

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
College of Journalism and Communications

Com. 468, The Political Economy of Communications

Outline and Readings

III. Communications policy and structure in the Communications Revolution (from about 1900)

(a) The Communications Revolution: general theory.

(1) The market aspect of the Communications Revolution.

(1.1) Population changes

(1.11) Increase in comparison with growth of productive capacity.

(1.12) Changing composition of population; "melting pot".

(1.2) Increasing pressure of supply on demand: tendencies toward a marketing economy.

(2) Pressures from capital, entrepreneurship and labor supply for new markets for consumer non-durable goods and services.

(3) In the communications area three kinds of new markets developed:

(3.1) Based on person-to-person communications techniques in telephony and telegraphy: radio telephony and telegraphy; TV; facsimile, etc.:

(3.11) Person-to-person service for both business and individual purposes.

(3.12) Mass production of service: broadcasting of AM, FM, TV.

(3.2) Based on older arts in entertainment and education, and techniques developed in the 19th Century in relation to photography (cameras, film, projectors): the art and industry of motion pictures. TV, in its time, came to share in this market.

(3.3) Based on the printing press and innovations to produce greater speed, cheapness, and color reproduction: a mass market for

(3.31) Newspapers, magazines and books.

(3.32) New products: comic books, picture magazines.

(4) Invention, innovation, and the structure and policy of organizations in the Communications Revolution.

- (4.1) Invention as effect and as cause; as induced and as accident.
- (4.2) Innovation: a policy; with certain preconditions:
 - (4.21) Expectation of profits; patent situation.
 - (4.22) Adequate financial resources for promotion.
 - (4.23) Favorable situation in inter-corporate strategic relations.
- (5) Size, rationalisation and responsibility in the organization of the Communications Revolution.
 - (5.1) Degree of competition and relative number of enterprises in various branches of communications industries as affected by ease of access.
 - (5.2) Dominant position of large enterprises in all branches.
 - (5.3) Relation of rationalization to size of enterprise and newness of industry. Rationalization: efficient utilization of all currently available techniques.
 - (5.4) Relation of increase in advertising for print media to amount of interpenetration and articulation of organization and policy between media and advertisers and agencies.
 - (5.5) Relation of degree of articulation and interpenetration of broadcast media and advertisers and their agencies to responsibility for policy decisions.
 - (5.6) Relation of degree of articulation and interpenetration of broadcast media and government agencies in respect to radio technology and responsibility for policy decisions.
 - (5.7) Relation of degree of articulation and interpenetration of broadcast media and investment bankers to responsibility for policy decisions.
 - (5.8) Relation of degree of articulation and interpenetration of telephones' industry with broadcast media, print media, government agencies, and investment bankers to responsibility for policy decisions.
- (6) The outcome of the Communications Revolution.
 - (6.1) Policy questions raised by rise of new and powerful communications institutions, interlocked with the largest segments of private business and with government.

- (6.2) Erosion and displacement of earlier institutions which formerly served needs now the subject of market exploitation.
- (6.3) Some of the biases of the Communications Revolution:
 - (6.31) The bias of print (Innes).
 - (6.32) The bias of wire-telegraphy.
 - (6.33) The bias of wireless and wire-telephony:
 - (6.331) Effect of telephony in person-to-person communication.
 - (6.332) Effect of telephony in automation.
 - (6.333) Effect of broadcasting.
 - (6.34) Values as biased by monopolies of time and space.
 - (6.341) The dichotomy in values in our culture:
 - (6.3411) The immediacy bias for the individual.
 - (6.3412) The perpetuity bias for business organizations.
 - (6.342) For the individual at work, the diffusion of responsibility de-personalizes decisions and alienates him from value orientations.
 - (6.343) For the individual at leisure, the effect on anomie, punitiveness.
- (6.4) Polarization of world power between U.S. and Soviet blocs puts our policies and values to the survival test; adequacy of a market test.
- (6.5) Alternative policies for enforcing policy responsibility:
 - (6.51) Anti-trust policy plus entrepreneurship in the marketplace.
 - (6.52) The self-conferred "social responsibility" doctrine:
 - (6.521) For the press.
 - (6.522) For common carriers.
 - (6.523) For broadcast radio licensees.
 - (6.53) Social accountability doctrine (for lack of better name).

- (6.531) Possibility depends on recognition of public concern with operating policies of communications agencies.
- (6.532) Necessarily involves conscious action by representative bodies to create accountability of communications agencies.
- (6.533) Rests on eliminating "cultural lag" in thinking of bases of policy.
- (6.534) Assumes that policy results follow from policy rather than from "bigness" or "smallness of enterprises".
- (6.535) Is capable of finding various solutions for various policy problems in communications agencies.
- (6.536) Is presently far from clearly formulated.

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- Levitt, Theodore, "The Dangers of Social Responsibility" Harvard Business Review, Sept.-Oct. 1958, p. 41-50
- Kelley, Stanley, Professional Public Relations and Political Power (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1956). 329 K28p

(b) Telephone.

- (1) Emergence of "social responsibility" policy for monopolies (under J. P. Morgan and T. N. Vail), 1907-1920.

(1.1) Organization policies

(1.11) On position and size.

- (1.111) Acquisition of Western Union; subsequent divorcement as result of anti-trust policy.
- (1.112) Negotiation rather than warfare as means of acquiring independent telephone properties; modification of this policy as result of anti-trust policy; the Kingsbury Commitment.
- (1.113) Research and patents as means for maintaining position and developing new markets; the start of Bell Laboratories and its research policy ("pure" rather than "applied" research emphasis).

(1.12) On relations with government and public.

- (1.121) A universal public relations policy based on "social responsibility" adopted.
- (1.122) Relations with government at all levels based on public relations policy and avoidance of conflict: public utility status is welcomed.

(1.2) Service policy and practice:

- (1.21) Availability; consolidation rather than competition with independent companies in providing service.
- (1.22) Quality; the consequences of a policy of applied research: essential radio inventions patented outside telephone organization; innovation in improved telephone service stymied until patent pool agreements.

(1.3) Rate policy to 1917.

(1.4) Income and its distribution:

- (1.41) Labor standards and welfare unions.
- (1.42) Profits.

(1.5) - The new organization policies are tested: the 75-year controversy over public ownership is "settled" in favor of private ownership with social responsibility.

(1.51) The national administrations' efforts:

(1.511) The Wanamaker program and report.

(1.512) The Wilsonian program and report.

(1.52) The strategic setting:

(1.521) The common concerns of railroads, telegraph, telephone, public utilities, and investment bankers.

(1.522) Wartime conditions:

(1.5221) Rising costs; deterioration in service standards because of increasing demand, labor turnover, etc.; inevitability of rate increases and of public resentment against inefficiencies of full employment, under wartime conditions.

(1.5222) Wartime partnership of government and big business; the Council of National Defense, dollar-a-year men; Walter Gifford, Director of Council of National Defense, 1916.

(1.5223) Wartime bills calling for government ownership of radio; Navy and Army relations with patent-holders and equipment suppliers.

(1.523) Congressional hearings on resolutions calling for government control of telephone, telegraph.

(1.524) The operating contract.

(1.525) The record of government "operation".

(1.526) The way it was ended.

(1.527) The results:

(1.5271) Crushing defeat of government ownership drive.

- (1.5272) Immediate gains in revenue; postwar rate policy.
 - (1.5273) Acquisition of skill in working with government and public.
 - (1.5274) Brilliant success of new organization policies; establishment of primacy in public relations policy for the business community.
- (2) The Patent Pool Agreements and the allocation of electronics markets.
- (2.1) Through mutually aggressive research and patent policies, major U.S. manufacturers of telephone and radio equipment were by the end of World War I mutually stalemated from developing a variety of new markets.
 - (2.2) Military procurement policies had temporarily superseded patent restrictions during the War while all radio was under Navy control; at end of war when government ownership was defeated, irresistible pressures broke the patent jam.
 - (2.3) General Electric created RCA and gave it the properties which it bought from American Marconi Company (an English company which owned the Alexanderson alternator). Agreements between RCA and British Marconi providing a cartel for division of world markets. G.E. and RCA agreed to a division of function (G.E. to manufacture; RCA to sell and operate radio equipment).
 - (2.4) A.T. & T. joined the cartel in 1920 in the first of the patent pool agreements. This insured for RCA the development of the market for radiotelegraphy, and for A.T. & T. the market for person-to-person telephony.
 - (2.5) In 1921 the cartel was extended to include division of markets with United Fruit Company and Westinghouse Electric Company.
 - (2.6) Out of these agreements, A.T. & T. obtained guarantees against competition for its domestic wire-telephone system by either other wire-telephone systems or radio-telephone systems.
 - (2.7) The theory of research and patents: security through aggressive research and patent policy, leading to penetration of the "home" markets of rivals, and periodically to mutual swapping of Patent threats.
- (3) Telephone "trusteeship" (or social responsibility) in action 1920-on.
- (3.1) Organization.

- (3.11) Research, patents and innovations as tactical weapons in intercorporate relations.
 - (3.111) Radio and the 1926 patent pool agreements.
 - (3.112) The 1932 patent pool agreements.
 - (3.113) Expansion in non-communications electronic markets in and after World War II.
- (3.12) Anti-trust policy: the 1949 case.
- (3.13) Relations with the financial community.
- (3.14) Relations with stockholders.
- (3.15) Recruitment of management personnel.
- (3.16) Leadership in business policy on government relations.
- (3.2) Common carrier service.
 - (3.21) Availability.
 - (3.211) Urban.
 - (3.212) Rural.
 - (3.2121) Rural telephone contraction.
 - (3.2122) Government intervention.
 - (3.2123) Rural telephone expansion.
 - (3.22) Quality.
- (3.3) Common carrier rates.
 - (3.31) Employment of the public utility concept.
 - (3.32) Results.
- (3.4) Income and its distribution:
 - (3.41) To owners.
 - (3.42) To employees; labor relations policy.
- (3.5) Effects of telephone policy.

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(c) Other Common Carriers: telegraph and international communications.

(1) Telegraph.

(1.1) Relation to A.T. & T.

(1.2) Regulation.

(1.3) Merger of Postal-Telegraph and Western Union, 1943.

(1.4) Related rationalization and innovation: 1943-present.

(2) International Communications.

(2.1) Organization.

(2.11) Two branches:

(2.111) Cables.

(2.112) Radio:

(2.1121) Radio-telephony: A.T. & T.

(2.1122) Radio-telegraphy.

(2.12) National policy: competition through licensing; public utility monopoly status never conferred.

(2.13) Lack of identity between policies of the nation and of operating companies.

(2.14) Considerations of new policy: 1932, 1941-43, 1945, 1950-on. The seemingly insoluble problems of creating a merged organization.

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President's Communications Policy Board, Telecommunications: A Program for Progress. Washington, U.S. Government Print. Office, 1951, Chaps. 3 and 4.

(d) Radio Structure and Policy.

- (1) The nature and scope of radio services.
- (2) Theory of radio spectrum allocation.
- (3) Organization of radio services.
 - (3.1) Intra-nationally.
 - (3.2) Internationally.
- (4) International radio allocations policy.

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(e) Radio Broadcasting.

- (1) Its innovation.
 - (1.1) Stemmed from the 1920 patent pool agreements.
 - (1.2) An ambivalent institution, 1920-1927.
 - (1.21) Economic support.
 - (1.211) In beginning: station operation a means of selling sets -- stemming from patent pool agreements.
 - (1.212) A.T. & T.'s "pay station" policy.
 - (1.213) Growth of advertising support.
 - (1.214) Networking: the essential skeleton.
 - (1.215) 1926 patent pool agreements.
 - (1.22) Legal status:

- (1.221) Laws of 1911 and 1912.
- (1.222) Inadequacy to control broadcasting: court decisions, 1923, 1926.
- (1.223) Radio Act of 1927: a unique institution created.
- (1.224) Communications Act of 1934: a regrouping of government functions.

(2) Organization.

- (2.1) Responsibility for station and network policies: relations with:
 - (2.11) The ownership of radio networks and stations.
 - (2.12) Relations with:
 - (2.121) Radio equipment manufacturers.
 - (2.122) Other media: newspaper and motion picture ownership.
 - (2.123) Radio advertisers; advertising agencies.
 - (2.124) Banking.
 - (2.125) Government agencies
 - (2.126) Telephone industry.
 - (2.127) Phonograph record industry.
- (2.2) Anti-monopoly policy.
 - (2.21) Anti-trust in general.
 - (2.22) Chain broadcasting regulations.
- (2.3) Policy on opinion broadcasting.
 - (2.31) Editorializing.
 - (2.32) Freedom of speech: the Harold Scott case.
 - (2.33) Controversial issues.
 - (2.34) Political campaign broadcasts.
- (2.4) Station licensing policy: theory and practice.

(2.11) General policy.

(2.12) Policy on standards.

(2.13) Station sales and equity in programming.

(3) Services.

(3.1) Availability.

(3.11) Clear channel stations.

(3.12) Intra-market policy.

(3.13) Engineering standards and changes in the station population.

(3.14) Economic distinctions on numbers of stations the facilities of the Service area.

(3.2) Quality.

(3.21) The problem of program tests.

(3.22) Program review policy and standards.

(4) Income.

(4.1) Network affiliated versus non-affiliated stations.

(4.2) Class of station differences.

(4.3) Multiple owner versus single owner differences.

(5) Comparative national systems.

(5.1) Canada.

(5.2) United Kingdom.

(5.3) Australia.

(5.4) Soviet Union.

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(f) Television Broadcasting.

(1) Its innovation.

(1.1) History of the invention to the late 'thirties.

(1.2) Factors affecting innovation, 1935-1952.

(1.21) Technical.

(1.211) Frequency allocation issues.

(1.212) Controversy concerning engineering standards.

(1.2121) What monochrome standards, if it
was to be monochrome?

(1.2122) Why not color, and if so, on what
standards?

(1.213) Necessity of creating new program art form.

(1.2131) Radio broadcast had been sui generis as art form.

(1.2132) TV invited borrowing from radio, cinema, and older tradition of stage-music hall-variety-puppetry-circus.

(1.22) Economic.

(1.221) Capital costs much larger than for radio to:

(1.2211) Build stations and networks.

(1.2212) Sustain heavy operating losses.

(1.222) Inevitably raised issue of direct or indirect economic support.

(1.2221) Role of set manufacturers.

(1.2222) Role of radio networks and stations.

(1.2223) Role of motion picture interests.

(1.223) Posture of patents and market development by major electronics manufacturers. Influence of war contracts.

(1.224) Policy of FCC administration.

(1.23) The licensed broadcast institution available.

(2) Income.

(2.1) Growth of total in relation to advertising expenditures in total and for other media.

(2.2) Distribution:

(2.21) Networks and non-network stations.

(2.22) VHF and UHF stations.

(3) Service.

(3.1) Availability.

(3.11) Set saturation.

(3.12) Station population.

(3.121) The de-intermixture controversy.

(3.122) Other engineering standards issues.

(3.2) Quality.

(3.21) The problem of viewer tastes.

(3.22) Program review policy and standards.

(4) Organization.

(4.1) Responsibility for station and network policies:

(4.11) The ownership of TV networks and stations.

(4.12) Relations with:

(4.121) TV equipment manufacturers.

(4.122) Radio stations.

(4.123) Newspapers.

(4.124) Motion picture exhibitors.

(4.125) Motion picture producers.

(4.126) Advertisers and advertising agencies.

(4.127) Banking

(4.128) Government agencies.

(4.129) Telephone industry.

(4.2) The continuing issue of economic support: Pay-TV.

(4.21) The advocates.

(4.22) The opponents.

(4.23) The stakes.

(4.24) The arguments and issues.

(4.3) Anti-monopoly policy.

(4.31) Anti-trust policy: Congress; Justice; FCC; the Courts.

(4.32) Network regulation.

(4.4) Policy on opinion broadcasting.

(4.41) Editorializing.

(4.42) Freedom of speech.

(4.43) Controversial issues.

(4.44) Political conventions, campaigns and candidates.

(4.5) Station licensing policy: theory and practice.

(5) Comparative national systems.

(5.1) Canada

(5.2) United Kingdom

(5.3) Australia

(5.4) Soviet Union

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Columbia Broadcasting System, Jerrold Electronics, Committee
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(g) FM and Facsimile Broadcasting.

(1) FM

(1.1) Its innovation.

(1.11) History of the invention and attempted innovation to 1944.

(1.12) Factors affecting innovation, 1944 -

(1.121) Technical.

(1.1211) Frequency allocation issues.

(1.1212) Engineering standards.

(1.122) Economic.

(1.1221) The threatened AM market structure.

(1.1222) The threatened AM set manufacturing corporate market structure.

(1.1223) The preference for TV by set manufacturers.

(1.1224) Personal factors in the FCC.

(1.13) The potential dissipated.

(1.131) The band shift.

(1.132) Failure to limit or halt AM licensing.

(1.133) Licensing chiefly to AM station licensees.

(1.134) Permission to duplicate AM programs.

(1.135) Equipment manufacturers' unwillingness to produce broadcast equipment.

(1.136) Equipment manufacturers' unwillingness to produce and aggressively market FM receivers.

(1.2) Income.

(1.3) Service:

(1.31) Availability.

(1.311) Set saturation.

(1.312) Station population.

(1.32) Quality.

(1.4) Factors supporting a delayed growth;

(1.41) Fringe adaptations of FM broadcasting;

- (1.411) Storecasting.
- (1.412) Background music business

(1.42) Popular taste for Hi-Fi music.

(1.43) Debasing of AM programs, largely via excessive advertising.

(2) Facsimile.

(2.1) Its innovation aborted.

(2.11) History of the invention to 1944.

(2.12) Factors affecting innovation, 1944 - .

(2.121) Technical.

(2.1211) Frequency allocation issues.

(2.1212) Engineering standards.

(2.122) Economic.

(2.1221) The threatened newspaper market structure.

(2.1222) Resistances arising from use of FM channels (see 1.122 above).

(2.1223) Massive absence of public information about facsimile.

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