

which serve more, rather than fewer citizens, it will be increasingly difficult to ensure open planning for information policy" (p. 115).

There, too, is the rub with this book: the problems it identifies are concrete; the solutions remain largely out of reach. Jacobson does an excellent job of identifying the many ways citizens and public interests are marginalized in the policy process, but his proposed solutions remain largely idealistic. Opening the process of policy making requires more than restructuring the relationships between regulatory agencies, industry and the citizenry. It requires a redistribution of Anglo-American political and economic power on a vast, revolutionary scale. Democratizing information policy making and the economy seems less likely in the wake of free trade and the capitalization of Soviet bloc nations.

As an analytical work, *An 'Open' Approach to Information Policy Making* is solid. As a plan for opening the closed nature of existing policy making, Jacobson proposes new structures which cannot be built without more direct attention to the political and economic base on which such structures rest.

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Public Communication Campaigns

Ronald E. Rice and Charles K. Atkin, (eds.)

Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1989, 2nd edition, 416 pp.

The evaluation of public communication campaigns has fluctuated widely in this century. The early part of the century was marked by both enthusiasm and fear of what mass media propaganda could accomplish. By mid-century there were doubts that public communication campaigns could accomplish much of anything. Rice and Atkin think we're now in a third stage—that is, carefully designed, properly evaluated, sensibly executed public communication campaigns can achieve limited objectives. Carefully designed means that mass media are only part of the execution. This volume attempts to flesh out the theory and data backing that cautious, through sensible, conclusion through a series of pieces by a wide variety of authors.

Most readers will find the book valuable; however I suspect readers in varying degrees will find serious flaws. Perhaps the editors (publishers?) have cast their nets too broadly. The readership is intended to encompass academic researchers of diverse hues, applied professionals in various areas, *and* the collection is to be a primary text for courses in a variety of departments while a supplementary text in others. Can so many masters be served adequately?

The book's scope guarantees some sustenance for all. The first part is a short history of communication campaigns in the United States. A second part on theory and design contains seven articles by notables such as William McGuire and Brenda

Dervin. A third part on actual communication campaigns consists of two sections: the first, called Campaign Samplers, is a series of pieces of a few pages each on matters as diverse as Smokey the Bear and mass campaigns in China during the era of Mao. This third part continues with a series of substantial articles on campaigns ranging from developmental television in India to the Stanford community studies on the prevention of cardiovascular disease. A final section consists of a single article skeptical of mass media power in the prevention of health disorders.

Nevertheless, such a scope causes some dissatisfaction. For instance, it's incomprehensible why an article on Smokey the Bear receives roughly the same space (three pages) as a review of 74 communication campaigns conducted in China during the Mao era. At the conclusion of the piece on China we are told that "one of the philosophical insights derived from the failure of these campaigns is that, perhaps unfortunately, emphasizing collective (community or national) benefits at the cost of individual sacrifice cannot be the primary basis of enduring change". I submit that we don't know enough about what went on in China during Mao's time to support so sweeping a generalization about human nature.

Another cause for dismay is that some potentially valuable chapters add up to less than the sum of their parts. An example is the opening article by William Paisley. He roams widely while attempting to define the essential features of public communication campaigns, to a quick history from Tom Paine through the abolitionists, the suffragettes, the temperance movement and into the present century. *And* then he concludes with a case history based on the National Cancer Institute. Fodder for several chapters is included and paring them down to one doesn't work. The same problem afflicts the chapter by William McGuire. We get a few pages on the communication/persuasion matrix, a few on the dynamic aspects of communication and a few on a seven-step model for constructing communication campaigns. The pages on dynamic aspects of communication covers sixteen *families* of theory (e.g., consistency theories, problem-solving theories, etcetera). This compression services neither researchers nor students.

Perhaps it's perverse, having been critical of chapters with too much packed in, to argue there are serious omissions. But, at least six selections deal specifically with campaigns in developing countries. Most are useful; one might mention a chapter on a systems-based planning model and another on prosocial television in India, which touches on the negative outcomes possible with mass media interventions. But these six selections demand an overview of the history and issues of information campaigns done in the lesser developed nations by American/Europeans and those trained by them. These pieces demand a critical analysis. For instance, one article in an aside mentions that while the health campaigns under discussion were generally successful some indices of health dropped "likely due to the tremendous drop—26%—in per capita income in the region due to Central American conflicts". Indeed.

There is another strange omission. This decade was marked by a series of information campaigns related to feminism, in the U.S. the Equal Rights Amendment,

abortion, and so on. These kinds of issues and campaigns are ignored. This is unfortunate; first because these issues were prominent on the public agenda. And these issues, e.g., abortion, are controversial in ways not true of the issues chiefly tackled here. To state the obvious, nobody is *for* the transmission of AIDS nor of cardiovascular disorders; the ERA and abortion aren't the same kind of issues.

The first edition of this volume went through five printings. Despite my *caveats*, this volume will be in demand too. It does package some impressive pieces by researchers of theoretical and methodological sophistication who have applied their expertise to specific problems, such as rat control, AIDS programs, and infant health programs. Some of the better chapters include Lawrence Wallack's argument that mass media are barriers to, not channels of, social change. Mass media being part of the system must inevitably promote consumption. The article on prosocial television in India is a buttress for his contention.

Brenda Dervin argues convincingly that prevailing models of communication campaigns "audience" people; they become objects of transmission, not dialogue and Dervin outlines her research approach to overcome this. Kathleen Reardon is thought-provoking on programs directed to adolescents on the dangers of AIDS. For instance, she builds on the theory that people operate on the basis of three illusions: unrealistically positive views of self, illusion of self-control and unrealistic optimism. From this she concludes that reality training may be the last thing that teenagers (and presumably scholars) want or need.

Caveats aside, for those interested in the present state of thinking about public communication campaigns, this volume is most useful.

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