

giants and lays bare the politics—sometimes racism but mostly sexism—in their arguments. She shows how biology is used to justify the social status quo. As she demonstrates, biological explanations are prevalent at particular periods of social change or when social change is being attempted, not when a biological fact happens to be discovered. For example, when there was an attempt to admit women to Harvard in 1873, Edward Clarke's book *Sex in Education* was published; in it he argued that educating women would only be done at great cost to their health. Even at that time it was charged that his book was written to keep women out of Harvard (where Clarke was a faculty member), not because there was biological evidence. But the book had a significant effect (and was printed in 17 editions). The first president of Bryn Mawr lamented: "We were haunted in those early days by the clanging chains of that gloomy little specter, Dr. Edward H. Clarke's *Sex in Education*" (Thomas, 1908, p. 69). The similarity to the current discussion of allowing women to compete in an Olympic marathon event is striking. Sayers gives many other examples of the uses of biological arguments about reproductive health, brain size, brain function, and aggression. She demonstrates most convincingly the attempted social change and the parallel use of biological arguments that occurred over and over again in the 1800s and 1900s. A pattern emerges, and Sayers gently but forcefully makes the pattern clear.

The second half of the book has a harder task. Here Sayers shows that rather than ignoring biology, many feminist theorists have incorporated biological arguments squarely in their theories. What makes this material more difficult is that the subject matter is less unifiable. There is great diversity in feminist theorists' positions with regard to biology. In addition, Sayers agrees and disagrees with these theories in varying degrees. But the second half is well worth the effort. Sayers's analysis and evaluation of contemporary work is an outstanding contribution. Particularly useful is her analysis of Ortner's and Chodorow's work and her criticisms of the recent work by Rossi.

The final constructionist Sayers is not as strong as the critical Sayers. The book as a whole, however, is first rate. It is an excellent example of how unconscious (or covert) politics can hurt the scientific endeavor, whereas conscious and overt politics can enhance it. This is a fine con-

tribution to scholarship by a strongly political feminist.

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Television on Trial Again: A Political Advocacy Approach

Gordon L. Berry and Claudia Mitchell-Kernan (Eds.)
Television and the Socialization of the Minority Child
New York: Academic Press, 1982.
306 pp. \$25.00

Review by

J. Philippe Rushton

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With the recent publication of the National Institute of Mental Health's (NIMH) two-volume *Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1982), it becomes increasingly difficult to evade the view that television has become one of modern society's major agencies of socialization. For a long while this conclusion was resisted—in part because television was only meant to be a form of entertainment, not a socializer now equaled only by the family, the peer group, and the educational system, and in part because previously the evidential base was perceived as somewhat narrow. Recently, however, government inquiries from around the world have forced the conclusion that, in the words of the recent NIMH report, "television has become a

major socializing agent of American children" (Vol. 1, p. 7).

One reason for the growing consensus is that although the data base has grown increasingly variegated, in general it points in the same direction. Research methodologies have included the case study, simple correlation, cross-lagged longitudinal panels, laboratory-experimental, field-experimental, and quasi-experimental designs; content areas have focused on aggression and antisocial behavior, altruism and prosocial behavior, advertising and consumer role socialization, imagination and cognitive skill acquisition, sexuality and sex-role learning, and political attitudes and voting behavior; and subjects have included preschoolers, elementary schoolers, adolescents (delinquent and nondelinquent), young adults, and old age pensioners, all from both sexes and many different countries and ethnic groups.

Research on minorities neglected

Although the amount of research on television and socialization has burgeoned, there is still very little that is directly concerned with American minority children. In the thirty or so chapters of the NIMH report covering esoteric areas such as people in the family, growing old, and learning sexual behavior, none was explicitly concerned with minorities. This book, therefore, is a welcome addition in that it focuses on this important area and raises issues that have been neglected previously.

The basic argument of the book is that minorities have received shabby treatment by television. Most of the thirteen chapters repeat the same points: (a) Minorities are underrepresented on television, (b) minorities are portrayed in negative stereotypes, and (c) these lead to a negative self-image in minority children. The evidence in favor of this, however, is weak largely because the data and methodologies are so poor. Moreover, the polemical tone of some of the chapters does not lead to a balanced assessment of the evidence.

Portrayal of minorities on television

In the 1950s there were very few minority characters on television, and those who were there were stereotypes like the black *Amos and Andy*, the oriental *Dr. Fu Manchu*, or the blood-thirsty Indians of countless westerns. Many of these programs were canceled as a result of organized protests. For the next few years

there were virtually no minority characters on television. Later, however, they began to reappear. By 1968, the proportion of black characters rose to about 10 percent, and it has remained at about that level ever since. There are far fewer Hispanics—only about 1.5 percent in 1975–1977, for example. During 1970–1976, the percentage of Asian Americans was 2.5, and of native Americans it was less than half of one percent. For all minorities combined there were about 12 percent in the period 1969–1978, with a high of 18 percent in 1975 (see Dorr's chapter and the NIMH study).

Many contributors to this book take issue with these portrayals. Spurlock (Ch. 4), Takanishi (Ch. 5), and Powell (Ch. 6) object to the portrayal of blacks; Iiyama and Kitano (Ch. 8) object to that of Asian Americans, Morris (Ch. 9) to the roles of American Indians, and Arias (Ch. 10) to those of Hispanics. Apparently, black and Hispanic characters are both cast mainly in situation comedies or in law-breaking or law-enforcing roles. About 40 percent of all black characters appear in only six shows. The same kind of clustering occurs with Hispanic characters; 50 percent are in just four shows. Blacks are less likely than whites to have a job, and if they are working, they are more likely to have a low-prestige job. Most Hispanic characters work in unskilled or semiskilled jobs.

Unfortunately, many of the authors rely primarily on anecdotal, impressionistic accounts to document their dissatisfaction with the roles of minority characters on television. There are only four or five tables in the book. Thus, the serious reader interested in content analyses of the roles of the various minorities in the different types of television programming such as newscasting, dramas, situation comedies, game-shows, soap operas, commercials, and sporting events would be wasting time with this book. The same would apply if the reader was interested in percentage breakdowns by viewer minorities expressing satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the various character roles they observe or preference of people to watch (Greenberg and Atkin's chapter is a notable exception to this criticism). Too often, the contributors simply pick what they feel is a suitable example to illustrate a particular iniquity, and the reader is left to guess as to its representativeness.

Consider the following examples to get the flavor of the book: In her chapter Powell argues that "The Toms, coons,

mulattos, mammies, and bucks are still there in *The Jeffersons*, *Good Times*, *Baby I'm Back*, *Sanford and Son*, and *What's Happening*. . . . Sanford . . . is a stumbling buffoon who often makes no sense, and his son is close to being cast as the young, oversexed black buck" (p. 125). Later she writes:

[The images] are always there to remind us of the antisocial nature of minority group people. All of these are on prime time in every home, a knob's turn away on ABC, CBS, or NBC, in color or in black and white. They readily reinforce the negative reflected appraisals in the self-concept development of the Afro-American child and reinforce the stereotypes for the white child who will reiterate those negative images in turn to another Afro-American child. (p. 125)

This would be a disturbing situation if it were true. But is it true? No evidence is provided. In a similar style, Iiyama and Kitano take issue with the portrayals of Asians:

The long-running television series, *Hawaii Five-O* (1968–1979), featured a stereotypical Asian villain based on the Fu Manchu image who periodically appeared as the nemesis of the head of the police department and finally was killed off in the last episode. He was a bald-headed, mustached Chinese Communist master spy who sadistically utilized the latest technological and psychological devices to torture as many people as possible for no reason whatsoever. (p. 156)

But how representative is the villain of Asian portrayals? How many compensatory prosocial Asians are there? Do Asians actually resent this character? Do whites, blacks, and Hispanics who see this villain generalize to other Asians? We do not know.

Even when discussing content analyses of television programming that portrayed minorities to be more law abiding, moral, and altruistic than whites, authors wax polemical. Takanishi in her chapter, for example, asserts that such prosocial portrayals serve primarily to keep blacks in their place as nonthreatening to whites. Later, in discussing a study finding that black adolescents liked black TV characters who conformed to social norms more than they did black militants, she suggests that portrayals of blacks as middle class is a form of social control and co-option rather than a source of ethnic identification and value. I often felt that the authors had their axes to grind and that no piece of evidence was going to be anything other than grist for their mill.

Effects of minority portrayals

Most of the authors attempt to make the case that the current portrayals (or non-portrayals) of minorities are hurting or could hurt the self-concepts of minority children. Thus, Morris writes: "The damage done to American Indian children who consistently see their people in non-contemporary, nonprofessional roles could be great indeed" (pp. 192–194). Unfortunately, very little evidence is provided. Indeed, what little evidence there is apparently points in the *opposite* direction, at least for black and Hispanic children. In general, snippets of research found in various chapters suggest that minority children exposed to a white-dominated medium do not develop destructive self-images (see also the NIMH report). Public television programs such as *Sesame Street*, *Carrascolendas*, and *Villa Alegre* appear to have been particularly effective in developing cultural pride and self-confidence in minority children. Even from commercial television at least one study has shown that black youngsters have more positive perceptions of black television characters (in terms of activity, strength, and beauty) than they do of white characters. Studies also report that black children generally perceive commercial television characterizations of blacks to be at least as realistic as, if not more so than, white children do.

It would be premature to accept from the current evidence any judgments of the effects of contemporary television portrayals of minorities on the attitudes of children. Useful data, however, would be relatively easy to gather. Just a few before-after experimental designs of different types of portrayal on self-concepts and attitudes toward others would go a long way, as would surveys of what different types of viewers judge to be offensive. It is unfortunate that some of the contributors were more interested in treating the reader to sermons about institutional racism than in sitting down themselves and providing the above data or carrying out finer analyses of how minorities are currently depicted.

Issues of power and control

Despite lapses in the academic quality of some of the writing, this book does raise issues that have yet to be dealt with adequately. What *ought* the content of television to be? Some writers of this book argue that it is white middle-class values that are being purveyed to the detriment of minorities. Many members of the

white middle class, however, believe that antiintellectual and antisocial values are more often transmitted. Some of the authors of this book are overtly political in intent and recommend that minorities be hired to monitor the transmission of values (Iiyama and Kitano are most explicit), and others (e.g., Morris) call for promoting the cultural values of other ethnic groups as alternatives to those of whites and thereby encourage diversity. Even the role of educational television in building Standard English can be questioned if it leads to interference with other linguistic communities (see the chapters by Asante, Arias, and Morris). Many people want the content of television altered. The political question becomes "In whose direction?"

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Can a "Squiggles" Test Be That Revealing?

Mary Louise Marley
Organic Brain Pathology and the Bender-Gestalt Test: A Differential Diagnostic Scoring System
New York: Grune & Stratton, 1982.
280 pp. \$29.50

Review by
Max L. Hutt

Mary Louise Marley is a clinical psychologist in private practice in York, Pennsylvania. ■ Max L. Hutt was, until 1973, professor of psychology and director of the psychological clinic at the University of Detroit. Currently semi-retired and in private practice as a consulting psychologist in Ann Arbor, Michigan, he is author of The Hutt Adaptation of the Bender-Gestalt Test, 1st-3rd eds.

The Bender-Gestalt Test, in its various forms, has become a standard procedure as part of the diagnostic battery used by psychologists and others. This work by Marley provides still another scoring system designed especially for differentiat-

ing patients with an organic brain syndrome (OBS) from other hospitalized patients. The author presents her system, based on about nine years of clinical observations and empirical testing, and claims exceptionally significant conclusions concerning its validity. For example, in evaluating the scoring system's effectiveness in differentiating nonorganics, mild organics, moderate organics, and severe organics, she states: "Thus, all subjects were correctly identified by the classification scheme" (p. 9). Such an exuberant conclusion surely merits closer inspection, especially because this is the first time, so far as I know, that such a claim has been made.

Marley states that "For practical purposes, the author began by borrowing Hutt and Briskin's (1960) Inferential Criteria for Intracranial Damage" (p. 4). This statement is inaccurate; Hutt and Briskin suggest these criteria as part of Configurational Patterns (Hutt & Briskin, 1960). Marley then adds other factors, modifies them, tries them out, and after some experimentation comes up with a list of twelve criteria plus a time factor. Research results, using these scoring criteria, are reported for 640 acute stroke patients. A so-called cross-validation sample of patients consisted of 196 nonorganic and 202 organic subjects. No data are provided with respect to comparability of the primary and secondary samples. Results indicating the diagnostic validity for both samples are impressive. Interjudge reliability for scoring the criteria (three judges) is reported as .99, an almost unbelievable degree of reliability (for 41 acute stroke patients). No controls for other factors such as level of intelligence, level of education, previous medical history, or sex are supplied or analyzed. Only age and severity of organic insult were studied.

Although a great deal of effort and extensive clinical experience went into this project, I am concerned about a number of factors. First, there is no reference to any of the hundreds of research studies published after 1965 dealing with the effectiveness of the Bender-Gestalt Test in the differential diagnosis of OBS. Not even the two revisions of the Hutt studies on this test (Hutt, 1969, 1977) are noted, despite their introduction of revised scoring and new validation for the test. Nor are such significant publications as Lacks and Newport's (1980) critical study or Tolor and Brannigan's (1980) extensive review of relevant studies noted. No word

is offered concerning possible contamination of the criterion of degree of organicity by use of the Bender-Gestalt scores. No explanation is offered concerning the criterion of "Angulation" (defined without any specification of degree of angulation distortion), although the research findings clearly demonstrate its ineffectiveness.

I am also concerned that the author did not describe the test stimuli (or test cards) that were used in her study. Because several sets of such cards are available (the most widely used being those prepared by Bender and those prepared by Hutt), inquiry was made about this factor. Marley, in a personal letter to Hutt, indicated that "I was not able to use the . . . cards supplied by the American Orthopsychiatric Association. I found them not only defective but also somewhat different from the original designs which Dr. Bender presented [in] her Monograph." Marley, therefore, modified designs A, 1, 6, and 7. Although such revisions of the test cards may be defended on several grounds, they introduce differences in the test stimuli, with unknown effects on test performance and test scoring.

Finally, the author presents extensive lists of supposed mental functions tapped by the various criteria (including level of intelligence) without any supporting evidence. Apart from such scholarly and methodological considerations, the work is marred by many extreme overgeneralizations and by considerable self-adulatory remarks concerning the author's highly sensitive clinical acumen. Thus, what may be a substantial contribution to the literature on this test is made suspect.

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