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ABSTRACT

Robert L. Stevenson recently described the problems facing international communications researchers: the field has no common focal variable, no common method, and no common literature--despite this, he professed pleasure at the state of the field. This paper takes Stevenson as a starting point to analyze international communications through a case study of recent research on Latin American communication in "Journalism Quarterly" (considered the most important scholarly journal that carries articles on Latin America). Instead of expressing satisfaction with the field, however, the paper reflects the influence of recent critical studies of comparative media research that have characterized the field as acontextual and ethnocentric. The paper provides a brief overview of communication research, a discussion of research on Latin American communications, and an analysis of "Journalism Quarterly" articles on Latin American communications. The paper concludes by offering a redirected agenda for mass communication research in international communication and asking for a widened view of research by "Journalism Quarterly." Forty-seven references and 89 article citations from "Journalism Quarterly" (covering 1931 through 1991) are attached. (NKA)

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Culture and Communication in Latin America

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### *Introduction*

Robert L. Stevenson recently described the problems facing international communications researchers: the field has no common focal variable, no common method, and no common literature (Stevenson 1992, 550). If for no other reason, international communication studies have seemingly drifted as if without purpose -- or rather, with a confusing multiplicity of purposes. Despite this, Stevenson viewed the contents of *Journalism Quarterly* and professed pleasure at the state of the field.

This paper takes Stevenson as a starting point to analyze international communications through a case study of recent research on Latin American communication in *Journalism Quarterly*. Instead of expressing satisfaction with the field, however, this paper reflects the influence of recent critical studies of comparative media research that have characterized the field as acontextual and ethnocentric (Hardt 1988, Lester-massman 1991).

This paper provides a brief overview of communication research, a discussion of research on Latin American communications, and an analysis of *Journalism Quarterly* articles on Latin American communications.<sup>1</sup> It concludes by offering a redirected agenda for mass communication research in international communication.

### *Stevenson Assesses the Field*

Stevenson's article, in brief, suggested to scholars an approach to designing international research projects. He insisted on firm answers to a range of questions that address questions of validity, reliability, adequacy of evidence, implications, and importance of a study. Such considerations suggest rigorous social scientific research. Traditional definitions of rigor, however, sometimes can exclude alternative approaches that value culture and context over "usefulness" and methodology.

Stevenson attempted to draw some distinctions of international research. The researcher, in casting about for a suitable international topic, first must choose a focal variable, that is, an aspect of communication to be studied. Next comes choice of a unit of analysis, ranging from a single newswriter to the global system. Finally comes the delineation of national or cultural boundaries. That third step introduces the "international" in what still could otherwise be an outline of any good research program.

Stevenson suggested four boundary delineations, or areas of international studies:

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<sup>1</sup>North American is used in this paper to refer to researchers from the United States and Canada, to reflect the usage found in many Spanish-speaking countries in the hemisphere. For the purposes of this paper, Latin American will refer to all continental nations in the Western hemisphere, excluding French Guiana, Guyana, Belize, and Suriname. Puerto Rico and Cuba are included from the Caribbean. The exclusion of English- and French-speaking nations is problematic, but simplified the present research.

- 1) foreign studies -- focus on a single culture or country;
- 2) comparative studies -- focus on a single phenomenon or institution with a comparison across cultures or nations;
- 3) international and intercultural studies -- focus on communication across cultural and political boundaries; and
- 4) global studies -- focus on a global, unified communications system (Stevenson 1992, 548-549).

This discussion encourages rigorous research methods, but it does not satisfy those scholars still longing for some neat phrase that defines once and for all international communications. Stevenson's outline suggests that any study that touches on an international theme is suitably international to be included in the field.<sup>2</sup> Although it may seem a disappointing answer, Stevenson is undoubtedly right on this -- or as right as anyone has been so far. A 1969 AEJ International Communications Division symposium on international communication as a field of study came to much the same conclusion, and there have been no breakthroughs since (Markham 1970).

While others may dream of the El Dorado of a more firm definition of international communications as a "field," Stevenson seems content with the field as it stands, provided the articles are filled with research, not polemic. The articles may be on whatever themes as long as they meet the "so what" and the "who cares" tests. But does scientific rigor always supply those answers? And does a qualitative approach or critical stance always reflect polemic? This papers argues a firm "no" to those questions.

### *The "Why" in Qualitative Research*

The history of communication research holds some explanation as to why qualitative research is often seen as polemic. Timothy Haight, for example, wrote that "The most disturbing limitation of 'mainstream' social science ... is that it tends to claim that its methods are the only legitimate ones" (Haight 1983). Modern qualitative studies have been written in reaction to the mainstream administrative research that long has held sway in journalism and mass communication departments. As has been well-documented, the rise of Lazarsfeld-style administrative research in the 1940s was driven by the need for research money from the government for wartime (World War II or the Cold War) propaganda or from corporations for peacetime advertising and broadcast programming (Sproule 1989). Lucian Pye noted this trend and said it reflected "a unique respect

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<sup>2</sup>An examination of the "special emphasis" issue in which Stevenson's essay appeared further suggests this conclusion. Included were a survey conducted in the United States (Salwen & Matera, 1993) and a content analysis of two U.S. newspapers (Dickson, 1993).

for practical policy problems and a high degree of understanding of how scholarship may be turned to policy ends without damaging the growth of knowledge" (Pye 1963, 13). Others have called it a calculated program of research for hire on the terms of the highest bidder -- in Lazarsfeld's case, the radio networks (Tunstall 1983). The result of the relationship between communication researchers and the military-industrial complex, as exemplified by Lazarsfeld, was "a research model which participates in and supports a world economic and communication system and a way of life which is at its core exploitative" (Lester-massman 1991, 92).

As Stevenson noted (1988, 548), administrative research has been associated with Americans, while qualitative studies have been dubbed European. Or as Robert K. Merton put it, "The American knows what he is talking about, and that is not much; the European knows not what he is talking about, and that is a great deal" (Merton 1968, 442). Likewise, Lazarsfeld recognized the differences in approaches, and he admitted concern over the shortcomings of administrative research: "Short-term investigations will never be able to trace the way in which, over a lifetime, the mass media accentuate for some people parts of the social world and conceal them from others" (Katz 1987, S36). That concern, among others, encouraged the growth of critical research.

Value-free research, Leo Lowenthal said, "exists neither in logic nor in history" (Hardt 1992, 155). Administrative research, as practiced by Lazarsfeld, was as ideologically involved as what Stevenson calls critical polemic. Gaye Tuchman showed that journalists use the ritual of objectivity to ward off accusations of bias (Tuchman 1972). Likewise, communication scholars invoke the fetish of replicable results to ward off accusations of ideological commitment. That commitment may be to a radical restructuring of society (Horkheimer 1972, 216-217). Or it may be to liberal democracy and libertarian free speech, an ideological bias unlikely to raise many hackles in most journalism and mass communication departments. Whatever that commitment, a larger sense of society should be present in the research question. Haight said, "Critical researchers have always put social relevance and the use of general social theory above the more usual emphasis on narrow research questions and 'middle-range' theories" (Haight 1983, 233). Stevenson insists that a research question provide an answer to the "so what" query. Hugh Dalziel Duncan answered that question by insisting that a research question be applicable to social relations: "Questions about communication must be about communication as a social, not a physical event" (Hardt 1992, 125).

Questions for research, then, should provide an answer to a question Stevenson did not raise: "what for?" Rephrasing Harold Lasswell's paradigm-setting research question, Raymond Williams asked, "(W)ho says what, how, to whom, with what effect and for what purpose?" (Williams 1975, 120, emphasis added). Or, more simply put, "what for?" Williams spoke from a

Marxist-oriented social theory, but his opposition to the empiricism fetish speaks for a wide range of qualitative scholars:

A particular version of empiricism — not the general reliance on experience and evidence, but a particular reliance on evidence within the terms of these assumed functions (socialisation, social function, mass communications) — has largely taken over the practice of social and cultural inquiry, and within the terms of its distortion of cultural science claims the abstract authority of 'social science' and 'scientific method' as against all other modes of experience and analysis (1975, 121).

This comment reflects the antagonistic state of affairs in communication research. It is not so much a case of different schools asking different questions<sup>3</sup>, but rather fundamentally different theoretical approaches rejecting the premises upon which the other is based.

These varied approaches to communication study can be seen in the critical literature of comparative media research. Hanno Hardt (1970) wrote that the majority of comparative research fell into two categories: 1) International communication — inquiries into political behavior among nations; descriptive and comparative studies; quantitative analyses of flow and exchange between countries; and 2) Intercultural communication — studies that cross cultural boundaries, regardless of national boundaries. Eighteen years later, Hardt (1988) stressed the need to concentrate on the second category. Lester-massman called reliance on the first category a "dangerously conservative" approach "which privileges research, science, and order over criticism, art, and disorder in the conception and reporting of investigations" (Lester-massman 1991, 93). Lester-massman viewed this type of international research as aimed at maintaining the current academic structure and propagating a modernist, First World development scheme throughout the developing world. Intercultural research was between two cultures, Daniel Lerner's "traditional society" and the developed world's modern society (Lerner, 1958). Hardt's recommendation was to emphasize unique cultural qualities, not the preconceived developed/undeveloped relationship. Rather than counting the number of advertisements in a newspaper, it is more useful to examine "the roles of authors, artists, and intellectuals, including journalists, and their contributions to society as an effort to identify the effects of increasing commercialization on their works" (1988, 140). Studies that examine the culture industry and its relation to the masses ("a socially, politically, and ideologically conceived audience") as well as to the elites ("experts and leaders of cultural knowledge") give us a greater understanding of the role of media in a society than would many a one-shot survey (141). Lester-massman showed the difficulty critical researchers face in searching

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<sup>3</sup>As put by Rogers, "Perhaps the central questions being asked today by critical scholars about communication are 'Why?' or 'Why not?' while the central research questions for the empirical school are 'How?' and 'How much?'" (Rogers, 1982, p. 129)

for workable alternatives to mainstream research techniques by suggesting a mixture of discursive fact and fiction to replace the research report. Hardt, more realistically, did not invalidate empirical approaches. Instead, he seemed to agree with Rita Atwood's conclusion:

Although it cannot be denied that positivist approaches have often justified their knowledge claims on the basis of statistically significant results rather than the validity of ideas, it is a mistake to assume that the use of numbers or the process of counting is inherently positivist (Atwood 1986, 16).

One of the problems of traditional empirical studies is that they often have been conducted in reaction to events rather than in development of new perspectives. Research, regardless of its category, should rather be directed toward "development of theories of media systems in a variety of cultures ... in the search for a broader theoretical foundation for the study of media, politics, and culture" (Hardt 1988, 143).

#### *Research on Communication in Latin America*

This paper is particularly concerned with research on Latin America as an example of the problems Stevenson raises. Competing schools of research have been apparent in research by Latin Americans themselves, though less so in research by North Americans. Latin Americans have brought a wholly different perspective, geographically, philosophically, and economically. It is useful to briefly examine the state of research on Latin American communication.

#### *Research North and South*

For this inquiry, Carlos Gomez-Palacio (1989; Chaffee, Gomez-Palacio and Rogers, 1990) is a good starting point, as he presents an overview of approaches being used in North, Central and South America. In a survey of Latin American communication researchers and North American researchers who study Latin American communication, Gomez-Palacio found 11 categories of study (See Table 1). In English-language communication journals (*Journalism Quarterly*, *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, *Journal of Communication*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Communication Research*, and *Journal of Broadcasting*), the most popular research category was "characteristics of Latin American media," followed by "communication and culture," and "political communication." Among Spanish- and Portuguese-language journals (*CHASQUI*, *Comunicación y Cultura*, *Cuadernos de Comunicación*, *Cuadernos Intercom*, *Comunicação e Sociedade*, *Cuadernos del TICOM*, *Comunicación*, *Materiales para la Comunicación Popular*, *Revista ININCO*, *Serie Comunicación Social y Desarrollo*, *Orbita*, *Cuadernos de la Realidad Nacional*, and *Lenguajes*), the top three categories were "communication

**Table 1. Research topics more commonly studied by Latin American scholars. From Gomez-Palacios (1989, 48).**

Category	Topics mentioned by Latin American scholars
1. Mass media uses and effects	Advertising research, mass media effects, media uses & patterns of consumption, children and media, women and media, knowledge gap.
2. Communication & development	Agricultural/rural communication, modernization research, diffusion of innovations, educational communication, health communication, communication and population problems, communication and development.
3. Communication & culture	Popular culture, cultural dependency, cultural imperialism/hegemony, mass culture, cultural industries.
4. Political communication	Political communication, public opinion, mass media and political socialization.
5. Characteristics of Latin American media	Media and Latin American elites, mass media ownership, media-state relationships, media flows.
6. Alternative communication	Alternative communication, democratization of the media.
7. History of communication in Latin America	History of Latin American media, history of communication research in Latin America.
8. Communication policies	Communication policies, New World information order, right to be informed.
9. Ideological content of media	Ideological content, semiological studies.
10. Latin American journalism	Teaching of journalism, freedom of the press, scientific journalism.
11. New information technologies	Satellite communication, social impact of the news technologies.
12. Other	Organizational communication, interpersonal communication, philosophy of communication.

and culture," "history of Latin American media," and "media content" (Gomez-Palacio, 110). Latin American journals, then, were featuring more qualitative research. When scholars were asked what types of research they had conducted, the differences were more pronounced. "Communication and development" was the top response by U.S. scholars, while that category was ranked number three by Latin American scholars. Latin American scholars were more interested in "communication and culture" (ranked No.2; No. 5, U.S.) and "political communication" (ranked No. 4; No. 6.5, U.S.) than were U.S. scholars. Gomez-Palacios' survey of researchers found a belief among many North American and Latin American communication scholars that there has been a gradual shift from empirical, quantitative methods to a more eclectic, critical approach in research on Latin American communication (92).

Also significant in his findings was the paucity of cross-citation between North American and Latin American scholars, even though they were often studying similar topics. U.S. scholars correctly responded that critical scholars seemed to be most important to Latin American communication researchers. But in their own research, North Americans most often cited traditional empirical scholars. In Spanish-language journals, the four most-cited authors were Armand Mattelart, Karl Marx, Michéle Mattelart, and Antonio Gramsci. The four most-cited authors in English-language journals were Everett Rogers, Wilbur Schramm, John T. McNelly, and Herbert Schiller. Armand Mattelart was cited four times in English-language journals, compared to 128 times in Spanish-language journals. Everett Rogers was cited 10 times in Spanish-language journals, compared to 28 times in English-language journals (p. 129). Overall, the study concluded that, "Clearly, critical theory dominates Latin American communication study by any accounting ..." (Chaffee, Gomez-Palacio and Rogers, 1019).

### *Empirical Studies*

In a diffusion of innovations study conducted in Latin America in the 1960s (Deutschmann, Ellingsworth and McNelly, 1968), Paul J. Deutschmann and his colleagues found they were heading into what they called uncharted territory: "We could not take with us any fully articulated theory of communication in social change, because such a theory is not yet available" (viii). They wrote that they used theories and methodologies developed in the United States and elsewhere and hoped that they would work in a Latin American setting. Empirical methodology as taught by Wilbur Schramm and Everett Rogers spread throughout Latin America in the 1960s with the help of UNESCO's Center for Advanced Studies for Latin America, CIESPAL, which was established in 1959 (Gomez-Palacio 1989, 19-20) In Latin American eyes (Beltrán, 1976), North American empiricism was enforced inappropriately in Latin American research settings. Atwood noted, "Increasingly, U.S. social science approaches are being seen in Latin America as significant components of scientific or cultural imperialism" (Atwood 1986, 12).

Not only were North Americans using an alien empiricism in making judgments about Latin American communication and society, Latin American researchers themselves were uncritically adopting the same methodology. Such empirical methods, Beltrán argued, reinforced First World values in Third World research. Notions of "professionalism" (McLeod and Rush 1969a, 1969b) and "elite" journalism (Merrill 1968) are, arguably, First World judgments. Deutschmann's study (1968) was of media use and introduction of change by U.S.-trained Latin Americans. This diffusion of U.S. concepts such as diffusion itself is an example of what Rogers (1983) later called the pro-innovation bias in development research. Development researchers, Rogers said, have long considered modernization and innovation as inherently desirable, leading to an enforcement of alien solutions to indigenous problems. Along those same lines, Rogers (1982) has suggested that a uniquely Latin American research model may arise, fusing alien and indigenous approaches and methods. Gomez-Palacio (1989) concluded that no such model has arisen, though he did not rule out the possibility.

### *Descriptive Approaches*

A popular approach to research on Latin American communication by North American scholars has been the historical/descriptive approach. In its typical form, an article will give a short historical overview to explain the present state of a nation's media system. This approach was used by the earliest writers on Latin America in *Journalism Quarterly* (Cohen 1931; Gerald 1931). Raymond Nixon's survey of journalism education in Latin America (1970) is representative of the approach. Short, descriptive pieces appeared regularly in *Journalism Quarterly* from 1937 to 1941 under the title "The Foreign Press." Contemporary historical accounts include *Keeping the Flame, Media and Government in Latin America* by Robert Pierce (1979) and *Latin American Media, Guidance and Censorship* by Marvin Alisky (1981). Both reflected a narrative approach, concentrating on a description of the media, a history of media development, and an historical and contemporary description of press freedom issues in each country. Each was written from a distinctly anti-censorship angle, though Pierce wrote, "The only relevant biases to which the author admits are predilections for honesty in what is uttered publicly, for professionalism in journalism and against brutality and waste of human resources. Enemies of these ideals can be found on the left and the right, in government and in the media." (Pierce 1979, ix).

Studies of policy issues often can be placed within the descriptive approach. Elizabeth Fox's *Media and Politics in Latin America: The Struggle for Democracy* is a collection meant to be "more nuanced and less polarized and ideological than the studies of the previous decade" (Fox 1988, ix). Gomez-Palacio (1989) called media policy an emerging research topic in Latin American communication.

### *Critical and Cultural Analysis*

Critical and cultural analysis, as discussed earlier in this paper, have begun to play a more important role in Latin American communication research. Robert Buckman (1990) showed how a traditional empirical approach, content analysis, and a longstanding theoretical approach, dependency theory, can be combined for critical ends. Alan O'Connor (1991) examined the emergence of cultural studies in Latin America, making the argument that Latin American approaches to cultural studies have as much to say to First World theory as First World theory has to say to Latin America. O'Connor said his "main purpose is to increase the global flow of ideas and research from the South to the North" (1991, 61). Also aimed at increasing that flow of ideas was Rita Atwood and Emile G. McAnany's survey of critical research in Latin America (1986). Their work showed how, when compared with comparable North American research, Latin American researchers are moving more quickly to research models that consider multiple cultures and new communication strategies.

### *Research in Journalism Quarterly*

*Journalism Quarterly* was chosen for this analysis because of its importance in North American mass communication research. Gomez-Palacio called it "the most important English language journal for communication research in Latin America (1989, 107). There are other, more wide-ranging English-language journals which publish research on Latin America, including *Latin American Research Review*, *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, *Latin American Perspectives*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, and *Review of Latin American Studies*. And there are other English-language communication journals which publish research on Latin America, including *Gazette*, *Communication Research*, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, and *Journal of Communication*. According to Gomez-Palacio's count, *Journalism Quarterly* has published more articles by U.S. scholars on Latin America than any other communication journal. In the past two decades, it has continued to outstrip other communication journals in numbers of articles on Latin America. Gomez-Palacio also found that it was cited more often in Latin American communication journals than any other English-language communication journal. *Journalism Quarterly* also is read by members of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the umbrella organization for U.S. journalism and mass communication scholars, giving its articles wider diffusion among communication scholars than any non-communication journal.

Such a focus on *Journalism Quarterly* is not unprecedented. K.E.M. Kent and Ramona R. Rush (1977) conducted a citation study of *Journalism Quarterly* to analyze the state of scholarship in international communication. They chose *Journalism Quarterly* for similar reasons:

The study was restricted to *Journalism Quarterly* to provide a clean picture of the state of citations in at least one leading scholarly communications publication; the availability of an exhaustive index with clearly applicable subject matter headings was considered important (581).

Other studies of *Journalism Quarterly* have given preliminary data on trends in journalism and international communication research. Wilbur Schramm (1957) analyzed *Journalism Quarterly* articles as representative of journalism research:

This then, is the trend: toward quantitative treatments, as opposed to non-quantitative; toward behavioral science method, as opposed to humanistic method; toward the study of process and structure, as opposed to the study of 'great men'; and toward a world-wide concern with the press and press systems (95).

Nearly three decades later, former *Journalism Quarterly* editor Guido H. Stempel III noted that the volume of articles on international communication reached its peak in the 1960s. Between 1964 and 1973, there were 197 international articles. In the next decade, there were only 97 international articles, he noted (1984, iii).

*Journalism Quarterly's* interest in Latin America dates back nearly to its beginning. In the first article on Latin America published in *Journalism Quarterly*, J. Edward Gerald of the University of Missouri wrote, "Argentina and Brazil are, and long have been, the chief directive sources in journalistic development on the southern continent. Not because it is less significant, but because Argentina's influence is somewhat more interesting to North Americans, the Brazilian school will not be considered here" (Gerald 1931, 213). Owing to that idiosyncratic nature of journalism research, it was to be nine years before an article devoted to Brazil appeared in *Journalism Quarterly's* pages (Viale 1940).

Beginning with the first volume in 1924, 89 relevant articles were found. More reflected some Latin American content, but mostly in multinational studies that only incidentally involved Latin America or in content analyses of U.S. publications' coverage of Latin America.

Stempel's (1984) finding about a decline in interest in international topics since the 1960s held true in Latin American studies. Between 1942<sup>4</sup> and 1959, there were 13 articles on Latin America. In the 1960s, the number ballooned to 27, but dropped to 17 in the 1970s and 11 in the 1980s. In the 1990s, through Vol.69, No.4, there three articles on Latin America, and it is far too early to tell if the decade may hold promise for a renewed interest in such area studies.

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<sup>4</sup>Although *Journalism Quarterly* began publication in 1924, its status as an academic rather than mixed trade/academic journal came about in the 1940s. The first article on Latin America reflecting this change appeared in 1942 (Eulau, 1942).

The surge in interest in Latin America in the 1960s can largely be attributed to development research, such as "The Mass Media in an Underdeveloped Village" by Paul J. Deutschmann (1963). There were, however, other significant areas of interest, including professionalization of newswriters (Menanteau-Horta 1967; Day 1968; McLeod and Rush, 1969a, 1969b) and journalism history and press descriptions (Alisky 1960; Gardner 1960, 1963, 1965; Erlandson 1964; Lane 1967; Waggoner 1967; Alisky and Hoopes 1968; Lowry 1969).

There was a great variety in research quality in the 1960s. Some of the history was simply cliché-ridden: "Anyone who has traveled in Mexico has probably been struck by the never-ending contrasts: the burro plodding along as a chauffeur-driven Cadillac swishes by ..." (Erlandson 1964, 232). Some strictly empirical studies did little more than present numbers and compare them to U.S. figures, such as Farace's (1968) study of news channel preferences in Puerto Rico. A few studies relied on funding from the U.S. government and local governments, possibly influencing the results. Pierce (1969) set out to answer the question, "How well does editorial opinion in Latin American dailies reflect public reaction on international issues?" His conclusion that it was "disturbing" to find that few Latin Americans surveyed had heard of the Alliance for Progress probably coincided with the reaction of the survey's sponsor, the United States Information Agency. Many of the topics were representative of First World concerns. Studies of professionalism of journalists (Menanteau-Horta 1967; Day 1968; McLeod and Rush 1969a, 1969b) reflected a North American idea of professionalization, rather than an indigenous model.

Overall, *Journalism Quarterly* articles on Latin America in the 1960s did much to provide statistical and basic historical data. The onset of the 1970s, however, did not signal any significant change in the directions of research found in the journal. Since then, the journal has continued to reflect the interests of development. Five articles in the 1970s dealt with media use by farmers, with an additional one focusing on agricultural news in Brazilian newspapers (Fett 1972). Typical of this group are articles such as "Situational Factors and Peasant's Search for Market Information" (Fett 1975). Seven of the 31 articles since 1970 have dealt with some form of cognition of readers, some in a development setting, such as "Media and Consumerism in Venezuela" (Martin, Chaffee and Izacaray 1979). Related is one article on cognition of journalists, also in a development context (Salwen and Garrison 1989).

It is telling to note the methodology used by researchers since 1970. Nine studies were content analyses. Nine were surveys conducted in Latin America. Four fit the description category given earlier: a contemporary description of a nation's media with historical context. Four were more traditional history: an historical study on one problem or era, rather than a media

system's general history.<sup>5</sup> Three were described by the authors as field experiments. One article was based on a study utilizing Q-methodology. Gomez-Palacio's study of communication researchers (Chaffee, Gomez-Palacio and Rogers 1990) did not fit any of these categories. Quantitative approaches clearly have continued to dominate the field.

Perhaps what is most telling about the set of 31 articles written after the 1960s is what is not found. While some articles described ownership patterns (such as Pierce 1970), only two articles explicitly considered the social effects of media ownership. Hurley gave a case study analysis of Lazarsfeld and Merton's thesis that commercial media tend to maintain the status quo and to mute social criticism (1974, 683). Lent's 1985 discussion of Cuban media history by nature dealt with the question of state ownership.

Despite the hue and cry over the New World Information Order and the Third World's complaints over international information flows, few articles explicitly addressed the problem in a Latin American context. A study of international coverage of El Salvador's civil war analyzed the cold war orientation of U.S. wire service coverage, but did not address political and social implications of news flow (Soderlund and Schmitt 1986). Christine Ogan's comparative study of coverage of development news addressed international news flow, as did Maria C. Wert and Robert L. Stevenson's study, "Global Television Flow to Latin American Countries" (1988). Wert and Stevenson found that U.S. television programs dominated screens in Panama, El Salvador and Costa Rica. Overall, virtually no attention was paid in *Journalism Quarterly* to the economic crisis of the 1980s — Latin America's "La Decada Perdida" — and its impact on communication.

In general, *Journalism Quarterly* articles on Latin America have not provided a cultural context to communication study. Few references were made to the culture industry, other than references to UNESCO's standards for number of cinema seats per capita as a measure of development (Menanteau-Horta 1967). Fewer still were considerations of cultural domination or alternative communication, themes that are important among Latin American researchers. In short, what was lacking in the journal were approaches that questioned First World assumptions found in the majority of the journal's literature on Latin America. The research, instead, followed typical North American communications research concerns.

This is more than a simple recognition of *Journalism Quarterly's* mainstream status. The recognition of research methodologies and theoretical approaches by dominant journals helps to shape and encourage future research, as does the academic structure in general. Attempts to publish studies more relevant in a Latin American rather than a First World context have met with

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<sup>5</sup>As an example of how problematic such categorization can be, one article was an historical content analysis. The content analysis category, then, is meant as *contemporary* content analysis.

success only outside the most widely-read journal in the field, marginalizing the approaches and, ultimately, discouraging such research among young scholars facing hiring and tenure decisions at schools which expect publication in the most prestigious journals in the field:

Beyond the training of graduate students, the process of collegial review in hiring, tenure, and publication decisions also exerts a stabilizing, or inhibiting, influence. ... [W]hen major differences in the definition of appropriate topics, methods, and theoretical approaches exist, the danger of a "tyranny of the majority" exists also (Haight 1983).

There are alternative sources for publication by Latin Americanists in mass communication. *Gazette* provides an interdisciplinary approach that reflects multiple methodologies and academic viewpoints. Thus, the journal has mainstream effects research such as "Dogmatism and the 'Knowledge Gap' Among Brazilian Mass Media Users" (Simmons and Garda 1982); legal studies, "Licensing of Journalists Under International Law" (Youm 1990); and cultural studies, "Between Culture and Organization: The Radio Studios of Cotopaxi, Ecuador" (O'Connor 1990). *Communication Research* devoted a special issue in 1984 to media flows in Latin America, a topic little-discussed in *Journalism Quarterly*. *Journal of Communication* has offered articles on important topics also bypassed in *Journalism Quarterly*: multinational advertising agencies in Latin America (Fejes 1980), rural radio (Gwyn 1983), and telenovelas (Rogers and Antola 1985). *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture* offers articles that would seem at home in *Journalism quarterly*, such as a special issue on Latin American media (1987). However, it also broadens the array to include the impact of videocassettes (Straubhaar 1989), changes in women's magazines (Torrents 1990), and the role of popular culture (Franco 1982).

### *Three Research Agendas*

Clearly, there is a wide range of topics and approaches to be taken advantage of by international researchers, although *Journalism Quarterly* only takes advantage of a small range. A new research agenda would broaden this range to benefit researchers and readers of the journal. Three agendas will be discussed here, reflecting a mainstream North American viewpoint, a Latin American critical viewpoint, and a pluralist North American viewpoint.

#### Mainstream North American

While Stevenson's five-point observation was perhaps not offered as an agenda for research, it could be interpreted as one.

1. *Anglo-American dominance in language, news, pop culture, and technology*. Notably, Stevenson suggested sensitivity on the part of Anglo-Americans as they "travel the world in a cocoon of familiar language, news and culture" (545). But later, he suggested a solution to the

bloodshed in the Balkans: "Sending the Serbs, Croats and Bosnians to Euro Disneyland or supplying them with 'Rambo' tapes might not end the fighting, but nothing else has worked. It's worth a try" (546).

2. *Resurgence of culture*. He noted ethnic and cultural clashes in the world (546)

3. *A global culture*. As local cultural conflicts arise, there still is an emerging, overarching culture that he called truly global despite its being transmitted in English (546).

4. *The triumph of independent journalism*. Described here were the collapse of communism and the failures of news agencies based on a nation-building model. However, failure of one model only implies the success of another. Stevenson only offers as an example of successful independent journalism the Voice of America, a state-run broadcaster (546-547).

5. *New media moguls*. Described here were a number of owners of international media conglomerates. Not suggested is any useful framework for their consideration, only their existence (547).

#### Latin American Critical Scholarship

Emile G. McAnany, in *Communication and Latin American Society*, outlined seven themes in critical scholarship by Latin American communication scholars (Atwood and McAnany 1986). As Gomez-Palacio's (1989) study noted as well, Latin American scholars can suggest themes for study that have been overlooked by North American scholars.

1. *The transnationalization of communication*. This category includes studies on U.S. advertising agencies in Latin America, U.S. wire services, and international television and news flow (31).

2. *Imperialism and dependency*. McAnany noted Marxist arguments as well as atheoretical, descriptive accounts of foreign domination of communication and cultural products (32-33).

3. *Marxist and neo-Marxist cultural analysis*. McAnany referred to Latin Americans influenced by Armand Mattelart's work in Chile, and the writings of the British Cultural Studies writers such as Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall (34).

4. *Communication technology in Latin American society*. He cited *Many Voices, One World* (Unesco 1980) and its ambivalence concerning technologies that "are promoted as leading to significant economic growth and yet are also seen as part of the dominant structures of transnational enterprise" (Atwood and McAnany 35).

5. *National policies for communication and culture*. McAnany cited attempts by governments such as Venezuela and Chile to mold communication policy to meet national development goals and to conform with governmental ideology (37).

6. *Alternative communication.* He observed a rising body of scholarship on “how people in different settings have opposed or resisted the dominant power structure and the dominant (usually transnational) communication structure” (38).

7. *An indigenous communication science.* Finally, McAnany described attempts to differentiate a Latin American communication science from North American models. He noted the difficulty of this by citing Stevenson's objection to “any deviation from accepted social science models as ‘nonscientific,’ whether it is produced by U.S. or Latin American critical scholars” (40).

### A Centrist Agenda

A useful set of research ideas can be found somewhere in-between Stevenson and McAnany. The following modest suggestions are not grounded in Marxist theory or in a rigid liberal social scientific approach. These suggestions are informed by James Carey, who has said the goal of communication study should be “to understand the meanings that others have placed on experience, to build up a veridical record of what has been said at other times, in other places, and in other ways; to enlarge the human conversation by comprehending what others are saying” (Carey 1989, 60). This approach is based upon a recognition that the creation and cultivation of culture is an important area of study for mass communication researchers, especially for communication historians.

1. *Recognize the newsworker.* Studies of media systems focus on large questions of ownership, distribution, audience, and relative freedom. Left out of these studies -- and left out of *Journalism Quarterly* -- is a consideration of the newsworker. What is it like to be a reporter in Bolivia? Does it make a difference how reporters are trained, under what conditions they work, and to which press theories they subscribe? Professionalization studies of the 1960s addressed this area, but modern studies open to viewing journalism through Latin American eyes would be more informative.

2. *Recognize culture.* Further studies on the changing patterns of information flow should shed light not only on news but on entertainment patterns. What impact does an increase in Latin American-generated entertainment programming have on audience images of themselves, of the producing nations, or of Latin America in general?

3. *Recognize communication history.* Traditional histories give a description of a nation's media system with a historical overview that emphasizes a legacy of censorship or press “freedom.” Historical studies can answer theoretical questions on media behavior (Leslie 1991) and can analyze the media's role in political, social, or cultural development.

4. *Recognize the relationship of media and the state.* How do journalists in a media system define democracy? How does a government define press freedom? How have each used similar words -- freedom, democracy, development -- in different ways? Textual analysis, joined

by oral history, and political analysis, can track the relationship of a media system with the government and ruling elites through the symbolic environment in the daily newspaper.

### *Conclusion*

Although she was writing in the context of analyzing specific survey data, Ramona Rush aptly summed up a critique of *Journalism Quarterly* scholarship on Latin America when she wrote: "We need to know more about topics of conversation at cocktail parties and less about the number of seats available in a movie theater, because what persons *do* with the media and in their transactions with others is more important than the physical chance for communication" (1972, 339). It is in that spirit that these comments have been offered.

Finally, it should be noted that this paper's critique of *Journalism Quarterly* does not suggest that it is unimportant to the Latin Americanists in communication studies, even qualitative researchers in the field. They should not ignore the findings of those with other research agendas any more than should mainstream empiricists ignore the findings of qualitative and alternative researchers. That is where a widened view of research by *Journalism Quarterly* editorial policy and by the communications academy in general would benefit all Latin Americanists among communications researchers.

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