, above all, of shareholder interest."<sup>66</sup>

Obviously, ABC is a vast corporate conglomerate with the traditional corporate values and objectives: profit motive and accountability to shareholders. Its recent acquisition by Capital Cities Communication Co. has only proliferated this situation.

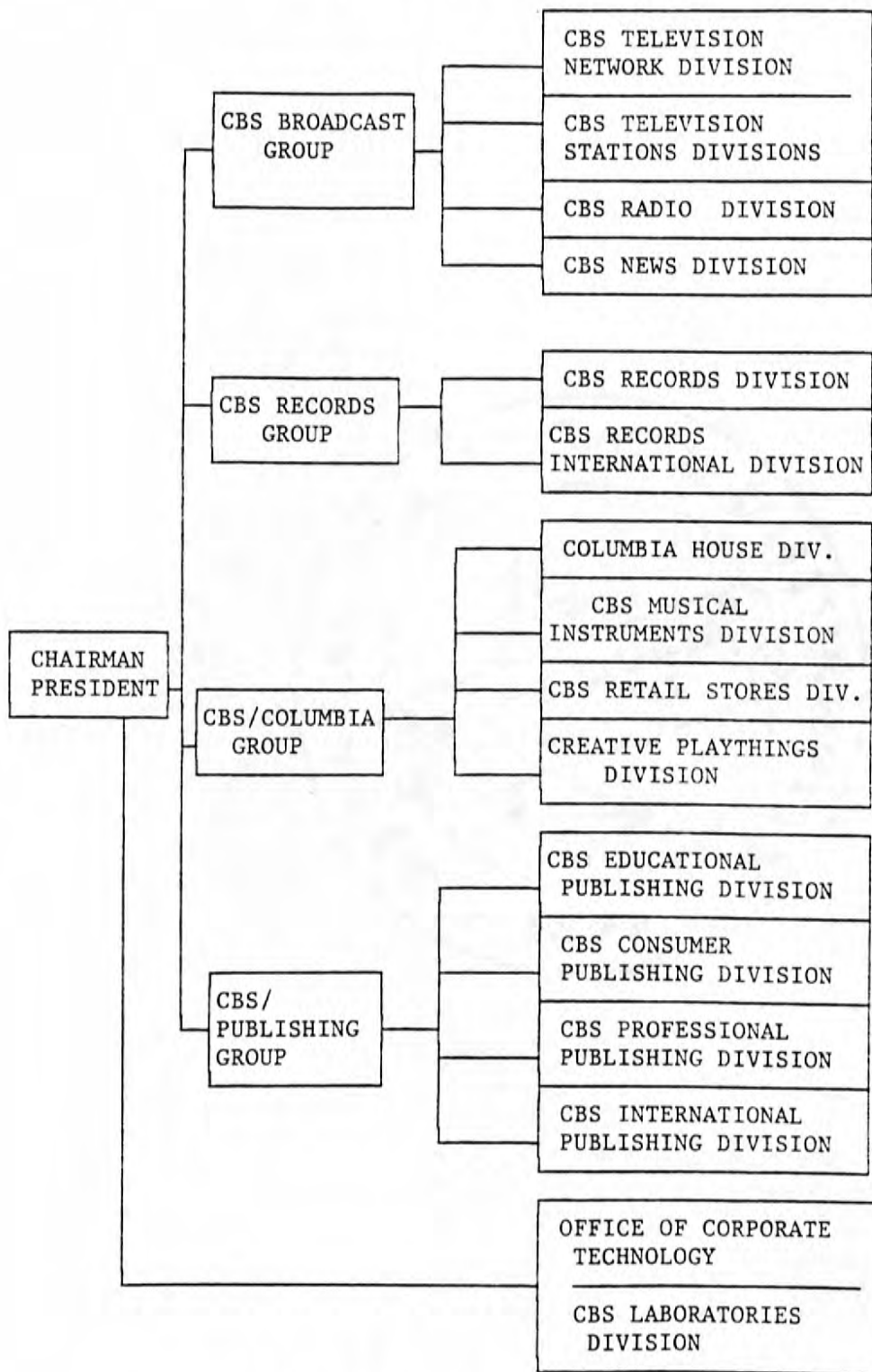
It is one thing to establish the fact that conglomeration does exist in the communication industry, it is another to prove that greater concentration is a negative feature. The fact that the major networks

Figure 2.5 ABC Operations - Prior to its recent Merger With Capital Cities Communication Company.



\*Source: American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. Annual Report 1984.

Figure 2.6 The CBS Corporate Structure



\*Taken from John Bittner's, Mass Communication: An Introduction, Prentice-Hall, 1977, p. 126.



dominate the industry is even, in itself, a subject for debate. The view of the broadcasting companies themselves changes depending on whether they are expressing them in Washington or New York, whether they are addressing Senators or stockholders.

The 1984 action by the FCC to eliminate the seven-stations rule drew a great deal of attention to the issue of media conglomeration and control. The seven-stations rule was a regulation which

prohibits any party from being a stockholder, officer or director of, or otherwise holding any interest in more than seven AM, seven FM and seven TV stations. Additionally, no more than five of the TV stations may be VHF (channels 2-13).<sup>67</sup>

Why did the FCC seek to eliminate or modify the seven-station rule?

This was being done because the FCC believed that

The increase in the number and stability of over-the-air broadcast stations during the past thirty years, the expected continued growth in the number of such stations, and the development and projected growth of broadcast-like alternatives make reexamination of the "seven station" rule mandatory.

The report goes on to note that

The FCC is of the view that these changes make the possibility that there could be national ownership concentration which would lead to economic monopoly or threaten program diversity extremely remote.<sup>68</sup>

In other words, due to the vast expansion of TV and Radio Stations, and the development of new communication and broadcasting technologies, the possibility for monopolization of the broadcast industry by the major networks is minimal. This is the current view held by the FCC. By allowing group owners to procure more stations, there should be greater competition within the industry especially with the major networks. The networks themselves claim, when testifying in Congress,

that they are being seriously challenged by cable, small group owners, etc. ...

However, not everyone agrees that removing this regulation will improve diversity and competition. In fact, there are those who would argue that they act as one entity rather than three separate organizations in their dominations of the broadcasting industry. Quoting Ron Olson, counsel to the Committee Against Network Dominance,

While part of their network armies are here in Washington saying one thing, another part are in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and elsewhere talking to the advertisers saying quite another.<sup>69</sup>

In his testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee's Hearing on the Implications of the Changes in the Seven Station Rule, Everett H. Erlick, executive vice president and general counsel, American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., stated that, indeed, there is extreme competition within the industry. Agreeing with the view of the FCC and chairman Fowler, he stated that

The networks are now engaged in the most intense competitive battle in their history: first, networks are intensely competitive among themselves; to this, you must add independent TV, specialized TV (SIN), public TV, cable, cable networks (CNN, CBN, USA), premium service networks (HBO, Showtime, The Movie Channel), MDS, STV and video cassettes.<sup>70</sup>

This makes the future of the major networks sound grim.

Yet, John Severino, the president of ABC Television, addressing the Broadcast Advertising Club of Chicago late in 1982, stated the following:

I don't think anyone seriously questions that cable is going to find a place in the broadcasting spectrum. But let's be realistic in our expectations and perspectives. Total cable advertising last year amounted to less than two-tenths of one percent of all television advertising revenues, which is a real measure of the size and dimension of cable audience.<sup>71</sup>

Severino also stated that network dominance is a fact of life.

Network television is our only true national medium....a medium with enormous<sup>72</sup> reach that it [sic] has assumed a unique place in our lives.

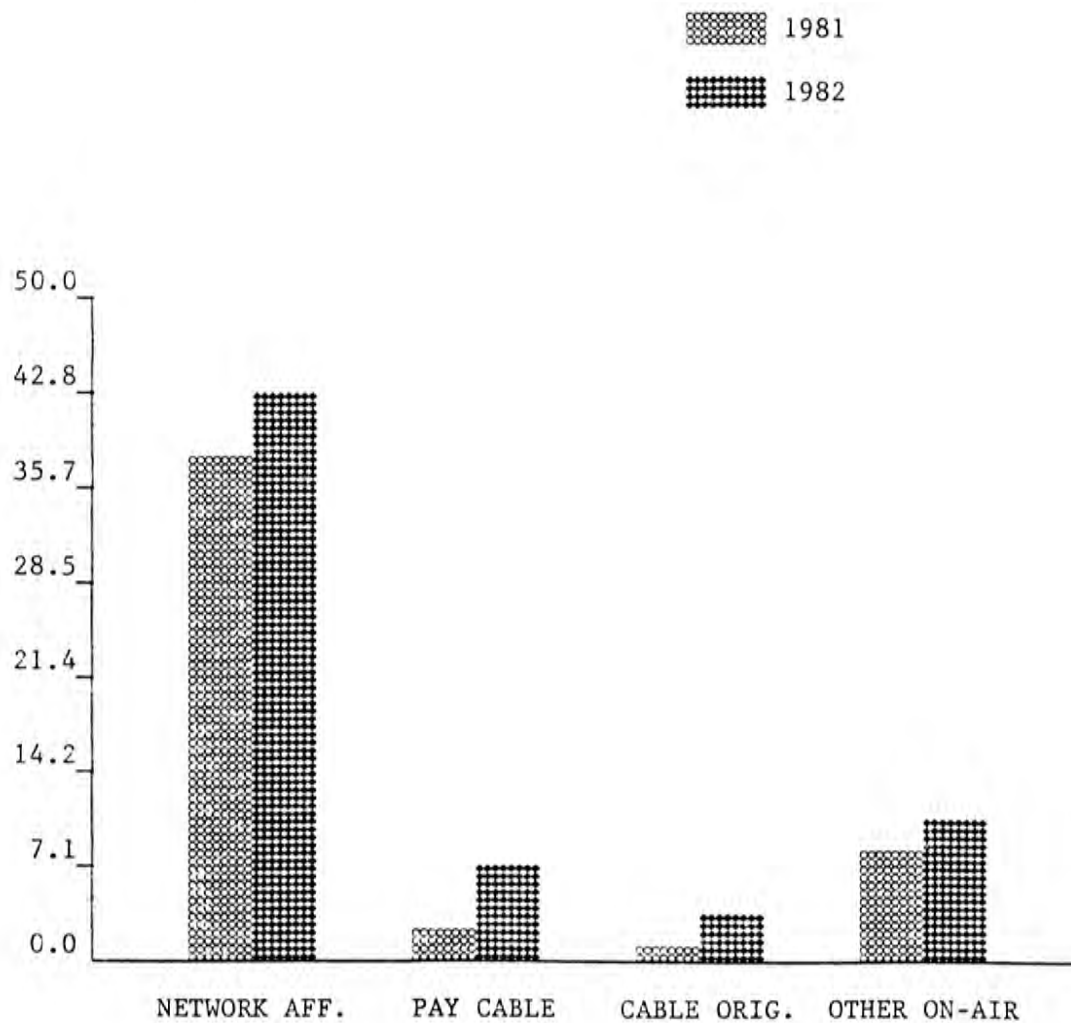
This view is not unique to ABC. Both CBS and NBC predict a similar future for the networks. In the CBS publication "Video Marketplace in 1990: Diversity and Growth in Perspective," they state that "network television has proved eminently adaptable - - absorbing new technologies as they emerge." They claim that in the future "the predominant share of television audiences, and the bulk of advertising revenues, will continue to be where they are today."<sup>73</sup> Figure 2.7 further demonstrates the networks' predictions for the future. And NBC, in a 1982 press release, announced that commercial television networks "will remain the dominant communications medium of the future."<sup>74</sup> Is there any doubt where the networks stand?

These statements by the networks place the viewpoint of the FCC in serious question. The Commission's suggestion that the networks no longer dominate the industry does not seem to reflect the reality of the matter.

Another inconsistency in the testimony of Mr. Erlick before the Judiciary Committee was his statement that there is intense competition between the networks. If this competition is so intense, why was Mr. Erlick, as he stated, "authorized to state that CBS and NBC concur" in his statement, although he was appearing as the representative of ABC?<sup>75</sup> All three networks relied on one man to represent their supposedly diverse and intensely competitive interests. As Ron Olson pointed out to the committee, "I did not realize that the network parallelism also extended into Congressional testimony."<sup>76</sup>

FIGURE 2.7

## PRIME TIME HOMES REACHED (IN MILLIONS)



\*Taken from the CBS Publication, The Road to 1990, printed in the Senate Judiciary Committee's Hearing Report on the implications of susp. the 7-7-7 rule.



The question of parallelism between the three major networks is a valid one and one which has received little of the attention it deserves. In the case of U.S. v. ABC, Inc. (United States District Court, Central District of California), CBS testified in the stipulation of facts that as a matter of course one of the three networks rarely did anything without the other two being immediately and completely apprised of the facts involved. Parallelisms and anticompetitive practices between the networks were not being implied here, they were being admitted to.

The networks informed each other of plans to produce new entertainment programs, theatrical programs, conditions for studio facilities, prices, terms and conditions offered to outside program suppliers for first-run right of exhibition, and other information including: term of years, exclusivity, pilot prices, license fees, creative control, syndication rights, syndication profit shares, domestic syndication distribution right, domestic syndication profit share, foreign syndication distribution right, foreign syndication profit share, merchandising profit share, merchandising right, merchandising profit share, music right, music profit share, literary right, and literary profit share.

Not only were the networks immediately apprised of these conditions and actions on the part of their fellow networks, they also acted upon this information to maintain the parallelism between themselves and to maintain their dominance within the industry.<sup>77</sup> As a result and in reference to this type of action by the networks, the Department of Justice, in 1980, stated the following:

The structure of the market is such that each of the three networks controls producers and advertisers' commercial television audiences, and each network has abused its power.<sup>78</sup>

Two other cases which came up with similar finding to the one cited above were United States of America v. CBS, Inc. and The United States of America v. American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. (Civil No. 74-3599-RJK and 74-3600-RJK respectively), both held in the United States District Court for the Central District of California. In these cases, the U.S. Department of Justice, Antitrust Division provided an Identification of the Evidence in Support of the Government's Contention that CBS and ABC have Violated Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act. The evidence was provided to establish the fact that ABC and CBS

have each restrained and monopolized trade and commerce in the prime time television entertainment programming offered for broadcast by its combined<sup>79</sup> group of television stations affiliated with each of them.

The report goes on to state that

CBS and ABC have used their respective monopoly power over access to obtain an unfair advantage in such secondary markets as domestic and foreign syndication, merchandising, music or literary exploitation, theatrical direct projection, closed circuit television, video disks,<sup>80</sup> video cassettes, and pay cable or subscription television.

Despite the obvious logic and the intensity of the opposition to the FCC's proposed suspension of the 31-year-old Seven Station rule, they passed a new Twelve Station rule, with a sunset provision for 1990. At that time the policy will be reviewed. In justifying its action the FCC stated that it had hopes that

Elimination of the "Seven Station" rule might provide people in a community with more truly diverse programming, since it may increase the acquisition or production of special programming by owners.<sup>81</sup>

It appears as though this finding is not supported by the available information and runs contrary to logic. Once again the FCC seems to have given in to the demands of the corporate powers despite their obvious parallelisms with one another, and their nearly complete domination over the rest of the industry. The FCC action was completely unjustified. The "new media," as the networks themselves stated, do not pose a serious threat. Even Ted Turner, the chairman of the board of the Turner Broadcasting System Inc., and a man who has done more to challenge the networks than anyone else, admits that there is little that can be done to change the current balance of power within the broadcast medium. Testifying before the same Judiciary Committee hearing, Ted Turner stated,

I am the only Don Quixote around here that has been willing to even try and I have been punching them for the last 8 years and what have I got to show for it but skinned knuckles. I am still doing it.<sup>82</sup>

As far as the Seven Stations rule, Turner commented that far from being given unlimited acquisition ability or increased ability, no one should be allowed to own more than one station.

That would be a hell of a lot better for fostering diversity. Just do not let the bad guys get more powerful. Save a little power for the government, and those who were elected.<sup>83</sup>

The potential power and influence of the media elite are awesome and it is hard to find a realistic way to counter it. It is hard to counter a false reality because for some it is still reality until they are told otherwise. Hopefully, the public might get this information from the available literature. The literature which contradicts this media made madness is out there somewhere (as this work demonstrates), but is seldom within the reach of the average American. It is perhaps

the greatest irony that those who are aware of the concentration and domination of the media are themselves usually part of the elite within society who help to carry out this myth and benefit from its perpetuation. Those who are most likely to only watch the evening news or to rely on only one daily newspaper are those who are least likely to encounter material stating otherwise. According to Townsend Hoopes, the president of the American Association of Publishers,

We may be witnessing a widening gap between the leadership elites and the general public. The engaged and energetic leadership groups are reading books, thereby reinforcing their influence, while the mass public is<sup>84</sup> sinking into a passive contentment with soaps and sit-coms.

And the mass public is made up of the individuals who are most likely to rely on the networks for their news about the world, and are most likely to take it for the truth. After all, a news story must be true if all three networks cover it in the same fashion, give it the exact same amount of coverage, and insert it at the same time in their broadcast. Did anyone tell these viewers that all three networks are controlled by the same financial pressures, and quite possibly the same financial institutions? Did anyone tell these viewers that the networks collaborate and that there is according to some, no substantial difference between the three? And the networks certainly are not going to be the ones to break the news to them. That might ruin their image of neutrality and independence. If the masses were aware of these facts, if the masses could be made to believe this particular reality, then they might start thinking for themselves and start using more than one news source before deciding what is real and what is not.



Whether one believes it or not, there appears to be a power elite in America with the ability to control what we see and hear about the world we live in. Partially on the basis of this information or misinformation which they provide for us through the media, we form our opinions, values, and images of the world. They influence our choice of who to vote for, what to eat, and how to dress. They influence how we feel about foreign governments and ideologies, not to mention how we feel about our own government and its policies. There is not a single element of our lives which goes untouched by the media.

Perhaps the power elite do not wish to manipulate the news medium in order to further their financial growth and stability, but are we willing to take the chance? Obviously the temptation must be great. We must ask ourselves if we would even trust so much power in government? How much power are we willing to concentrate in the hands of the few? As Parenti put it,

The primary function of the media is not to keep the public informed but, like any business, to make money for their owners, a goal seldom coinciding with the need for a vigilant, democratic press.<sup>85</sup>

Even if your news of the world were not being manipulated, it appears to have been compromised by the controlling elite.

Whether the men who control industry are socially responsive or trustees of the social welfare is quite another matter; it is one thing to speculate about their motivations, another to generalize about economic facts. And even if we assume that these men act benevolently toward their workers and the larger community, their actions still would not be the result of social control through a formal democratic structure and group participation, which are the essentials for democracy; they would be an arbitrary noblesse oblige by the economic elite.<sup>86</sup>

The point is that this elite should be socially responsible to the masses. If this is not the case, then Mosca and Pareto were correct and democracy is only a title under which the true structure of power in America lies: the few who rule and the many who are ruled.

### CHAPTER 3 - THE MEDIA AS A TOOL OF THE ELITE

Fundamental to our way of life is the belief that when information which properly belongs to the public is systematically withheld by those in power, the people soon become ignorant of their own affairs, distrustful of those who manage them, and--eventually--incapable of determining their own destinies. (Richard Nixon, The New York Times, 22 November, 1972.)

America's media managers create, process, refine, and preside over the circulation of images and information which determine our beliefs and attitudes and, ultimately, our behavior. When they deliberately produce messages that do not correspond to the realities of social existence, the media managers become mind managers. (Herbert Schiller, The Mind Managers, p. 1)

The rocket named television has lost its course. (Fred Friendly, Due to Circumstances Beyond Our Control, p. 266)

In Chapter 2 we attempted to establish the concept that the large media conglomerates, as corporate enterprises, operate under the same set of values and goals as would any other conglomerate. Profit motive, accountability to stockholders, and economic conditions are prime factors under which the mass media operate. However, to merely state this is not enough. The concept is interesting but without evidence that this affects the products of the media it is irrelevant. Too often the media are judged by the ideological, political, and economic makeup of their owners and functionaries. It is not unusual to find one group crying that the media are too liberal while another is complaining that they are too conservative, often at the same point in time. This study does not concern itself with the purported ideological biases of the media to the extent that other studies have in the past. We feel that too much emphasis has been placed on the politics of the media and its

ideological make-up and not enough on its economics. Perhaps we are guilty of falling in with the popular belief in the power of money. Perhaps we have found ourselves believing Andrew Young's statement in a recent interview that "politics doesn't control the world. Money does."<sup>1</sup> Although this is a gross simplification of the structure and make-up of power, it does begin to put its elements in the proper order."

As applied to the mass media, economic and business interests influence the outcome of internal policy decisions such as whether or not to run a controversial documentary in the place of a highly profitable entertainment program. These economic decisions, then, go on to affect the socialization process in America, the political knowledge of Americans, and the public policy-making process in general. Of course politics does enter into the decision-making process within the media, but these political beliefs, usually conservative in the form of preservation of the status quo, are closely tied to economic beliefs. This is where the differentiation between politics and economics becomes blurred. As Bernard Nossiter stated in his book The Mythmakers,

The conventional division between politics and economics is artificial. It obscures rather than illuminates any analysis of the real world. The sources and exercise of power--the concern of politics--is inextricably bound up with the distribution of limited<sub>2</sub> resources among limitless uses, the concern of economics.

Often times good journalism may result in the cry of ideological biases. This thesis puts ideological biases aside and concentrates on the purported overriding bias of the media in favor of the status quo within our capitalist society. To quote from The Capitalist System,

power in a capitalist society is dominated by the capitalist class, and since social conflict may lead to instability in the institutions themselves, the class exercises power



primarily to maintain the institutions which function in its favor. The intervention of power--to deflect political threats, depoliticize class conflict, and so forth--assumes the smooth functioning of capitalism.<sup>3</sup>

The basis of this power, the authors point out, is "economic organization." And theoretically, the economic power of the ruling capitalist elites, of which the owners of the media are a vital component, is used to maintain the status quo and to preserve institutions which favor the capitalist way of life.

But to say that the owners of the media are members of the ruling elite is not enough. If the products of the media and the internal decision-making of the various communication conglomerates were not to reflect this economic bias, then the argument would be irrelevant. As Nick Thimmesch of the American Enterprise Institute stated, "it seems to me that journalism's product should be judged, not the private opinions, or self-image of its practitioners."<sup>4</sup> In other words, we should not worry about whether those within the media are liberal or conservative, elites or nonelites. We should worry about the product. As Lichter and Rothman stated at the conclusion of their study on the media elite,

The crucial task that remains is to discover what relationship, if any, exists between how individuals view the world and how they present that world to the public. This is the next step to understanding how the evolution of the media elite has transformed American society.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, in Chapter 3 we attempt to provide the necessary evidence by examining the product and the process by which it comes to be. Not only will we demonstrate that economic factors do play a role in programming decisions within the media, we will also demonstrate various methods by which those in control of the media can and do maintain their elite status. A necessary element of any elite system is that the elite use

their resources to maintain or advance their economic and political power. If the mass media are an elite dominated structure, as is questioned in this study, then this should hold true for them as well.

Our first example deals with a rather unlikely source: the Public Broadcasting System. In 1980, WGBH-TV, Boston, a non-commercial television station, together with the ATV network of London, co-produced a docu-drama titled "Death of a Princess." The program dealt with the July, 1977 execution of a Saudi Arabian princess who had committed adultery. When PBS distributed the program to its various members throughout the country it notified them that "Death of a Princess" contained "controversial material." Several stations across the country chose not to broadcast the program. This resulted in several law suits which are not of particular relevance to this study. However, in the proceedings of one particular suit, Bartstone and Martin v. The University of Houston, KUHT-TV, and Patrick J. Nicholson (U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division), some interesting facts were revealed which provide a great deal of insight into the factors influencing the programming decisions of one particular television station: KUHT-TV Houston. Although KUHT-TV is a public television station, its freedom under the first amendment to make independent programming decisions is no different than that of a commercial station.

KUHT-TV was being sued by two citizens who felt that the station's decision not to broadcast "Death of a Princess" violated their rights as expressed in the 1st and 14th Amendments. KUHT-TV went on to win the case after an initial set back in the district court. However, the outcome of the case is not as important to this study as are the reasons

why KUHT-TV decided not to broadcast "Death of a Princess." There were many viable reasons for not broadcasting this controversial docu-drama. For instance, the Alabama Educational Television Commission chose not to run the program because it feared that Alabama residents working in Saudi Arabia might be put in a position where their safety was jeopardized. The decision by the Alabama Educational Television Commission was upheld by the U.S. District Court of Alabama on July 8, 1980, when it decided that

all licensees, public as well as commercial, have unfettered discretion under the Communications Act and the First Amendment to the Constitution to determine which programs to broadcast.

However, KUHT-TV's decision not to broadcast "Death of a Princess" was unique (or possibly not so unique) in that it involved economic considerations. Dr. Nicholson, the vice president of the University of Houston and the man who made the decision not to broadcast the docu-drama, stated in his testimony that the University of Houston

receives a significant percentage of its contributions from individuals in oil-related companies. According to Dr. Nicholson, 15 to 25 percent of the University's private contributions come directly from major oil companies. That percentage, it should be noted, does not include contributions from individuals who won shares in, have contacts with, or are employed by companies doing business in oil.

Also, the University had dealt personally with the Saudi Government in the past. Part of those dealings was "a lucrative contract with the Saudi Arabian royal family to instruct a particular princess as part of its 'Open University' program."<sup>8</sup> Obviously the University of Houston felt that it had a great deal to lose by broadcasting the docu-drama and let economic motives rise above its duty to inform the public.

The problem of controversial programs, programs which might offend stockholders and other economically interested parties, is not peculiar

to PBS. Commercial television and the print medium also suffer from the same dilemma.

When the premier editorial writer for the Providence Journal found his weekly column discontinued because of an article he had written opposing the Vietnam War, he retaliated in a May, 1967, New York Times article. In this article, columnist James Brown stated his case, saying that his situation was

symptomatic of a larger problem that affects most if not all American Newspapers today. This is a problem of preserving a vigorous provocative forum for discussion, and if need be, dissent on the editorial pages of the newspapers which are increasingly dominated by business-oriented corporate boards enjoying monopoly status in their local communities.

So rather than risk offending several important advertisers, the paper did away with its controversial editorial writer. Once again economic factors were more important than providing an open forum for the expression of ideas, and most importantly, the expression of doubts about national policy.

This position of power held by those corporate leaders who dominate the media leads to what Joseph P. Lynford calls "the pacification of the press." Lynford explains this pacification process as the result of the gradual monopolization of the media by those with strong commercial interests. According to Lynford,

Chain ownerships, monopolies, mergers, and the acquisition of many broadcasting and publishing enterprises by conglomerates have absorbed the mass media into an industrial-commercial system which accents the marketing functions of the media while diminishing their roles as information and education agencies.

One result of this pacification, as stated by Lynford, is a lack of controversial programming such as indepth documentaries or detailed, objective articles. Robert Cirino, in his detailed study of the news



medium titled Don't Blame the People, devotes the entirety of his text to examples of inadequacies of news coverage in areas of fundamental importance to the American people; these inadequacies being the result of economic considerations. In his book he points out that the media are very careful that documentaries and news items carried by them in no way offend viewers or stockholders, even if it means keeping reality from the public. This point was brought out in the forum Is there a Liberal Elite in America? when Michael Massing stated the following:

Media organizations themselves have become bigger, more powerful, more like corporations. TV networks are owned, of course, by three of the largest corporations in the country, and I think that we are seeing what bottom line considerations they are having by cutting back on documentaries, and becoming more cautious in the types of documentaries they will do.

The media are not going to challenge the values of the American public, nor are they going to challenge our image of the world. They have an economic interest in keeping their viewers, stockholders, and advertisers happy. By rarely challenging these traditional values which American's acquire through the socialization process, they are therefore reinforcing and substantially contributing to the perpetuation of the socialization process in the United States.

Fred Friendly, the once president of the CBS News Division, provides an enlightening and entertaining account of his 16 years of experience with CBS in his book Due to Circumstances Beyond Our Control .... He gives expert documentation of the effects of corporate, profit minded thinking, on the quality and quantity of documentaries and news programs put out by the media. Friendly's testimony provides the vital link between the corporation and the newsmaking process, proclaiming that indeed the president, the chairman of the board of directors, and the vice-president for broadcasting, each made vital decisions affecting

the quality and quantity of news specials and other programs coming out of the news division, often times based on purely economic considerations.

On February 15, 1966, after 16 years of service, Fred Friendly resigned his position as president of the CBS News Division. Friendly, together with his close friend and partner Edward R. Murrow, had pioneered in the business of broadcasting. Their early CBS news program See it Now was an innovator in the industry. With Edward R. Murrow as the host and Friendly behind the scenes, See it Now tackled some of the toughest issues of the time: the atomic bomb, McCarthyism, and desegregation. Mr. Friendly was forced to resign from CBS when the decision of whether or not to broadcast news specials reached the point that it "was clearly one of business over journalism, of dollar-editing over the professional judgment of an entire news organization."<sup>12</sup>

Although Friendly's decision and his comment were directed specifically toward a single event, this event was symptomatic and led to the culmination of his frustration with a major trend within the broadcast industry. When the decision had to be made whether or not to carry live the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's hearings on the Vietnam War, the reality of the modern news organization was revealed. On the day of George Kennan's testimony, a man whose testimony Senator Fulbright considered to be of great importance, CBS decided that it was not financially feasible to broadcast the hearing live. This was decided even after CBS had committed staff, equipment, and funds to the three network pool which would cover the hearing. In fact, it was CBS staff members who covered the hearing for the other networks. The entire matter, according to Friendly, boiled down to this analysis:

If profits had stayed at \$1.27 a share, where they were in 1958 when Stanton said that CBS would have to work hard to stay at that level, all the public service we could have conceived in our wildest dreams would have been within our means. But 1958's profits had to be increased through the years, and by 1965 the "proper" balance between revenues and public service had permitted the net income, like the company's growth, nearly to double, to \$2.47 a share. Too many unscheduled news programs could drive those figures down, could make Wall Street change its optimistic evaluation of CBS as a high-growth stock, could impel those mutual funds, foundations and universities to invest in something else.<sup>13</sup>

By unscheduled news programs, Fred Friendly was referring to documentaries, live coverage of unscheduled Presidential press conferences, and live and specially edited coverage of events of particular national importance such as Papal visits, Presidential assassinations, and crucial Congressional hearings. These unscheduled news events, if aired, would replace highly profitable entertainment programs which would not only hurt the company financially but might alienate loyal viewers who are stereotyped as not being interested in Senate hearings and foreign affairs. This stereotype is dangerous because it might lead to the decision on the part of the networks to cover fewer special news events and those that they do cover might be in less depth. This lack of coverage then could lead to a lack of knowledge on the part of the viewers in the specific areas which have been neglected by the networks. The corresponding lack of knowledge by the viewers might then be interpreted by the networks as a lack of interest in areas such as foreign affairs coverage. At this point the process has come full cycle and continues to perpetuate itself. The potential result is a partially uninformed public and a highly profitable communications industry.

In the case of the Kennan testimony, CBS decided that it was more important to air its regularly scheduled daytime programs. To cover the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing would have cost the network

approximately \$30,000 for every half hour. This figure represents the lost revenue from pre-empting the regularly scheduled programs. As a result, when George Kennan was being interrogated by Senator Fulbright, CBS was showing reruns of I Love Lucy (10:00 a.m.) and The Andy Griffith Show (11:00 a.m.).

When Fred Friendly resigned from CBS, the entire episode received a great deal of attention in the press. In his letter of resignation, which was later released to the press, Fred Friendly put forth his case.

I am resigning because CBS News did not carry the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings last Thursday, when former Ambassador George Kennan testified on Vietnam. It was the considered news judgment of every executive in CND that we carry these Vietnam hearings as we had those of the other witnesses. I am convinced that the decision not to carry them was a business, not a news, judgment.

When last Thursday morning at ten o'clock I looked at the monitor and saw the hearings on Channel 4 (pool production, by the way, via CBS news crew) and saw a fifth rerun of Lucy, then followed by an eighth rerun of The Real McCoys, I wanted to order up an announcement that said: "Due to circumstances beyond our control the broadcast originally intended for this time will not be seen."<sup>14</sup>

The circumstances of control have in a large way been taken out of the hands of those in the various news divisions, those most competent in making decisions of newsworthiness. News decisions are now often being made by corporate executives without the proper news backgrounds. Edward R. Murrow, in a speech before the Radio-Television News Directors Association in 1958, commented on this trend.

The top management of the networks, with a few notable exceptions, has been trained in advertising, research, sales, or show business. But, by the nature of the corporate structure, they also make the final and crucial decisions having to do with news and public affairs.<sup>15</sup>

The seriousness of this matter, the lack of quality public affairs coverage by the networks, would receive limited attention in the years to follow. Perhaps this is due to the fact that when a network fails to



cover a news event, all networks usually fail to cover the event, and therefore, no one is aware that it even occurred not to mention that it didn't receive adequate coverage. Networks rarely come on the air to announce that they will not be covering certain key happenings of the day due to economic concerns and a perceived lack of interest on the part of their viewers. However, the CBS/Fred Friendly case did bring attention to the area, if only for a fleeting moment. The day after Friendly's resignation, Senator Ernst Gruening of Alaska addressed the Senate:

The question remains: what lies behind this attempt to keep from the American television audiences the true facts about our involvement in Vietnam? What were the pressures--if any--exerted on CBS to cause it initially to decide that its viewers should not see a live broadcast of the testimony of Mr. Kennan before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee?<sup>16</sup>

In answer to the Senator's question, the pressures appear to have been economic in nature. They are directly related to the bottom line consciousness of the profit minded corporations who are slowly but surely consuming the mass media. And unfortunately, the news industry, which is responsible for public affairs coverage and the production of documentaries, seems to be governed by the same balance sheet mentality. Marketing, accountability to stockholders, and profit motive now appear to govern nearly every phase of the American mass media. Television, radio, and the print medium are all in the same boat. To quote the famous journalist Walter Lippmann, "While television is supposed to be 'free,' it has in fact become the creature, the servant and indeed the prostitute of merchandising."<sup>17</sup> Public service has become a secondary goal of the media.

Probably the most clear cut indictments of the broadcasting industry came in 1967 when Congress passed the Public Broadcasting Act and in

the Carnegie Commission Report of the same year. Although non-commercial broadcasting has been in existence since 1919, by the 1960s it had still failed to establish itself as a viable alternative to commercial broadcasting. The 1967 act recognized that there were shortcomings in the commercial/corporate approach to broadcasting which it sought to counter by helping to fund and organize public broadcasting. It was expected that

programs of high quality, obtained from diverse sources, will be made available to noncommercial radio or television broadcast stations, with strict adherence to objectivity and balance<sup>18</sup> in programs or series programs of a controversial nature.

Probably the clearest indictment came in the Carnegie Commission Report which is summarized in the following:

If we were to sum up our proposal with all the brevity at our command, we would say that what we recommend is freedom. We seek freedom from the constraints, however necessary in their context, of commercial television. We seek for educational television freedom from the pressures of inadequate funds. We seek for the artist, the technician, the journalist, the scholar, and the public servant freedom to create, freedom to innovate, freedom to be heard in this most far-reaching medium. We seek for the citizen freedom to view, to see programs that the present system, by its incompleteness, denies him.

Because this freedom is its principal burden, we submit our report with confidence: to rally the American people in the name of freedom is to ask no more of them than they have always been willing to provide.<sup>19</sup>

Public broadcasting could ideally provide an alternative to the profit-minded biases of the corporately controlled broadcasting companies. Whether or not PBS was able to remain free of economic and political influences is not relevant at this point. The Broadcasting Act of 1967 and the Carnegie Commission Report of the same year are used here to demonstrate the concern over the inadequacies of commercial broadcasting, especially in the area of public affairs coverage.

Of course, the broadcast medium is not alone in this problem of profit motive versus quality news coverage. The print medium is perhaps guilty of an even more subtle form of bias. In an effort to keep from offending readers, to attract advertisers and to please stockholders, the print medium tends to give prominence to news items which perpetuate the status quo in America. This might lead to a capitalist cultural bias in the products of the newspaper companies of America.

According to Robert Cirino, in his book Don't Blame the People, placement of an article is a technique for bias. When there is some information available which the controllers of the medium would rather the public remain unaware of,

news editors can minimize the attention such events receive by placing the article in the back pages of newspapers or allowing five to ten seconds in a newscast ... . The continual placement of hunger, car safety, smoking, and venereal disease on the back pages is ample example that editors use this technique successfully without the public being aware of it.<sup>20</sup>

An example of this, and one which Cirino offers, is the Birmingham News' coverage of local race riots. New York Times reporter, Ted Poston, detailed the inadequate and biased coverage:

Birmingham News headlined the bloody riots in Cyprus while finding only brief space at the bottom of page 4 to make mention, without details--of the local rioting then going on between Birmingham's negroes and Bull Connor, with his police dogs and fire hoses.<sup>21</sup>

Another example is the Winston-Salem Journal article entitled "U.S. Says KGB Uses Unsafe Tracking Dust." This August 22, 1985 article (UPI) was found on page one with the conclusion of the article on page 5. On page one the article discusses the outrage of the American Government over Soviet use of a dangerous chemical agent, possibly cancer causing, which is used to help track Americans' movements in the Soviet Union. According to the page 1 account, the agent "NPPD, is a mutagen--a

chemical agent that alters cells and can be carcinogenic in humans." However, hidden on page 5 is the comment that "laboratory tests may take years to determine if a serious hazard exists." Also mentioned on page 5 is the fact that "up to this date no one has suffered ill effects from exposure to the chemical."<sup>22</sup>

This type of biased coverage, whether intentional or otherwise, occurs all too often in the media. Rarely do newspapers print retractions where they will be easily seen. Or, as in the case of the Winston-Salem Journal article, the information which serves to qualify statements and balance this bias, is hidden on a back page. Usually the bias is so subtle that it goes unnoticed by the general public. And when someone does point out these biases and techniques of bias in the communications industry, as Robert Cirino does and as this study does, they are called radicals or paranoid conspiratorial thinkers. Once they have been given this label then their material is no longer taken seriously by the majority of the public, not to mention by fellow scholars.

In the next section of this chapter we take a closer look at the newsmaking process and at the various factors involved therein.

#### The Newsmaking Process

Why is it that everyone calls that two minute "bleep" of information on the evening news a "news story"? The word story has always had questionable implications, implying some sort of twisting or changing of the facts in order to make the narration more interesting for the listener. It seems as though every story ever told, whether ancient folktale or modern fantasy, has had some underlying cultural message,



moral, or otherwise significant purpose. In Ravenna Helson's article "Through the Pages of Children's Books," she addresses just this point. Although the effects may be hidden, and the cultural message subtle, the reality is there. According to Helson,

The casual reader--adult or child--who follows Alice down the rabbit hole into Wonderland or rides the cyclone with Dorothy to the Land of Oz or journeys through Mirkwood with the hobbit Bilbo Baggins has no idea that these fantasies express hidden longings<sup>23</sup> that afflict the society in which they were written.

In a recent lecture on the campus of Appalachian State University, former U.N. Criminologist Gerhard O. Mueller, spoke on the role which folktales and other stories played in the socialization of the inhabitants of medieval Europe. These tales, which were passed on by word of mouth, helped to establish an early code of ethics and morality.<sup>24</sup> Through these stories young and old alike were taught societal standards and the punishments which could be expected for certain crimes. An evil witch would be burned at the stake while an old sorceress who kidnapped little children (as in the story of Hansel and Gretel) would soon meet her demise. And so it was established that kidnapping and witchcraft would be severely punished. Through this process, these early folktales served as socializing agents and provided a message of cultural and ethical significance.

And so it is with the modern day news story. Perhaps (only perhaps) our 20th Century storytellers, the anchorpeople and reporters, do not communicate their messages with the same creative flair found in medieval folktales, but they have three qualities even more important and effective in helping them to transmit their cultural messages: believability, an air of neutrality, and the ability to reach an audience of unlimited proportions. Combined, these qualities have

drastically enhanced and enlarged the role of the storyteller in the modern age.

In this world where we value information above all else, these storytellers and storytelling networks (ABC, CBS, NBC) have been given added significance. Today we expect the news organizations and networks to provide a check against the excesses of government.

[Edmund] Burke said there were Three Estates in Parliament, but in the Reporter's Gallery yonder, there<sup>25</sup> sat a Fourth Estate, more important [by] far than they all.

Not only must the mass media educate, entertain, and socialize, now they must meet government head on without showing any obvious biases. The storytellers of the world must now work for the good of the people-- which would be fine if it were the people throwing coins into the storyteller's hat at the end of each performance. However, these modern day storytellers' hats are filled prior to each performance with gold coins from the corporate elite, which might have a tendency to influence the type of story which is told and the method by which he or she tells it. Where the medieval storyteller was serving a cultural function, perhaps the modern day newsperson is performing a corporate function-- and sometimes a governmental function when it suits the needs of the private industrial sector.

An example of this is the award winning film of the early 1940s, "Sergeant York," starring Gary Cooper. This is the true story of a mountain boy, originally a conscientious objector to fighting in World War I, who finally compromises his religious convictions for the greater causes of patriotism and freedom. He ends up killing and capturing German soldiers by the handful on a battlefield in France, becoming one of the major heroes of WWI. When York returned home to America after

the war, he turned down several offers from Hollywood to recreate his story on film because he felt that war should not be glorified; he wasn't proud of the killing he had done in France, no matter what the cause. However, when WWII was breaking out in Europe, Hollywood again approached York about making the film. This time he gave in, possibly because he was convinced that his story might move the country and prepare Americans for their eventual involvement in the war.

"Sergeant York" was and is an obvious piece of propaganda which, at the time of its release, just prior to our involvement in WWII, could not have been better. The film could stir the coldest of hearts. But why would Hollywood produce such a piece of propaganda? Was it out of a sense of patriotism? Were the government and the movie makers working hand in hand? More likely, Hollywood knew how well a moving, all-American film would sell and took advantage of York's patriotism in order to make a profit. Throughout the movie parallels are drawn between York and other great figures of history such as Daniel Boone, Abe Lincoln, and even several religious and biblical figures. This movie could not help but stir the hearts of the American people and certainly benefited the government. But the motives behind it were more than likely economic, not patriotic. In performing a corporate function the media also met the needs of the national government. Maybe the next time the government would not be so lucky. According to Morton Baratz, in his article "Corporate Giants and the Power Structure,"

Under certain circumstances, the interests of the corporate giants may well coincide with those of other groups in society ("the public interest"). And the giants may utilize their power moderately or at all. But this is hardly a satisfactory arrangement for a society<sup>26</sup> which places a high value on a decentralized power structure.

This is why it is important to always keep in mind who is paying the fiddler. In this case, who is throwing gold coins into the storyteller's hat?

As was mentioned earlier, often times the narrator of a story will change the flow (order) of events in order to make the narration more appealing to the listener or in order to make the intended message come across more clearly. The story of The Three Little Pigs should have probably been the story of the three brothers but it is more entertaining as The Three Little Pigs. The same is true with a news story. As is true with all stories, the news story goes through a type of transformation/metamorphosis through time. The message will often pass through several people's hands before ending up in front of the final storyteller. And even then, the storyteller has a lot of freedom in the way in which he or she presents the material to the audience. They may choose to use a frightening tone in order to alert the viewers, or they may use a cheerful tone which might imply a "not to worry" attitude. Whatever approach the storyteller takes, he or she is the next to the last link in the newsmaking process.

The final step takes place when the story is retold by the viewers, readers, and listeners to their friends, family, and associates. (An article by Brad Greenberg entitled "The Diffusion of News of the Kennedy Assassination" found in Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 28 highlights the importance of this word of mouth flow of news.) It is here that the story fulfills its underlying societal and cultural goal: the socialization of the masses. And this is all possible because of the three qualities of the storyteller/newsperson: believability, an air of neutrality, and the ability to reach an audience of unlimited magnitude.



We now take a closer look at the actual newsmaking process: the various procedures and steps involved with creating a "quality" news story. We look at the manipulation of the news as proposed by elite theorists, but this time from the grass roots level. We look at how cultural forces (as directed by the corporate giants) are able to influence the outputs of supposedly unbiased news workers and how these same workers are involved in the process of socialization within American society, as the tools of the corporate elite. Finally, we seek to examine Gaye Tuchman's thesis that news is "the social construction of reality."<sup>27</sup>

#### Creating a News Story

Probably the most interesting and easy to read of all the books on the newsmaking process is The News Business by John Chancellor and Walter Mears. Not only is the reader given an excellent look at the news business from an insider's perspective, but it is done in a highly entertaining way. It serves well to balance many of the critical analyses of the news industry which are popular today.

Chancellor and Mears divide the newsmaking process into several parts: leads, color, analysis, words, sources, and delivery. Each of these elements is covered in depth, with entertaining examples from the authors' wide array of experiences within the news industry. The News Business is a sugar coated look at the news industry, written for the general public and well done in that regard. As with most material directed toward the general public, it fails to examine the serious shortcomings of the topic it chooses to address. Once again we find

that the masses are left virtually uninformed, clinging to their false reality.

Where does the newsmaking process begin? There are those who would have us believe that an honest, unbiased news reporter, living in a cultural vacuum, suddenly has a news story appear on his desk. (Just as there are those who would have us believe that a single Watergate tape simply erased a portion of itself.) A news story begins long before any of the relevant events occur. It begins with the news person. And news people begin as we all do, they are products of our society and culture. We cannot expect them, nor should we, to be super-human. They have cultural biases just like the rest of us and hopefully they have been trained to do their best to remove themselves from those biases. Most news people are incredibly neutral in their work, a state which is hard to maintain once one has become well informed in a particular area. Wouldn't there be a great temptation as one of the more knowledgeable people on a certain issue to let the world know your informed opinion? But no, the average news person does an excellent job of remaining neutral and reporting the facts. What little analysis which is included is necessary to "provide background and content."<sup>28</sup>

But still, even a news person cannot remove himself or herself completely from cultural biases. Rupert Murdoch, speaking of the good job journalists do, stated that "it does not alter the facts that they are human beings, and we all have biases in our life, and they tend to have one ... ." <sup>29</sup> For example, how does an editor or reporter decide which stories to cover and which stories to let slide? How is it decided which stories are to be placed on the front page with 10 column

inches while another is found hidden on page 15 with only 3 column inches?

The kind of filters that go into determining what is reliable, what angle should a story be given, what story is worth running?

These are the kinds of decisions that journalists have to make every day, and we think it is really a psychological issue as to how you move from having a certain mindset, to looking at reality in a certain way, to covering<sup>30</sup> it in passing on a certain vision of reality to your audience.

Often it is a question of what the editor or reporter deems to be "important." How does one know what is important? What or who is it that tells us that an event is of special significance? It is hard to pin down any one factor, rather, there is something deep inside each of us which helps us to define what is important. The odds are that most people who share a common culture will generally define the same happenings, events, and circumstances, as being significant. This is where culture and socialization come into play in the newsmaking process. Often it is not an obvious, blatant attempt to bias the news, but rather a subtle, usually unconscious voice inside the newsperson which defines for him or her what is important, what is of cultural significance. According to Robert Lichter, "attitudes seem to influence, however unconsciously, the coverage." He goes on to state that this may even apply to the journalist's choice of sources.

If journalists tend to be against nuclear energy, then they consider sources critical of nuclear energy to be more reliable. So when the networks go to sources, expert sources, they go to the places they trust, and they tend to be more anti-nuclear.<sup>31</sup>

This is one of the methods by which our cultural and our societal norms are perpetuated by the American mass media. Using the example of the corporate elite in capitalism, a newsperson who has been socialized into a capitalist mindset would be more likely to give stories a capitalist

bias by his or her choice of sources. He or she would probably not even be aware of the bias. And this is why the mass media are such effective socializers of the masses. They socializes us without our being aware of it and often without being aware of the process themselves. Of course, no one within the upper echelon of the communications conglomerates is jumping in to put an end to this practice.

Once the reporter or editor decides what story is important and worthy of coverage, then he or she must pursue the story further. Hopefully, there are sources which may supply valuable information. (In the paragraph above we have already looked at some of the problems in selection of sources.) According to Chancellor and Mears,

there has to be a source--and that simple fact has created some tortured language and logic in the news business. The informed and unimpeachable source are two prime players. The source on which a story is hung had better be both.<sup>32</sup>

If the source is unreliable, the journalist might end up playing the fool. But how many of us actually question the sources from which a newsperson gains his or her information? How often are we even given sources, for instance, on the evening news?

Most of the time the reporter is the source, was on the scene, and is simply relating events to his audience which he has witnessed. However, all too often a news story is based on information provided by someone given as "a noted authority," "a high Washington official," or "an expert in the field." Other phrases which are used to lend authority to a story without the proper identification of a source include: "experts believe," "police said," and "a source close to the President." Obviously, there are times when a journalist cannot reveal his source, but if a complete citation is not given, several questions should immediately form in the media consumer's mind: Was this story



purely speculative? Where can I go from here to substantiate this report? And why couldn't the journalist list other reliable sources which might have backed up his or her allegations? According to Chancellor and Mears,

There is some dispute about how much the public has a right to know, but there is one area of journalism about which there can be no dispute: the public has a right to know where we're getting the stuff we put into the papers and on the air, by name when possible, by description when necessary.<sup>33</sup>

If a name is not given, or a document not provided, the source should not exist in the consumer's mind and he or she should pursue other news sources or wait for further reports to substantiate the initial story. Of course, even further reports should cite their sources. It is not enough to hear a story on ABC and then turn a half hour later and hear the same story on CBS. This does not verify anything except for the fact that there is possibly very little independence in the news business.

Once a story has been gathered the question of analysis arises. As mentioned earlier, a degree of analysis is necessary to provide background, content, and to put the story in proper context. According to Fred Friendly,

a raw fact, unexplained, is not really news and that turning broadcast circuits into conduits for unanalyzed information is not only bad journalism but even slightly dishonest.<sup>34</sup>

Ed Klauber established CBS reporting standards for World War II, in regard to analysis, in the following statement:

What news analysts are entitled to do and should do is to elucidate and illuminate the news out of common knowledge, or special knowledge possessed by them or made available to them by this organization through its sources. They should point out the facts on both sides, show contradictions with the known record, and so on. They should bear in mind that in a democracy it is important that people not only should know but should understand, and it is the analyst's function to help

the listener<sup>35</sup> to understand, to weigh, to judge, but not to do the judging.

One of the greatest shortcomings of television network news is the lack of background information. Robert MacNeil offers the following explanation for the lack of background information.

At NBC News ... there have been no adequate facilities for backgrounding a story. An index or morgue or clipping service which collects and files information from day to day for instant retrieval is the most elemental part of a news organization. Broadcasters, however, have to rely on their memories, on what recent newspapers they can find, or on what makeshift files they are able to patch together in the midst of very busy lives. NBC's own product is not filed for convenient reference because there is <sup>36</sup>no house respect for it as a source of background information.

Often times stories are oversimplified or taken out of historical context in order to save time (an economic consideration) or to accommodate nonintellectual viewers. This is especially true with foreign affairs coverage, as we have already discussed, with which Americans are perceived to be uninterested and uninformed. Who is going to inform us if the American mass media do not? The schools? Who publishes textbooks and where do teachers gain their knowledge of the world? More indepth news coverage, documentaries, and news specials are all necessary ingredients of a quality news organization which keeps the public informed--not the products of a profit minded, money making machine.

Of course, there are times when analysis is better left out. An example of this is political debates. Why bother airing the debate if immediately afterward you are going to tell the public, through your expert analysis or commentary, just exactly who won and why? Is not the idea behind having debates to allow the public to see for itself who is the best man or woman for the job, or at least whose views are the most sensible and appealing?

An example of the real influence analysis has on the viewers can be found in a study by Notre Dame psychologist Lloyd Sloan. Dr. Sloan conducted a nonpartisan survey of people who had viewed the second Ford-Carter debate of 1976. The viewers were divided into three groups. The first group viewed only the October 6 debate. The second and third groups consisted of people who watch the debate and the post debate analysis, one group on CBS, the other on ABC. The members of the group who watched only the debate came out on the side of Ford. However, the two groups who viewed the post debate commentary leaned toward Carter. According to Sloan, "the network news analyses by themselves produced overall net changes of 27 percent (CBS) and 22 percent (ABC) in the direction of Carter."<sup>37</sup> Another interesting point brought out by this study was that "those who viewed the postdebate news analyses saw both as being biased in favor of Carter."<sup>38</sup> From this evidence it would appear that analysis in the case of debates is better off forgotten. Let's give the viewers a chance to analyze the events for themselves.

Having determined the degree of analysis appropriate for the particular story, the journalist can now go ahead and prepare it for review by the editor or other decision makers. Like everyone else, editors have biases which, although not always obvious, must at times influence the decision making process. Chief Justice Warren E. Berger once said that "for better or worse, editing is what editors are for and editing is the choice and selection of material." And within the editing process there is plenty of room for cultural, economic, and ideological biases to slip in.

More importantly, it must be remembered that editors are responsible to the stockholders, the corporation, and the sponsors--in fact they

are responsible to the power elite. Sander Vanocur, in his article "How the Media Massaged Me," makes this point very clearly.

NBC is a very paternalistic company ... Corporately, the image project--at least to me--was that not of Big Brother but rather Big Mother ... She feeds you (rather more than you need for your own good), she rewards you, and she punishes you in the sense that for years during the period of prolonged adolescence you tend to feel that you must not do anything or say anything which she will not approve. You find more and more that your journalistic behavior pattern tends more and more to be shaped toward an expression not of what you believe but rather toward what Big Mother will find acceptable.<sup>39</sup>

Someone within the hierarchy is eventually responsible to the economic motives which control the major communication conglomerates. Was ABC's managing editor correct when he stated in a letter to this author that "ABC News makes its own assessments of what is newsworthy. Its operations are independent and free of interference by the corporation."<sup>40</sup> In the same letter he also stated that

Shareholders, individual or institutional, are interested in a company's operating decisions. But at ABC, as in most companies, this is directed at how operating decisions affect overall financial performance. Investors like to receive a good return on their investment, and the shareholders of media companies are no exception in this regard.<sup>41</sup>

Isn't there a contradiction here? In the example of Fred Friendly's relations with CBS was it not the case that what was judged to be newsworthy by the news division was not aired because of this same relationship between operating decisions and the financial performance of the company? And did not Edward R. Murrow mention that news decisions were now being made by corporate executives with business training rather than the appropriate communications experience and training? How does this compare with the evidence put forth by Sander Vanocur? These are all people who have come from within the industry and are therefore speaking from their personal experiences.



A final component which comes into play in the newsmaking process is the "delivery." By delivery we mean how the final product, the polished news story, is presented to the viewers, listeners, and readers. In the case of the evening news it would involve the anchorperson's believability, tone of voice, and facial expression. All of these can imply more than the spoken word. An anchorman we greatly respect, the late Frank Reynolds, could say more with the tilt of the head than he could with a thousand words. A news story is not complete until it reaches the consumer, and often the anchorperson can drastically change the impact of the story through his or her delivery. This is the final step in the newsmaking process. After this it is in the hands of the public.

In all, the opportunities for abuse are great. The opportunities for cultural and societal biases to influence the news are even greater and occur often unintentionally, going unrecognized by both the public and the newsmakers. The influence of the power elite is constant and occurs at all levels of the newsmaking process. Each newsworker must answer to a superior, who in turn answers to another superior. At the top of this hierarchy is the corporate executive. Obviously, if a news story is going to offend the viewers or advertisers, pressure will be applied to have it killed. And there is a whole lot that can offend the American viewers and sponsors. We tend to fear the unknown and hate things that we do not know much about. The journalist becomes aware of this and often censors himself in order to avoid the censorship by his superiors. This type of self-censorship is probably the most effective tool used by the power elite to influence the flow of information in the world. By now it should be clear that there are several areas in the

newsmaking process where abuses can potentially and occasionally do take place.

As media consumers, we each have a responsibility to ourselves and to our families to shop wisely. We should look for alternative news sources. Sometimes we are better off thinking of the news story in the context of a folktale rather than an authoritative source of information. We must ask ourselves, what makes ABC News "uniquely qualified to bring you the world"? Perhaps we should think of them as uniquely qualified to entertain. "Once upon a time, deep in the heart of Nicaragua ... ."

#### Further Manipulation of the Media

A central theme in this study of the media elite is the idea that the power elite use the media as a tool to maintain the status quo. By preserving the status quo we mean reinforcing those institutions and movements within society which are seen as beneficial to our capitalist system and eliminating any institutions or movements which might threaten the established economic and political order. We have, in our discussion of the newsmaking process, outlined some of the ways in which the media might possibly serve as the tool of the elite. Often times the process may be very subtle and even invisible to most observers. In this section we shall view a few methods through which the media may be used to influence public opinion, public movements, and more generally, the socialization process. Although these tend to be more conspiratorial in nature, they still deserve our analysis. The simple fact that these exist as possibilities makes their examination essential.

Without straying far from our discussion of the newsmaking process, we turn to news coverage of popular movements as a method of elite control of the masses. One cannot deny that the mass media have given substantial coverage to such popular movements as equal rights for women, civil rights for minorities, and the constant struggle between labor and management. Rather than giving legitimacy to these movements, some feel that media coverage has been used by the corporate elite to pacify small but potentially volatile groups within society. According to this school of thought, these causes are often distorted by the media, giving them the status of mass movements. By giving a false legitimacy to the movement, the media in no way strengthen it. They proclaim victories where there are none, legitimacy where there is none, mass where there is but limited popular support, in an attempt to make the masses seem effective. By doing this, they take attention away from the real policy-makers: the power elite. They make our nation seem to be a plurality and pacify potentially dangerous movements. At the same time they give legitimacy to the media which covers the movements and to the claim that public policy is the derivative of the demands of competing groups within society.

If your image of the relationship between elites and non-elites has been formed by reading newspapers, it is likely an inaccurate image. Whereas news headlines proclaim a victory if the women's liberation movement, the actual facts are that a tiny group of self-selected females concerned with feminist issues have established themselves as a counter-elite in a male dominated society. The mass media refers to the youth movement, but there is no politically viable organization of youths. There is instead a small minority who act and speak forcefully in a variety of youth-related questions. Even the so-called labor movement is more the actions of a few labor leaders than it is the action of the mass rank-and-file worker's movement. By describing the actions of the small groups as mass movements, the media distort the truths of American politics.

This distortion is aided and abetted by the elites themselves. Elites are fond of metaphors that describe them as willing representatives of mass movements, electoral majorities, or active constituencies.<sup>42</sup>

The media are possibly perpetuating myths about the democratic nature of our political system. The masses are, for the most part, unaware of the elite nature of the policy-making process and are left believing that the masses are well organized and highly effective in influencing government.

Another way in which the masses are supposedly suppressed or manipulated by the elite is through the concept of crisis. The use of this concept is very popular within government and private industry and is usually associated with manipulative motives. Politicians cry crisis in order to get something which they feel is of importance placed on the agenda. Presidents cry crisis in order to act hastily and to circumvent the power of Congress. The media label events crises in order to gain viewer attention and ratings. In short, we have become a crisis-oriented society.

The power elite also use the concept of crisis to support their position of power. Elites use domestic crisis as a form of manipulation.

That the times are critical is conventionally cited by elites and politicians as their justification for unpleasant actions that might be expected to arouse resentment and resistance, and the deep conviction that the age is indeed critical brings wide popular support for peacetime drafts, for injecting cancer-producing matter into the air and food supply, and for austerity welfare budgets.<sup>43</sup>

Hard times are easier to swallow when you believe that your nation is experiencing an economic crisis. Citizens are often more willing to make sacrifices and are more easily controlled in times of crisis.



The concept of crisis is also used by the elite to keep the masses off balance. Murray Edelman discusses this form of social control in the following:

For the unskilled worker there are frequent shifts in plant layoff plans and in unemployment trends generally, in union strike threats, in promised government social security programs, and in the latest work about the adequacy of his children's education and the incident of child delinquency.

Edelman goes on to state that

If a man's vicarious experience with events that concern him, as far back as he can remember, consists of emergencies, crises, and hazards followed by temporary periods of relief and hope, followed by new crises, what effect will this have upon his behavior? It may well induce helplessness, confusion, insecurity<sup>44</sup> and greater susceptibility to manipulation by others.

Through this process the masses remain passive and might possibly be manipulated further. The myth of popular government, of the influence of the people upon the policy outputs of government, may be perpetuated. Even though government might not be acting to benefit you today, your problems are due to even greater national problems and until they are resolved you should grit your teeth and put the best interest of the nation ahead of your selfish personal needs.

That brings us to a discussion of myth as a tool for manipulation of the masses by the ruling elite. Very often the product of the media, even news, takes the form of cultural myths. Karl Marx once wrote in a letter that

Up till now it has been thought that the growth of the Christian myths during the Roman Empire was possible only because printing was not yet invented. Precisely the contrary. The daily press and the telegraph, which in a moment spread inventions over the whole earth, fabricate more myths<sup>45</sup> in one day than could have been formerly done in a century.

And surely, as Marx pointed out, the mass media have become a primary carrier of these cultural myths. These myths are rarely questioned by

"to account for extraordinary privileges or duties, for great social inequalities, for severe burdens of rank, whether this be very high or very low."<sup>48</sup>

The mythology of "democracy by the people," whether intentional or not, has been a very successful method of pacifying the masses. The inadequacies of our system are rarely mentioned (an example is our electoral college), the contrast between poverty and affluence rarely given adequate coverage, and when shortcomings are mentioned they are not strong enough to counter the power of this mythology. The people do not want to be told that they might have been living a lie. They do not want to know that they might have been misled.

According to Herbert Schiller, the author of The Mind Managers, the masses have been intentionally led astray by the media managers. And, the myth has been one of the central devices in this manipulation. The media, which he calls the "cultural-informational apparatus," have been highly successful in perpetuating these myths.

Myths are used to dominate people. Where they are inserted unobtrusively into popular consciousness, as they are by the cultural-informational apparatus, their strength is great because most<sup>49</sup> individuals remain unaware that they have been manipulated.

Schiller goes on to highlight the central themes of the mythology of our representative democracy as carried out by the mass media on the behalf of the ruling elite.

Though individual freedom and personal choice are its most powerful mythic defenses, the system of private ownership and production requires and creates additional constructs, along with the techniques to transmit them. These notions either rationalize its existence and promise a great future, or divert attention from its searing inadequacies and congeal the possibilities of new departures for human development.<sup>50</sup>

those on the receiving end. In fact, there is a strong desire on the part of the masses to believe these myths. After all, most of them have been expressed and reinforced since our early school days.

In all countries and cultures men dwell on lore about the state: what it is and does and should be. The lore includes much that is vague, yet comes to have a powerful emotional pull. It includes much that is plainly contrary to what we see happen, yet the myth is all the more firmly believed and the more dogmatically passed on to others because men want to believe it and it holds them together.<sup>40</sup>

According to this school of thought, if it is true that these myths bind the people closer together, then they are bound by the manipulative efforts of the elite. The necessity of these myths for holding the people together is also a myth to keep scholars from revealing these myths to the public. To say that the truth cannot be trusted in the hands of the people is to advocate totalitarianism. The masses cannot and will not act to change the status quo until the problem is made clear to them. They will not cry out until, like a child who has been cut, they can see the blood pouring out from their wounds. The problem is that the media, who help to carry out these myths, would have to be the ones to expose the myth makers. Another problem is, as Edelman noted, that the people only see what they want to see. They will not easily be convinced of this new reality. In that case, we must do the impossible.

The potential danger of this use of myth for social control cannot be understated. President John F. Kennedy noted this when he stated,

For the great enemy of the truth is very often not a lie--deliberate, contrived and dishonest--but the myth--persistent, pervasive and unrealistic.<sup>41</sup>

As stated earlier, myths are often thought to be used for manipulative purposes by people in power to maintain power. Often they are used

In other words, through the use of this mythology we are prevented from seriously questioning our political and economic system, and we are kept from seriously considering any viable alternatives for the future. This mythology has played a central role in the maintenance and strengthening of power for the corporate elite in America. Through myths we are able to maintain the status quo and pass through hard times without seriously questioning our system.

Although this study has concentrated heavily on the news business as a tool of the power elite, other elements of the media are nearly as successful. The news business was concentrated on primarily because of its image as being non-biased and neutral. However, movies, magazines, and other forms of entertainment and information are used by the elite to carry their messages to the public. In Chapter 2 it was demonstrated that the same conglomerates who own the major networks also control major magazines and movie production companies. The example of the film "Sergeant York" in Chapter 2 demonstrated the potential of film as a tool for influencing public opinion.

A movie can be a very effective tool with which the elite may influence both government and the people. John Wayne noted this in a letter to President Lyndon Johnson in December of 1965 when he was discussing his plans to make a movie about Vietnam. Wayne felt that it was

extremely important that not only the people of the United States but those all over the world know why it is necessary for us to be there ... the most effective way to accomplish this is through the motion picture medium.<sup>51</sup>

It was Wayne's desire to create the "the kind of picture that will help our cause throughout the world." The movie would, according to Wayne's account,



tell the story of our fighting men in Vietnam with reason, emotion, characterization, and action. We want to inspire a patriotic attitude on the part of fellow-Americans--a feeling which we have always had in<sup>52</sup> this country in the past during times of stress and trouble.

This attempt at propaganda is blatant and demonstrates the power which John Wayne, a man closely associated with the motion picture medium, felt existed within that industry.

Finally, a less subtle method which corporate America uses to influence the public is advertising. The emotional appeals within advertising have become increasingly sophisticated in recent years. Advertisements now are of equal or greater quality than the programs they are sandwiched between. According to William Domhoff, advertising is one way in which the ruling elite attempt to sell the public our system of laissez-faire capitalism.

Advertising is usually thought of in terms of the efforts used by corporations to sell specific products, but it can be used to sell the corporations and the economic system as well. Many corporations attempt to sell the free-enterprise<sup>53</sup> system through what is called institutional advertising.

Domhoff goes on to say that

Instead of talking about their products, they tell us what they have done to benefit local communities, schools, or service organizations. The Quiet sponsorship on public television is especially useful in revealing the image-building efforts that motivate such sponsorship.

Through advertising and sponsorship of quality programs on PBS, corporations may further their image. They also reduce the effectiveness of those who try to counter the myths put forth by the ruling elite and distributed by their agents within the American mass media. A scholar who comes out with a study which claims that corporations are self-centered, power hungry, manipulative bodies is likely to be countered with evidence of public service performed by these corporations.

Public service, it should be added, might not be carried out if it were not tax deductible and image building, both factors which enhance the position of the corporation.

In summary, a case may be made that through the use of the media, the corporate elite in America further their interests at the expense of the masses. Through this process we are quite possibly pacified, manipulated, and our position of subservience is maintained. We are led to believe that there are no major problems within our system (except for occasional crises) and that really there is no need for us to become activists because our needs are being met by the status quo. Not only are our needs being met, they are also being defined and regulated by the status quo. The mass media, as tools of the corporate elite, not only have the potential to define our reality, they also may define our goals and motivations. This evidence comes to us not only from conspiratorial elite minds, but from journalists, network executives, and others coming from within the communications industry. In Chapter 4 we examine several alternative courses of action for the future and conclude our argument and analysis.

#### CHAPTER 4 - ALTERNATIVES FOR THE FUTURE

I believe television is going to be the test of the modern world, and that in this new opportunity to see beyond the range of our vision we shall discover either a new and unbearable disturbance of the general peace or a saving radiance in the sky. We shall stand or fall by television--of that I am quite sure. (E.B. White, 1938.)

This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise it is merely lights and wires in a box. (Edward R. Murrow, 1958.)

In the previous three chapters we have attempted to lay down the foundation of this thesis. In Chapter 1 we presented the fundamentals of elite theory as the basis of what was to come. In Chapter 2 we presented the key elements of our media elite theory and introduced the members who make up the media elite. We also attempted to demonstrate that the elite have an interest in influencing public policy. In Chapter 3 we demonstrated how the media may be used by the elite for the maintenance of economic and political power, which favors the preservation of the status quo.

Having put down the foundation in the earlier three chapters, we now use Chapter 4 as the blueprint for further construction. Chapter 4 points us toward the future, putting forth various proposals for consideration. Obviously, if we are putting forth proposed solutions or possible answers to a problem, we are assuming that there is a problem. The current state of the media, as defined in Chapters 2 and 3, is inadequate in several key ways which greatly affect our political system. 1) The media, particularly the news business, are not what they

represent themselves to be. Public service is not their main objective. Profit motive is now placed high above the public's need and right to know. Therefore, the traditional image of the media is not only incorrect, it is dangerously misleading. 2) The ability of the media to influence public policy has been greatly enhanced in recent years with the growth of communications technology. 3) The media have grown to a position of dominance in the socialization process, possibly replacing or reducing the influence of other traditional socialization agents such as the family, peers, and the schools. 4) The mass media have become a tool of an economic elite in America and serve to preserve their economic dominance by influencing the policy-making process at several key points. These factors combined demonstrate the need for change. This chapter examines several directions that change might take. Each of these suggestions or courses of action discussed within this chapter deserves a study of its own. They cannot possibly, within the context of this study, be given the attention they deserve. The discussion of these various approaches to change is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather is provided in the hope that it might stimulate and possibly guide future research. It is also hoped that it will be recognized that there exist realistic alternatives to the status quo.

Certainly there are those who will oppose any change, claiming that in America we have the best of all possible systems. The opponents of change will support their arguments with claims that Americans are the most well informed people in the world. They will state that Americans, in fact, are supplied with an overabundance of information and are free to seek out a variety of conflicting opinions. In response to these claims this study puts forth the following counter arguments. There is



indeed a wealth of information in America, but most of this information never reaches the general public, particularly the information which runs counter to the traditional mindset. Our socialization process has failed in creating a questioning citizenry. In general, it pacifies the American people. We are not seekers of information, we passively absorb what comes to us. The limit of what we know about the world comes to us from radio, television, weekly news magazines, and newspapers. These are far from the most scholarly and enlightening sources of information. Furthermore, their coverage is not even as indepth as is that of the news source of several other countries. The great quality and quantity of American news sources is vague when compared to these other countries. This is particularly true in the area of foreign affairs coverage. Americans know very little of the outside world other than cultural stereotypes.

George Gerbner and George Marvanyi conducted a study on the foreign affairs coverage of several papers from different countries. The result of this study should dispel any myths about the high quantity of American news agencies' foreign affairs coverage. Gerbner and Marvanyi, in their article "The Many Worlds of the World's Press," analyzed the foreign news content of several world papers.

The German paper appropriately named Die Welt; it devoted 43.7 percent of its total non-advertising space to foreign news. Five other papers gave more than 30 percent: The Soviet Pravda (38.0 percent), The Hungarian Magyar Nemzet (37.6 percent), Nepszadsag (36.0 percent), and Magyar Hirlap (35.6 percent), and the Czechoslovakian Lud (30.1 percent). Another 16 dailies, including the Christian Science Monitor (28.7 percent), gave more than 25 percent, but no other U.S., British, or Soviet paper did. The New York Times used 16.4 percent of its non-advertising space for foreign news, the London Times 22.4 percent.

Even the Times of India was superior to the New York Times in quantity of coverage with 25 percent of its content devoted to foreign affairs. In light of this, are Americans the most well informed people in the world? If there still remain individuals who cling to this myth of the enlightened masses or even to the potential of an enlightened mass based on the high quantity of readily available information, we have supplied an extensive bibliography in the Appendix of this work to guide future research in this area. Even though the information on the inadequacy of our foreign affairs coverage is not often presented to the public through their usual sources of information, within this text we supply the necessary direction to guide those who would actively seek this knowledge.

Even when we have the information available to use, we do not often take advantage of it. In the March, 1982, newsletter of the American Association of Publishers, Townsend Hoopes, the AAP President stated that most Americans do not take advantage of the literature which is available to them. "Less than a majority of Americans read books regularly, and only about 25 percent are moderate to heavy readers (defined as 10 to 30 or more books a year)." Hoopes goes on to state that it is the elite, not the general public, who usually read books.

We may be witnessing a widening gap between the leadership elites and the general public. The engaged and energetic leadership groups are reading books, thereby reinforcing their power and influence, while the mass public is sinking into a passive contentment with soaps and sit-coms.

Certainly we are free to seek out information, to read scholarly journals, to read the most revealing studies, but the simple fact is that we generally do not. The fact that the information is available is

irrelevant. And this idea that Americans are so well informed has possibly helped to perpetuate this passivity within American society. If a citizen thinks that he or she is so well informed, then why bother going out and reading books? All an individual has to do is watch the evening news to feel as up to date and as current as anyone else. And if the same citizen, by chance, stumbles upon information which runs counter to the status quo, it is viewed as radical propaganda. The little bits and pieces of reality that do happen to leak through and reach the masses cannot hope to counter years of socialization and exposure to the products of the mass media. In this light, what is the answer? In this, our final chapter, we examine a few of the possibilities proposed within the literature. We attempt to provide what we feel are the most viable courses of action. Finally, we shall sum up our arguments and offer our conclusion.

Within this chapter, we look at four general methods or sources of change: Government regulation, self regulation and change from within the media, development of a media curriculum, and the development of alternative sources of information which would be readily available to the general public. Each of these options has its merits and, as stated earlier, deserves more indepth analysis than can be provided within the framework of this study. However, we hope that our efforts might stimulate and direct future analysis in these areas.

The first alternative which we look at is increased government regulation. When we speak of government regulation of the media we are obviously discussing the FCC. The FCC has been far from successful in regulating the major media conglomerates. This view of the FCC is not unique to this study and is not unique to regulatory agencies in

general. James M. Landis, the former dean of Harvard Law School once called the FCC's actions "Alice-in-Wonderland procedures."<sup>3</sup> And Fred Friendly, the former president of the CBS News division, referred to the FCC as "an administrative never-never land."<sup>4</sup> The FCC is either the willing partner of the media conglomerates or out of touch with reality. In either case, they have not done nearly enough to limit conglomeration and concentration within the American mass media. And they have failed to defend the public's right to know. Therefore, any suggestion that we rely on increased government regulation must overcome the first hurdle of an ineffectual FCC.

The second problem with relying on further government regulation is that we have no assurance that government control of the media would be any better than corporate control. To quote former Senator Fulbright, "There are no conceivable restraints to be placed on the press which would not be worse than its excesses."<sup>5</sup> Some of the current problems which public broadcasting is facing due to government control of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting points out the less than desirable nature of increased government control. Indeed, strong hand tactics by government would be just as bad, if not worse, than corporate control.

However, the mass media are putting themselves in a position where soon government will be left with no alternative other than further regulation. According to Rupert Murdoch,

What is in danger is the press itself, if it is allowed to go to extremes, and without being checked. The First Amendment was not written for a monopoly press, or a monolithic media, and I maintain it will be in danger one day if this elite does not straighten out its double values.

A similar opinion was expressed by Kevin Phillips in his article "Busting the Media Trusts."



In today's context, we can postulate that if the communications business threatens to engulf the values, culture, and careers of voters and politicians, it will force the state to engulf the communications business.

Taking this in mind, and keeping in mind the less than desirable alternative of further government regulation, we come to our second alternative which is self regulation by the media. Why can not the media regulate themselves? As Stuart Loory concluded in his study on the media and their ties with the CIA, the media must become more critical of themselves. According to Loory,

If this crisis of confidence faced by the news business--along with government--is to be overcome, journalists must be willing to focus on themselves the same spotlight they so relentlessly train on others."<sup>8</sup>

And according to former Senator Fulbright,

After a long period of divisiveness and acrimony in our national life, we are in need of a reaffirmation of the social contract among people, government, and the media. The essence of that contract is a measure of voluntary restraining.

Are the media willing to exercise this self-restraint? Can they rise above the profit-mindedness which rules the day? Is criticism from the outside of the industry enough to force change? According to Joseph Lynford, it is not.

A rehabilitation of the press will not come about because of press councils or new visions in the heads of the conglomerates and chains which control so much of the mass-communications system. There has already been enough trenchant criticism of the news media to know that outside commentary, no matter how rational, falls on deaf ears. And the history of the media since World War II should be enough to show the folly of expecting publishers and broadcasters to engage in self-correction.<sup>10</sup>

If change is not to come from within the industry, then from where will it originate? Perhaps, the problem is not with the media but with our definition and expectations of the media. Perhaps what we are seeing in the media today is the reality of a fully developed mass media

within a free enterprise system. Therefore, what is needed is a new definition of the media. Maybe we should give up, stop trying to change the media, and admit that the media are above all else responsible to their needs for profits. We should also recognize that the media are owned and operated by a corporate elite who will use it to their advantage. Perhaps if we viewed the media in this manner, no longer having false expectations and no longer believing in the myths of objectivity and neutrality, we would no longer fall victim to its influence. In this way we would limit its effectiveness as a socializing agent.

In order to change our concept of the media, what we would need would be a media curriculum in our schools to educate young Americans to become wise media consumers. As media consumers, the masses could then become objective evaluators of information. They would learn to seek out alternative sources of information which challenge the information put out by the media. Citizens would become active, questioning individuals, rather than passive sponges sucking up the products of the corporate rich. Harold Lasswell, in his article "Policy Problems of a Data-Rich Society," stated that

a category of particularly important information for everyone is knowledge of how he can be manipulated and thereby deprived of the degree of choice that one might have. One does not necessarily alter one's opinion because he becomes aware of the factors that usually shape it. But if one's factor-determiners are continually brought to attention, the likelihood is improved that an individual will ask himself whether his response is, after all, satisfactory when reviewed in the light of all the information at his disposal.<sup>11</sup>

Currently there are many groups within society pushing for media education in our public schools.

Groups such as Prime Time School Television in Chicago, Teachers' Guides to TV in New York, and the Office of Radio and Television for learning at public TV station WGBH in Boston have produced teacher guides to specific commercial and

public television programs. Television columns appearing in magazines and journals for classroom teachers offer a variety of suggestions for using TV in the classroom. Professional teacher's associations, such as the National Council of Teachers in English, are now providing media education materials and workshops for classroom teachers. In addition to these activities at the national level, local efforts are being made to incorporate media awareness instruction into curriculum offerings and to develop innovative approaches to the use of television as an instructional device.<sup>12</sup>

Richard P. Kleeman, the senior vice president for the Association of American Publishers, addressed the topic of curriculum development in a letter to the author of this study. His remarks follow:

As for a media curriculum: I would think that college rather than high school would be the place for a relatively sophisticated course, but on the theory that it never hurts to learn something early and relearn it more intensively later on, a high school course in media might be constructed that would be interesting and comprehensible. It would be surely worth the effort, and some organizations have tried it--notably the Society of Professional Journalists, which has long been trying to devise a course on newspapers and constitutionally protected speech in general.<sup>13</sup>

However, when one takes into account the amount of television that young people are exposed to, and when one considers the overall influence of the socialization process on young children, the idea of a media curriculum which begins at early levels of grade school makes sense. By high school or college, the individual has already been socialized to a high degree. Therefore, there have been efforts recently toward developing a media curriculum for young children. Singer, Singer, and Rapaczynski developed such a curriculum, which,

concentrated on those areas in which the possible confusing or harmful effects of TV were amply documented by the existing research. These included such things as commercials, the portrayal of violence on TV, stereotypes about sex and rape, and the comprehension of sequence or 'magical effects' in a television show.<sup>14</sup>

The curriculum was developed for use in an elementary school setting, to be incorporated into regular school studies over a six-week period,

consisting of six lessons: Introduction to TV, How TV Programs are Made, Real and Pretend on TV, Effects and Special Effects, Action and Aggression on TV, and Commercials. The lessons concerned such topics as how TV works, technical aspects of TV, the distinction between fantasy and reality, lighting and sound effects, violent behavior on TV, and advertising through commercials.

The media curriculum was tested in an actual elementary school setting, and was shown to be effective in teaching children about television. Children showed increased knowledge about TV overall, and were better able to understand the distinction between reality and fantasy.

Television education though, should continue through grade school, high school, and even through the post-secondary level, as does the socialization process. In 1978 the Library of Congress and the U.S. Office of Education sponsored a conference on just this need, and requested proposals for funding a "critical viewing skills" curriculum package for all levels of education the USEO listed the following set of abilities which students need to be "critical viewers" of television.

- to understand the psychological implications of commercials.
- to distinguish fact from fiction.
- to recognize and appreciate differing and/or opposing viewpoints.
- to develop an understanding of the style and content of dramatic presentations, documentaries, public affairs, news and other television programming; and
- to understand the relation between television programming and the printed word.<sup>15</sup>

These objectives were used in a media curriculum designed for teenagers, including chapters on "You and Television, The Television Industry, Programs and Production, Selling, That's the Way it Is?, The Television Environment, and A Saving Radiance."<sup>16</sup> Topics covered in



these chapters included TV viewing behavior and the role of the media in one's life, the TV industry, the FCC, the networks, technical aspects of TV such as production and bias in the news, the TV environment, portrayals of women, minorities, and other social groups, and the future implications of television for viewers. Again, the researchers found that the curriculum enhanced knowledge of television and how it works.

On the post-secondary level, colleges and universities such as Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, are adopting media curricula of their own. At ASU students are offered the option of a media minor with courses in both production and viewing skills. Another step in the right direction is the fact that political science departments are beginning to offer courses in the area of media and politics. Some schools are putting out books such as Boston University's When Information Counts, which takes a critical and realistic look at the media. Edited by Bernard Rubin, it is a collaboration between professors of journalism, English, film, and political science. Efforts such as this are a step forward in educating the public about the media, and should be expanded in the future. Education has the potential to be a major tool for fighting the excesses of media. It should be a major function of public education to create a new generation of informed media consumers.

However, there are those who would say that education is as much a tool of the elite as are the mass media. Martin Carnoy, in Schooling in a Corporate Society, points out the many problems of education within a corporate dominated society. Carnoy, together with the authors and editors of The Capitalist System, claim that indeed education is a tool

of the elite and is used by the elite to maintain the divisions of class within society. According to Carnoy,

public education and the American "classless" melting-pot society have been characterized by the image makers--all successful products of the system--as an ideal, consistent with the rages-to-riches American dream and equal opportunity for all.<sup>17</sup>

Carnoy then goes on to give us his version of reality. "Contrary to the American dream, the school system helps to preserve the status quo from generation to generation rather than helping us to generate interclass mobility."<sup>18</sup>

Unfortunately, this study is not the place for the analysis of our educational system. Certainly, elite theorists would question the value of education as a tool for countering the misinformation of the mass media. However, already some progress has been made in the area of media education, as was demonstrated earlier. It is possible that this progress might continue in the future.

One final method for countering the misinformation of the media is to develop alternative sources of information.

As a public, it may be that we should take our cue from the bureaucracies that have appropriated the communications process for the pursuit of their own ends. That is to say, we should create in the public interest new systems of gathering information and find effective means of feeding this data into the stream of news relayed by the conventional media.

There are signs that such a counter propaganda movement is already under way. One such alternative reporting service which has put a great deal of antibureaucratic information into the news stream is Ralph Nader's investigative effort. Another is the newly formed Center for Defense Information, which specializes in contradicting the Defense Department and demanding equal time from broadcasters to respond to the supernews put out by privately financed fronts for the D.O.D.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps an even better suggestion would be to take PBS, an alternative source of information already in place, and make it into a viable alternative to commercial television. As was pointed out earlier, this

was the original intent behind its creation. However, during its brief history since the passage of the Broadcasting Act of 1967, PBS and the CPB have fallen victim to both political and economic influence. The fact that PBS relies on corporate sponsors, even if only to a small degree, makes it susceptible to the type of economic censorship discussed earlier in the case of KUHT-TV, Houston.

The problem of political interference is largely due to the nature of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. In the July/August 1985 edition of Channels magazine, Steve Behrens discussed the political woes of the CPB in his article entitled "Public Broadcasting's Unholy Link to Politics." The problem with the CPB is that its members are political appointees and are therefore the tools of the White House. When a majority of the members of the CPB voted recently to bar certain of its members from participating in a public broadcasting trip to Moscow, a trip which was planned to sell programs to the Soviets, attention was focused on the politics of the CPB and of its members. Conservative board members feared that they might be promoting the import of Soviet films into the U.S. as well. According to one board member,

I mean, the Bolshoi is fine. You know, ballet is ballet. Nature programs ... little things grazing on the tundra. Fine ... But if we are going to be opening the doors to wonderful Soviet ideas<sup>20</sup> on their own history or something, this is just disastrous.

According to Steve Behrens, the real reason why the conservative members of the CPB vetoed the trip was because of the Reagan administration's negative/paranoid view of the Soviets. "The board's Reaganite members were looking far beyond public television to the prime obsession of their kind: the Evil Empire, as the President has called it."<sup>21</sup>

The CPB should not be a political puppet of the Administration as both President Reagan and former President Nixon have attempted. If PBS is to become a viable alternative to commercial television, the method for appointing members of CPB must be changed.

A better way of appointing the CPB board was proposed in 1979 by the second Carnegie Commission on Public Broadcasting. It recommended that "a public trust" be created, with its trustees appointed for nonrenewable nine-year terms appointed by the President. But the President would choose names from a slate drawn up by a panel "chaired by the Librarian of Congress, drawn from governmental institutions devoted to the arts, the sciences, the humanities, and the preservation of our heritage," and including two public broadcasters.<sup>22</sup>

This would definitely be a step in the right direction. A non-political CPB would definitely increase the viability of PBS as an independent, alternative news source.

Another suggestion would be to make PBS completely viewer supported. Of course this could not happen overnight, but it is possible. Eric L. Sass, Vice President Administration for PBS, in a letter to the author, clarified for us the current financial situation of PBS.

According to figures supplied by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, of the total public television system's income of \$784 million in Fiscal Year 1984, only \$123 million came from business, and only a portion of that came from the "major corporations." This was only some 16 percent of the total income. As a comparison, viewer contributions accounted for more than 20 percent of total dollars, or almost \$160 million. I think it is clear that public television's main influence still comes from the viewers themselves, and while corporate America plays a vital role in financing public TV, we are still accountable to the TV viewers.<sup>23</sup>

Until the day comes when PBS is totally viewer supported, they should continue to strive for a balance in their support which will eliminate any single group such as government or the corporations from controlling its content and direction. Experiments with commercials and enhanced underwriting are not the solution, they simply bring public



television closer to the world of commercial television. Their goal should not be to create a fourth commercial network, we should strive to create an alternative free of profit motive and the balance sheet mentality. Their efforts should be directed at decreasing government and corporate involvement, while increasing viewer support. Although this is no easy task considering the fact that PBS only received 20.2 percent of its funding from viewers donations in Fiscal Year 1984. The following chart (Figure 4.1) demonstrates where PBS receives its funding.

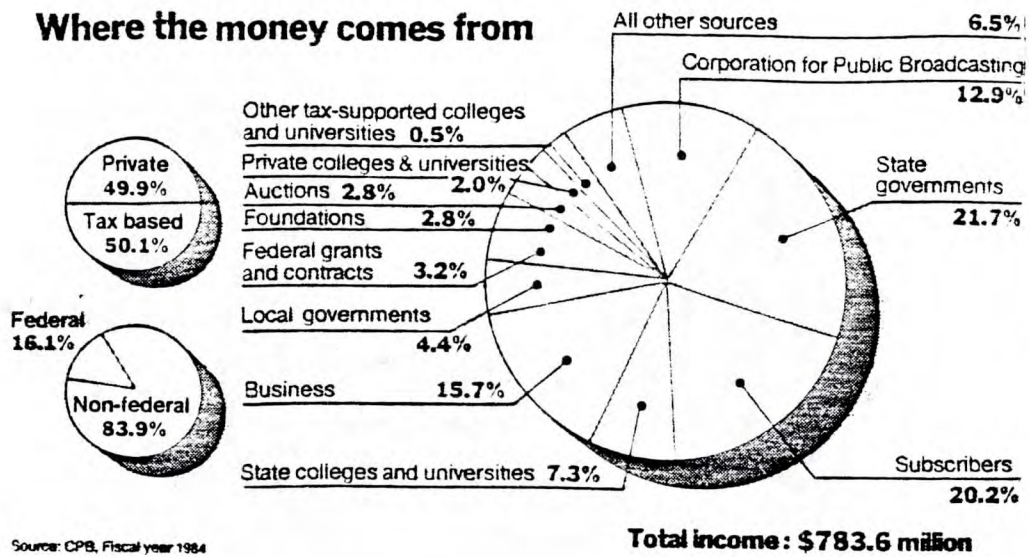
If PBS is to live up to its reputation as a "national treasure" it must remove itself from the political and economic pressures associated with funding from the government and the corporations. By increasing viewer support and by changing the method by which CPB board members are chosen, PBS will be on its way to becoming a legitimate alternative to commercial television. It will be able to provide quality, indepth public affairs programming. Because of its position as a community based operation, it will be able to address community problems and needs. It will continue to bring us programs such as the MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour which have given it a reputation for excellence. In PBS and other alternative sources of information, we find one of the answers to our problem of an elite dominated mass media in America.

#### Conclusion

Whether or not any of the courses of action which we have offered will be taken in the future remains to be seen. Obviously, a great deal of research is called for in these areas. We have only lightly touched upon areas which in and of themselves deserve indepth studies.

Figure 4.1

PBS Funding - fiscal Year 1984



Source: CPB, Fiscal year 1984

Source: "What's Ahead for PBS," Christian Science Monitor  
August 22, 1985.

Much of this study and its findings are based upon the belief that this trend toward conglomeration and concentration within the media will continue. It is also based on the rather naive assumption that the shape of the media will not change substantially enough in the near future to cause any drastic shifts in the power structure. However, 50 years ago no one could have imagined the shape of things to come. More than likely, the same is true today. Hedley Donovan, while speaking before a conference of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1966 on the future of communications in America, wisely made the following remarks.

I could sketch a fairly orderly model of impersonal forces, factors, and trends that theoretically should have a predictable influence on the course of communications media over the next 20 or 30 years. I suspect, however, that some schoolboy, now 14 years old, whose name I do not know, is going to conceive of an idea in 1981 that will have more influence on what communications are like to 2000 than anything I or my colleagues could logically project today.<sup>24</sup>

Something like this might, one day, render this entire study irrelevant. We have a tendency to refer to communications as a limited resource, but it is only as limited as our technology. Tomorrow someone could come out with a new technological advancement that could open new doors in the field of communications. But, even if this were to happen, more than likely the major media conglomerates would be right there attempting to absorb this new technology as they have done with the new technologies of the 1970s and 80s. In fact, it might be the networks, with all of their resources, who lead us in the development of these new technologies. This is certainly their intention.

Throughout this study we have pointed out the pervasiveness of the media and of the potential power wielded by its controllers. In a society where information is so highly valued, in a political system

where the input of an informed citizenry is supposedly essential, the need for complete, correct, and unbiased information is primary. Without this, our freedom is seriously compromised.

Even if the supply of information were not being manipulated by those within the media, the simple fact that they have the ability and that their motives are rarely questioned implies that we must provide alternatives. The potential for abuse is just as frightening as the reality. Alternative sources of information and a media curriculum in public schools would provide the much needed checks upon the media conglomerates.

This study, unlike many others, has used information from a great variety of sources, representing a variety of interests. We have corresponded directly with the major conglomerates and with leaders in the communications industry. Our intent was to provide the most in-depth, current, and comprehensive study into the implications of the growing trend toward conglomeration within the American mass media.

Our process was simple. In Chapter 1, we laid the foundation of our analysis by providing a brief overview of elite theory. In Chapter 2, we presented the current trend toward conglomeration within the media and introduced the media elite, incorporating them into the traditional elite model of policy-making. In Chapter 3, we demonstrated how the mass media may be used as a tool of the elite to further their political and economic interests. Then, in our final chapter, we discussed several courses of action which might be taken to balance current domination of the flow of information within America by the corporate elite. Of these alternatives, we consider the development of a media curriculum and the development of alternative sources of information to



be the best. We particularly advocate making PBS into a legitimate alternative to network television.

It is our conclusion that the American mass media are indeed controlled by an economic elite who are, above all, responsible to corporate goals and values. This corporate elite has both the ability and the motives to use the media in order to further its economic and political power. In fact, this elite does at times exercise its control over the media, directing the flow of information in America, in order to further its interests. We consider this action to be a threat to freedom and a violation of the people's right to know. For, as long as the primary sources of information in the United States are controlled by an economic elite, the American people are susceptible to manipulation through abuses of the media. We are a free people only so far as we are able to provide input into our political system which is based on an accurate, complete, and unbiased supply of information, not on the misinformation of the few who would seek to control the masses.

It is our hope that future studies will question our findings and our suggestion, and in turn propose their own. We are certain that they will bear us out. However, we welcome the dissenting opinions of informed critics. The bibliographies provided in this work should prove to be an excellent starting point from which future studies can grow.

We wish to conclude with a quote from Nobel Prize winner Alexander Solzhenitsyn, a man who places a great deal of value on the concept of a free and independent press; a man who believes, as does this study, that control of the media by a powerful few constitutes a threat to freedom.

But woe to that nation whose literature is disturbed by the intervention of power. Because that is not just a violation against 'freedom of print,' it is the closing down of the heart of the nation, a slashing to pieces of its memory.<sup>25</sup>

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- <sup>45</sup> See footnote #8 in Chapter 1.
- <sup>46</sup> Nossiter, p. 1.
- <sup>47</sup> Edelman, p. 18.
- <sup>48</sup> Herbert Schiller. The Mind Managers. Boston: Beacon Press, 1973, p. 24.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 10.
- <sup>50</sup> Lawrence Svid. "Hollywood and Vietnam." Film Comment September/October 1979, p. 20.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>52</sup> G. William Domhoff. Who Rules America Now? Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1983, p. 105.



## FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER 4

<sup>1</sup>George Gerbner and George Marvanyi. "The Many Worlds of the World's Press." Journal of Communication Winter, 1977, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup>AAP Newsletter March, 1982, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Fred Friendly. Due to Circumstances Beyond Our Control. New York: Random House, 1967, p. 290.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 289.

<sup>5</sup>William Fulbright. "Fulbright on the Press." Columbia Journalism Review 14, November/December 1975, p. 43.

<sup>6</sup>American Enterprise Institute. Is There a Liberal Elite in America? Washington, D.C.: AEI, June 28, 1984, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup>Kevin Phillips. "Bustin the Media Trusts." Harper's July, 1977, p. 24.

<sup>8</sup>Stuart Loory. "The CIA's Use of the Press: A Mighty Wurlitzer." Columbia Journalism Review 13 September/October 1974, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup>Fulbright, p. 45.

<sup>10</sup>Joseph P. Lynford. "The Pacification of the Press." in Albert Hughes (ed.). Socialization to Power to Propaganda. Lexington, Massachusetts: Xerox Individualized Publishing, 1975, p. 100.

<sup>11</sup>Harold Lasswell. "Problems of a Data-Rich Society." in Alan F. Westin (ed.). Information Technology in a Democracy. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 191.

<sup>12</sup>Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, et a. "Developing a Media Curriculum for Teenagers." Journal of Communication 30 No. 3, 1980, pp. 119-20.

<sup>13</sup>Letter to the author. See Appendix.

<sup>14</sup>D.G. Singer, et al. "Teaching Television: A Curriculum for Young Children." Journal of Communication 32, Spring 1982.

<sup>15</sup>Lloyd-Kolkin, et al., p. 121.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>17</sup>Martin Carnoy. Schooling in a Corporate Society. New York: David McKay Co., 1977, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>19</sup>Lynford, p. 100.

<sup>20</sup>Steve Behrens. "Public Broadcasting's Unholy Link to Politics." Channels July/August 1985, p. 31.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>23</sup>Letter to the author from Mr. Eric Sass, Vice President, Administration, Public Broadcasting Service, August 28, 1985.

<sup>24</sup>Ben Bagdikian. The Information Machines. New York: Harper and Row, 1971, p. xvi.

<sup>25</sup>Lynford, p. 101.

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APPENDIX A

Select Members of the ABC Board of Directors

## SELECT MEMBERS OF THE ABC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Frank T. Cary - B.S., U.C.L.A., 1943; M.B.A., Stanford University, 1948; IBM chief executive officer and chairman of the board, 1973; director J.P. Morgan & Company, Morgan Guaranty Trust Co. N.Y., ABC, Inc., Merck & Co., Inc., Texaco, Inc.; Trustee of the Conference Board, The Brookings Institution.

John T. Connor - A.B., Syracuse University, 1936; J.D., Harvard University, 1939; D. Sc., Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, 1959, Hahnemann Medical College, 1964; president Merck & Company, Inc., 1955-1965; U.S. Secretary of Commerce, 1965-67; president Allied Chemical Corp., 1967-68, director, 1967-80, chief executive officer, 1968-79, chairman of the board, 1969-79; director J. Henry Schroder Bank & Trust Co., 1980 to present; director General Motors Corp., American Broadcasting Companies, Schrodgers Ltd., Merck & Co., Inc.; member of the Business Council, Council on Foreign Relations; trustee Syracuse University.

Everett H. Erlick - A.B., Vanderbilt University, 1942; LL. B., Yale, 1948; executive vice president and general counsel ABC Inc., presently; member of the President's Business Advisory Committee on Desegregation, 1963, President's National Citizens Committee for Community Relations, 1964, National Committee for Immigration Reform, Alan Greenspan - B.S. summa cum laude, N.Y.U., M.A., 1950; Ph.D., N.Y.U., 1977; consultant to the Council of Economic Advisers, 1970-74, Chairman 1974-1977; consultant to the Congressional Budget Office, 1977 to present; member of the

President's Economic Policy Advisory Board, 1981 to present; chairman National Commission on Social Security Reform, 1981-83; member Task Force on Economic Growth, 1969, President's Intelligence Advisory Board, 1982 to present; co-founder Greenspan O'Neil, Inc., 1984; member Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, 1969-70, Commission on Financial Structure and Regulation, 1970-71; consultant U.S. Treasury, 1971-74, Federal Reserve Board, 1971-74; member Economic Advisory Board to the Secretary of Commerce, 1971-72; member Central Market System Committee of SEC, 1972; member GNP Review Committee of Choice of Management and Budget; senior advisor to the panel on economic activities Brookings Institution, 1970-74, 77 to present; member board of economists Time Magazine, 1971-74, 77 to present; director of General Foods Corp., J.P. Morgan & Co., Morgan Guarantee Trust Co., Mobil Corp., Alcoa, Automatic Data processing, Inc., member Nixon for President Committee, 1968-69, director of domestic policy research; personal representative of President elect to the Bureau of the Budget for the Transition period; chairman Task Force of Foreign Trade Policy Board of Overseers Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, 1973-74, 77 to present; fellow of the National Association of Business Economists (past president); member Council on Foreign Relations, Conference of Business Economists.

Norma T. Pace - Grad., Hunter College, 1941; graduate study Columbia University; staff Econometrics Institute; with U.S. Economics Corp., 1944-71, president, 1969-71; vice president, director industrial economics Lionel D. Edie & Co., NYC, 1971-73; asst. development visual aids for teaching Economic Columbia Visual Las; director Sears, Roebuck &



Co., Sperry Corp., Milton Bradley Co., ASC, 3M Co., Vulcan Materials; member National Commission on Employment Policies; member advisory council Stanford Research Institute; member economics advisory board Graduate School Business, Columbia University; trustee Committee for Economic Development.

APPENDIX B

Select Members of the RCA Board of Directors

## SELECT MEMBERS OF THE RCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thorton Bradshaw - A.B., Harvard University, 1940, M.B.A., 1942, D.C.S., 1950; vice president, director Atlantic Richfield Co. (formerly Atlantic Refining Company), L.A., 1956-62, executive v.p., 1962-64, president, 1964-80, member executive committee, 1966-81; director, chairman, chief executive officer RCA, 1981 to present; director NBC, Champion International; chairman board of directors Conference Board; member board of directors Center for Education in International Management, Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, American Petroleum Institute, Los Angeles World Affairs Council; trustee for the Conservation Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund; member board of overseers Harvard University.

John Brademas - B.A. magna cum laude, Harvard University, 1949; D. Phil. (Rhodes Scholar), Oxford University, 1954; legislative assistant to U.S. Senator Pat McNamara; administrative assistant to U.S. Representative Thomas L. Ashley, 1955; executive assistant Presidential nominee Stevenson, 1955-56; member 86th-96th Congresses from 3rd Ind. District; chief deputy majority whip 93rd-94th Congresses; majority whip 95th-96th Congresses; president NYU, 1981 to present; chairman Federal Reserve Bank N.Y.; director RCA/NBC, Loew's Corp., Scholastic, Inc., N.Y. Stock Exchange, Rockefeller Foundation; board of overseers Harvard University; trustee, member of the advisory council College of Arts and Letters, University of Notre Dame; board of visitors, department of political science MIT.

Robert Cizik - B.S., University of Connecticut, 1953; M.B.A., Harvard University, 1958; chairman of the board, chief executive officer, president Cooper Industries, Inc., Houston, Texas; director First City Bancorp Tex., NBC, Temple Inland, Inc., RCA, N.Y.C.; vice president Machinery and Allied Products Institute; board of directors Central Houston, Inc., National Business Committee for the Arts, Catalyst; trustee Center for International Business, Conference Board, Committee for Economic development; board of overseers Executive Council of Foreign Diplomats; member of Social Founders, American Leadership Forum.

Thomas O. Paine - M.S., Stanford University, 1947, Ph.D., Stanford University, 1949; with General Electric Company, 1949-68. 70-76; president Northrop Corp., Los Angeles, 1976-82; chairman Thomas Paine Associates, L.A., 1982 to present; deputy administrator, then administrator NASA, 1968-70; director Eastern Airlines.

John R. Petty - A.B., Brown University, 1951; post grad., N.Y.U., 1953-54; Chase Manhattan Bank, N.Y.C. and Paris, 1953-66, v.p., 1964-66; deputy assistant secretary Department of Treasury, Washington, 1966-69, assistant secretary for International Affairs, 1969-72; president, director, chairman, executive committee Marine Midland Banks, Inc., from 1977; director RCA Corp., NBC, Hercules, Inc.; member Council on Foreign Relations, Foreign Bondholders Protective Council.

Cecily C. Selby - A.B. cum laude, Radcliff College, 1946; Ph.D., MIT, 1950; consultant U.S. Department of Commerce, 1976-77; director Avon



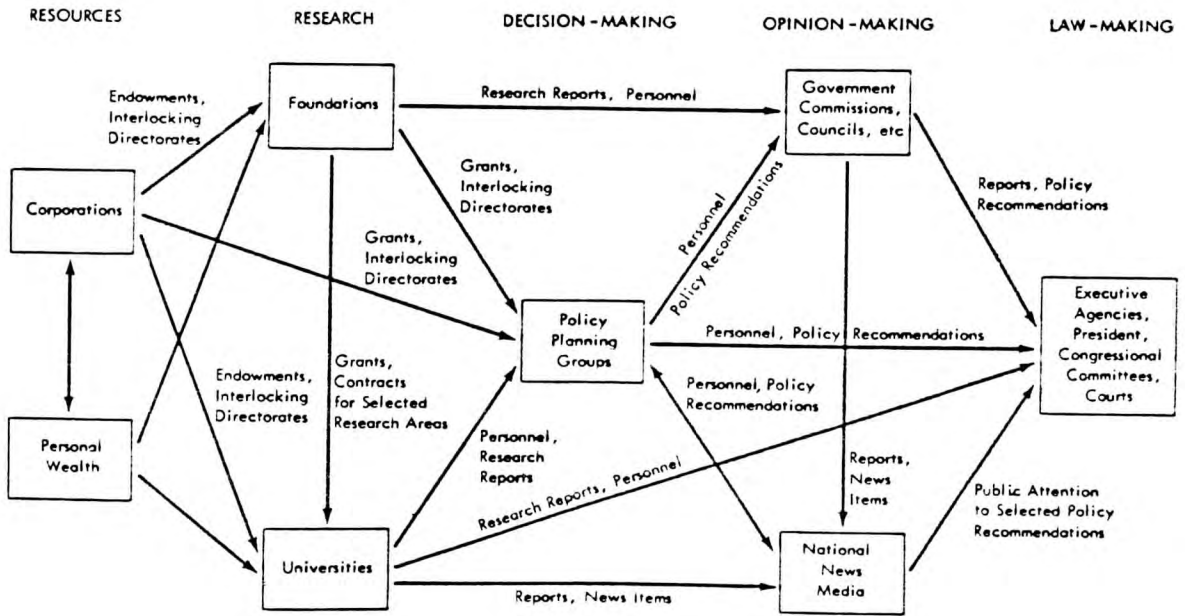
Products, Inc., RCA, NBC, Loehmanns, Inc.; trustee MIT, Brooklyn Law School, Radcliffe College, Women's Forum N.Y.

Donald B. Smiley - B.A., Augustana College, 1936; J.D., Northwestern University, 1940; R.H. Macy & Company, Inc., NYC, from 1945, currently chairman financial committee, since 1981; director Ralston Purina Co., Fidelity Union Ban Corp., U.S. Steel Corp., N.Y. Stock Exchange, Inc., Texasgulf, Inc., 1966-82; member Bar Association City N.Y., Foreign Policy Association, American Arbitration Association, National Retail Merchants Association.

APPENDIX C

Dye's Elite Model of Policy-Making

Dye's Elite Model of Policy-Making



(Source: Thomas R. Dye, Who's Running America? p. 192. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1976)

APPENDIX D

Concentration Ratios for Selected Industries

Concentration Ratios for Selected Industries

Industry	Census Year	Number of Companies*	Value of Shipments (\$M)*	% Value of Shipments Accounted for by:			
				4 Largest Companies	8 Largest Companies	20 Largest Companies	50 Largest Companies
Book Publishing	1972	1,120	2,915.4	16	27	52	75
	1957	963	2,255.3	16	27	52	75
	1953	936	1,547.8	18	29	52	73
	1958	883	1,010.7	16	26	45	65
	1954	804	655.4	18	28	47	NA
Book Printing	1972	674	1,050.0	19	27	44	57
	1967	720	900.3	15	23	38	53
	1953	662	607.0	14	23	37	51
	1958	785	422.9	15	22	34	48
	1954	592	304.9	15	24	37	NA
Book Retailing	1972	6,640	937.0	11	15	20	24
	1967	2,425	427.6	7	10	17	21
	1953	2,859	273.5	7	9	16	21
	1958	2,885	195.3	10	13	16	19
Paper Mills	1972	194	6,183.7	25	40	65	86
	1957	203	4,739.5	26	41	64	85
	1953	186	3,724.0	26	40	61	83
	1958	NA	3,044.6	25	39	58	78
Periodical Publishing	1972	2,451	3,187.0	22	33	50	65
	1967	2,430	2,658.2	23	36	53	68
	1953	2,562	2,035.5	26	39	56	69
	1958	2,245	1,578.4	31	40	54	67
Commercial Printing	1972	NA	631.6	22	32	50	58
Lithographic Magazines	1957	NA	295.1	15	25	46	65
	1953	NA	138.5	18	25	41	62
	1958	NA	65.2	NA	NA	NA	NA
Commercial Printing	1972	NA	1,554.1	6	10	16	26
Lithographic	1967	NA	967.6	6	9	16	28
Adv. Material	1953	NA	721.6	6	9	16	26
	1958	NA	577.3	6	9	16	27
Phonograph Records	1972	537	537.1	47	60	75	85
Tapes	1957	306	271.0	58	67	80	91
	1953	128	178.7	68	74	83	93
	1958	85	136.2	74	81	88	97
Printing Machinery	1972	523	736.6	36	44	59	76
	1967	485	656.0	43	52	67	82
	1953	463	403.2	39	47	62	79
	1958	421	270.7	37	48	63	79

\*The number of companies shown here includes firms classified by the Census Bureau within the particular industry because their predominant product was books; however, other organizations also publish books. The value of shipments shown here is the total value for all books published by all organizations; this includes the book products of the companies included in the particular industry, but also the book products of organizations not classified as book publishers.  
NA = Not available.

Source: FTC, Proceedings of the Symposium on Media Concentration,

p. 563.



APPENDIX E

Concentration Ratios for Book Publishing

Concentration Ratios for Book Publishing

Industry Segment	Census Year	Number of Companies*	Value of Shipments (\$M)*	% of Value of Shipments Accounted for by:			
				4 Largest Companies	8 Largest Companies	20 Largest Companies	50 Largest Companies
All Book Publishing	1972	1,120	2,915.4	16	27	52	75
	1957	963	2,255.3	16	27	52	75
	1953	936	1,547.8	18	29	52	73
	1958	883	1,010.7	16	26	45	65
	1954	804	655.4	18	28	47	NA
Religious Publishing	1972	NA	131.2	36	51	76	97
	1957	NA	110.4	27	46	74	96
	1953	NA	81.1	22	37	65	89
	1958	NA	59.6	30	45	70	90
General Reference Publishing	1972	NA	235.2	71	82	94	99+
	1957	NA	216.3	81	91	NA	100
	1953	NA	207.3	87	96	100	NA
	1958	NA	163.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
Technical, Scientific and Professional Publishing	1972	NA	403.0	33	57	76	92
	1957	NA	240.2	38	54	74	91
	1953	NA	155.3	32	49	68	87
	1958	NA	115.0	27	43	71	91
Textbook Publishing	1972	NA	809.6	33	54	80	95
	1957	NA	733.6	29	50	79	94
	1953	NA	471.1	32	54	81	94
	1958	NA	291.7	33	50	75	93
General Publishing	1972	NA	1,005.7	29	47	74	92
	1957	NA	657.7	28	45	70	91
	1953	NA	458.2	30	46	59	89
	1958	NA	274.7	39	53	72	90

\*The number of companies shown here includes those firms classified by the Census Bureau within the particular industry because their predominant product was books, however, other organizations also publish books. The value of shipments shown here is the total value for all books published by all organizations; this includes the book products of the companies included in the particular industry, but also the book products of organizations not classified as book publishers.  
NA=Not available.

Source: FTC, Proceedings of the Symposium on Media Concentration,  
p. 562.

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A note of special thanks goes to my American National Government class whose help with this paper was far beyond my expectations.

APPENDIX G

Letter from Representative James Broyhill

JAMES T. BROYHILL  
10TH DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 2340  
TAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
202-225-2576

DEAN, NORTH CAROLINA  
CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

COMMITTEE  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

September 3, 1984

DISTRICT OFFICES  
832 GARRISON BLVD  
GASTONIA, NC 28054  
704-864-9922

ROOM 133  
FEDERAL BUILDING  
HICKORY, NC 28601  
704-328-8718

224 MULBERRY STREET, SW  
LENOIR, NC 28645  
704-758-4247

Mr. Daniel S. Dunlop  
Wagoner Apartments #22  
410 E. Howard Street  
Boone, North Carolina 28607

Dear Daniel:

I want to thank you for your recent letter. I was interested to learn that your Master's Thesis in Political Science deals with the ownership and control of the American Mass Media.

I think that I should begin by pointing out that most people in this country do business as corporations -- instead of owning businesses as individuals. Therefore, I am not really sure what you mean by the phrase "corporate elite." I feel certain that if the majority of businesses were owned by individuals, you would be concerned about that, too, because the "power" would be concentrated in too few individuals.

Contrary to the claims that the FCC is not doing a good job and that they are letting the "corporate elite" take over, I feel that the FCC has opened up more opportunities for people to get into business -- through low power TV, additional radio stations, etc. Furthermore, the FCC has permitted entrepreneurs to put together larger blocks of stations so that there can be more competition with the networks.

Regarding the ownership of television, there are strict rules on ownership of TV stations. I have asked officials at the Federal Communications Commission to send you a copy of the regulations for your review. According to the courts and their interpretation of the Constitution, there is very little that can be done about who owns the print media.

Your comments on the use of nominee accounts by financial institutions were also appreciated. I do not feel that the use of nominee accounts is out of the ordinary. Furthermore, the use is not confined to broadcasting. This is a completely different issue from broadcasting and you might want to contact the Securities and Exchange Commission for information.

Is corporate control of the media a reality? Sure it is! It is a reality just like in any other business.

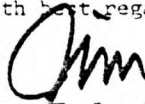
I feel that the FCC is doing a great job, Daniel. My Committee has held a number of oversight hearings on the Commission and I am proud of what they have accomplished.



Mr. Daniel S. Dunlop  
Page Two  
September 3, 1985

I do hope that this information is helpful to you in your studies, Daniel. Should you have any further questions or feel that I can be of additional assistance to you, I hope that you will not hesitate to let me know.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jim", written over the typed name.

James T. Broyhill  
Member of Congress

JTB:sa

APPENDIX H

Letter from Hunt Williams of ABC, Inc.

W. L. Williams  
Vice President and General Counsel

August 20, 1985

Dear Mr. Dunlop:

Thank you for your letter to Michael Mallardi requesting information on ABC. It has been referred from his office to me.

I've enclosed a copy of our 1984 Annual Report, which contains the most recent summary of all our operations. This may answer many of your factual questions.

Due to our pending merger with Capital Cities Communications, Inc. -- announced on March 18 of this year and scheduled to become effective on January 6, 1986 -- ABC will soon cease to be an independent, publicly-owned entity. The majority of ABC shares are currently still held by institutions on behalf of pension funds and similar clients. No institution or person holds more than five percent of the stock.

Shareholders, individual or institutional, are interested in a Company's operating decisions. But at ABC, as in most other companies, this interest is directed at how operating decisions affect overall financial performance. Investors like to receive a good return on their investment, and the shareholders of media companies are no exception in this regard. Holding ABC shares does not confer the right to influence or censor specific programs.

Special interest organizations do, however, purchase small quantities of shares in order to air their views at the annual meeting of shareholders.

Arbitrageurs, yet another breed of shareholder, often take a position in the stock of companies that may be taken over in the hope of selling for a quick profit when the tender offer is made. The question of nominee accounts is appropriate here. Most arbitrageurs operate in secret; nominee accounts give time to accumulate a position anonymously, at a low price. But once a single position in a given stock reaches five percent of shares outstanding, through nominee accounts or directly, SEC regulations enter the picture. No shareholder can legally exceed this limit without disclosing his investment and declaring his intentions.

The general view that "a small group of corporate executives" manipulates the flow of information in the American media is, as you say, part of the popular literature on the broadcasting industry. I don't think you'll find many people in radio or television who share it. ABC News makes its own assessments of what is newsworthy. Its operations and programs are independent and free of interference by the corporation. In addition, each program is produced separately -- for example, World News Tonight with Peter Jennings has a different staff and executive producer from Nightline. It would be quite incorrect to assume that a uniform bias (somehow corresponding to a general "conglomeration and concentration" in media ownership) governs and distorts broadcast journalism.

You have picked a fascinating subject. I hope this response will further your research. You might also want to look at some of the news coverage of the ABC/Capital Cities merger. The articles in Fortune and Broadcasting magazines in the week following March 18 would be a good place to start.

Yours sincerely,

Hunt Williams

Daniel S. Dunlop  
Wagoner Apt. #22  
410 E. Howard St.  
Boone, North Carolina 28607



APPENDIX I

Letter from Richard P. Kleeman of the AAP



9 September 1985

Mr. Daniel S. Dunlop  
Wagoner Apartment #22  
410 E. Howard Street  
Boone, North Carolina 28607

Dear Mr. Dunlop:

The questions you addressed to me in your letter of August 19 are so complex and far-reaching--and call for so many personal views--that to answer them fully would require a thesis almost as long as the one you propose to write. I don't imagine that you expected--nor can I provide--extensive replies to all of your queries; nor would my own personal views on some of the issues be particularly relevant. What I would hope to do in this relatively short letter is to direct you to some papers that may help you find some answers and reach some conclusions of your own.

I hope that you have written to, among others, the Federal Trade Commission. A bright and fair-minded attorney there--Heather Kirkwood (I believe I heard recently that she is still on their staff)--in 1978 organized a "Symposium on Media Concentration" that explored at great length the questions of concentration and conglomeration that you raise. Virtually all media were covered--books, newspapers, magazines, TV, and films. These proceedings were collected in two telephone book-sized volumes (I and II), published by the Commission's Bureau of Competition. I would be surprised if they were not in your local public or college library (published by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402). They may also be read in this office, but not removed from it. I had thought perhaps to photocopy some excerpts from the presentations and conclusions of the two-day symposium (14-15 December 1978), but it seems more logical to see whether you can find the full documents and see what interests you (see below, however). On the whole, I believe the FTC found that book publishing then was not a highly concentrated industry in general because of the vast number of entities that can and do call themselves publishers and because of the relative ease of access to the industry. The paperback publishing sector, FTC thought, needed to be somewhat more closely watched for concentration than other areas because of the relatively small number of houses. (These, of course, were the conclusions of 1978, but I don't suppose they would be vastly different today--although there have been some significant major acquisitions of book publishing houses by conglomerates or by other publishers in recent months.) To learn a lot more about the paperback side of our industry you should look up Two-Bit Culture: The Paperbacking of America by Kenneth C. Davis, published in trade paperback in 1984 by Houghton Mifflin. Every year "Publishers Weekly," the magazine of the trade, recapitulates events and trends of the previous year. I enclose some excerpts from its issue of 15 March 1985 on highlights of 1984.

"Elite control" of the media is a term I do not fully comprehend nor readily accept. What sort of elite? Eastern? Surely publishing is heavily concentrated in New York City, but there are many publishers in New England,

New Jersey, and Illinois, as well as throughout the country. The Los Angeles area is particularly rife with small publishers. Financial elite? Many publishing houses are distinctly large and wealthy, but many start on a shoestring, and a number of these do not succeed. Intellectual elite? Possibly--certainly in my thirteen years of experience in an association representing the industry I have found leading publishers generally of high intelligence. But surely they do not publish exclusively for an "elite" audience or there would be precious few books sold in this country.

When you ask for the "views and opinions" of AAP on these issues, I must give the remarks of our then and present president, Townsend W. Hoopes, at the 1978 symposium. I'll do that and try to find a few other pertinent statements of his; he is the one who speaks for AAP--in addition to a relatively small number of publishers who have held office as our chairmen over the years, and they have done relatively little public speaking on behalf of the industry on these issues.

As far as anticompetitive practices are concerned: as an association, we at AAP do our best to avoid them. We are subject to stringent guidelines governing meetings of our various committees and task forces to avoid even the appearance of restraint of trade or illegal anticompetitive practices. What individual publishing houses do is of course their business; we have no enforcement powers over our members.

As for a media curriculum: I would think that college rather than high school would be the place for a relatively sophisticated course, but on the theory that it never hurts to learn something early and relearn it more intensively later on, a high school course in media might be constructed that would be interesting and comprehensible. It would surely be worth the effort, and some organizations have tried it--notably the Society of Professional Journalists, which has long been trying to devise a study course on newspapers and constitutionally-protected speech in general. Their address:

Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi  
53 West Jackson Blvd./Suite 731  
Chicago, IL 60604 312-649-0211

There are, of course, numerous excellent college short courses (often in summer schools) on book publishing.

I hope this gives you at least a start on your thesis. If you are able to get to Washington, you would be welcome to browse in our small library on publishing issues and no doubt would find some materials of interest.

Sincerely,

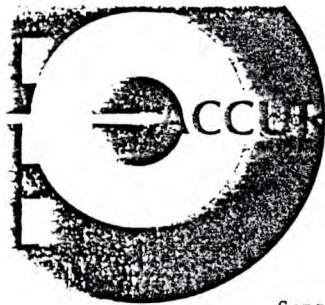


Richard P. Kleeman  
Senior Vice President

APPENDIX J

Letter from Deborah Lambert of AIM, Inc.





# ACCURACY IN MEDIA, INC.

1275 K Street, N.W., Suite 1150 • Washington, D.C. 20005

Phone: (202) 371-6710

Reed Irvine  
Chairman of the Board

September 27, 1985

### OFFICERS:

Reed Irvine, Chairman  
Julius Baton, President  
John C. Luoma, Vice President  
John R. Van Latta, Executive Secretary  
Ron Ravi Ulflev, Treasurer  
Milton Mitchell, General Counsel

**NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD**  
Arnold Beasman, Writer and Analyst

Hon. Karl R. Bendetsen, Past and Present Chairman  
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Alfred D. Dierker, Writer

Wendell Fertig, Economist and Author

Ellen G. Gannett, Author

Dr. Thomas H. Ince, Professor of Medical Physics  
University of California, Berkeley

Charles Keating II, Chairman of the Board  
American Continental Corp.

Robert H. Kucible, Chairman of the Board  
Fidelity Corp.

Mark Lewis, Union Ethical Committee

David Lichtenstein, Attorney

Hon. Clare Boothe Luce, Former Ambassador and  
Member of Congress

David Martin, Writer and Analyst

Dr. Thomas H. Mottet, USAF Ret., Former Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Dr. Charles A. Moser, Professor  
George Washington University

Adm. William C. Mott, USAF Ret., Vice President  
National Strategic Information Center

L. Robinson, Former Vice Chairman  
Federal Reserve Board

Hon. Salvatore, Founder and Retired CEO of  
Western Cosmological Company

Walter W. Seibel, Professor of Journalism  
Ohio State University

Dr. Fredrick Spitz, President Emeritus  
Rutgers University

Hon. William F. Simon, Former Secretary  
of the Treasury

David H. Smith, Independent Oil and  
Gas Producer

Dr. Edward Teller, Physicist, Co-founder of  
Lawrence Livermore  
National Laboratory

Dr. Lewis W. Ware, USMC Ret.

Dr. Eugene P. Wigner, Nobel Laureate in Physics

Daniel S. Dunlop  
Wagoner Apt. #22  
410 E. Howard St.  
Boone, NC 28607

Dear Mr. Dunlop:

Thank you for your letter of August 19.

Since the main objective of Accuracy in Media is to monitor the media for incorrect or misleading information, the mindset of the media is of great interest to us.

The enclosed Rothman and Lichter report is one of the most important to appear concerning the political biases of the major media elite. It provides statistical evidence that the media are dominated by people with opinions considerably to the left of the American public. The Los Angeles Times article provides further illustration of this point.

You might look into the following books for insight regarding political bias in television: The Left-Leaning Antenna by Joseph Keeley and The Gods of the Antenna by Bruce Herschensohn.

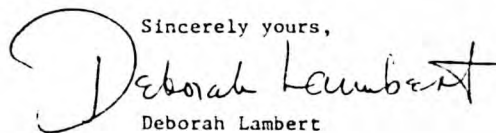
A book on the foreign policy of the New York Times titled Bad News by Russ Braley shows how the Times has affected American foreign policy goals and interests during the past thirty years.

I also recommend to you back issues of our AIM Report for a long list of media inaccuracies and slanting of stories.

The enclosed articles and above-mentioned sources should, I feel, prove useful to you in your research.

Please feel free to contact us in the future regarding any specific questions you might have.

Sincerely yours,

  
Deborah Lambert

Enclosures

## VITA

Daniel Sean Dunlop was born in Opelika, Alabama, on March 30, 1961. He attended elementary schools in Maine, the Virgin Islands, and Vermont. In May of 1979 he graduated from Essex Junction High School in Essex Junction, Vermont. In September of that year he entered the University of Vermont, and in May of 1984, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. In the fall of 1984 he accepted a teaching assistantship at Appalachian State University and began study toward a Master's degree. This degree was awarded in December of 1985.

The author is a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society, and is a member of the American Political Science Association. While working on his Masters's degree he was a member of the Graduate Student Association Senate, serving as the Graduate Council Representative, the Rules Committee Chairman, and as a member of the Executive Committee.

Mr. Dunlop's parents are Patricia and John Dunlop of Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He is to be married to Alyson McKenzie of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in April of 1986.