

whether public journalism offers a new professional orientation or is simply "good journalism" put into practice. As this engaging introductory journalism textbook demonstrates, public journalism can be both.

Cheryl Gibbs and Tom Warhaver, journalism educators who began their careers in newsrooms, open their book with a discussion on the vital role of journalists in a democracy. They examine ways that enterprising journalists identify and write about what really matters to the communities the media serve. The authors cover straight news-writing but extol storytelling techniques that deliver dialogue and context as well as information. In tone and emphasis, *Getting the Whole Story* draws heavily on public journalism theory, yet none of the topics covered would seem out of place in a standard introductory journalism textbook.

In short, the textbook has much to offer basic reporting courses, whether or not it is used in a public journalism context. By combining the "whys" of journalism with the "how-tos," *Getting the Whole Story* covers the fundamentals of news reporting in a way that inspires as well as instructs. Especially helpful is the chapter that clearly explains how writing news stories differs from writing academic papers (the distinction may seem obvious but, as journalism educators quickly discover, it is widely misunderstood by beginning journalism students). The authors show that journalism is a collaborative enterprise involving editors, photographers, and graphic artists. The textbook provides numerous exercises inviting beginning journalists to report on their community in ways that go beyond covering the city council and police blotter.

Gibbs and Warhaver seek to balance the mechanics of reporting with exercises that foster greater awareness of how journalism affects people's lives. For example, an entire chapter is devoted to news framing, asking students to step back and reflect on how their reporting choices shape a story and its impact on the people who read it. The textbook also provides numerous opportunities for students to reflect on the importance of

press freedom and to work through ethical concerns encountered in day-to-day reporting. Without pontificating, the authors convincingly show that journalism is challenging, powerful—and fun.

This textbook's greatest contribution—the integration of theory and practice of good journalism—also could be considered its shortcoming. The nuts-and-bolts of news-writing, though thoroughly covered, are interwoven into the text in a way that may befuddle journalism students. For example, instruction on handling quotes and attribution are found on pages 55 to 60, the "5 W's" are introduced on page 105, and the inverted pyramid is first considered on page 127. Extensive scholarly and philosophical references add a level of depth and thoughtful discourse missing from many journalism texts, but these ruminations risk losing beginning journalism students who are grappling with writing a concise lead to a hard news story. A companion workbook, a missing component, would help overcome these limitations.

Journalism educators seeking a fresh approach to teaching news reporting should consider *Getting the Whole Story* as a primary textbook. Striving to nurture engaged journalists, the authors meld the values and practices of public journalism with traditional news-gathering strategies. Yet public journalism remains in the background (indeed, the authors formally introduce public journalism deep in the text and briefly at that). What stands out is the book's sharp focus on how good journalism can make a positive difference in people's lives. The result is a practical textbook that nurtures journalism's highest qualities.

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■ ***Hidden Agendas: How Journalists Influence the News.*** Lydia Miljan and Barry Cooper. Vancouver, British Columbia: UBC Press, 2003. 212 pp. \$24.95 pbk.

The debate over media bias is largely driven by political perspective. Those on the

far right tend to see a liberal media promoting special interests and dedicated to the perpetuation of Big Government. Those on the far left are just as convinced that the media are cheerleaders for unregulated capitalism on behalf of Big Business. *Hidden Agendas*, offering empirical research on this controversy from Canada, obviously comes from the far right politically. In making their case that left-leaning journalists influence the news, however, its authors engage less in scholarship than in ideology. Worse, they practice questionable science in order to make their political points. As a result *Hidden Agendas* amounts to little more than polemic and makes little worthwhile contribution to the debate.

The authors are political scientists—Miljan teaches at the University of Windsor and Cooper at the University of Calgary. Unlike the journalists they accuse of harboring ulterior motives, they make their agenda obvious from the outset. They believe it is journalists, not owners, who inject bias into the news, and they see that bias as invariably left-leaning, even Marxist. The study's findings, however, can be largely understood in the context of the authors' own perspectives. Miljan has been director since 1987 of the National Media Archive, a division of the Vancouver-based Fraser Institute, which is often described as a "right-wing think tank." The survey research relied on was gathered for Miljan's 2000 dissertation in the department where Cooper teaches. Cooper is the author of *Sins of Omission*, a 1994 study of CBC television that found much relevant information to be suppressed by the government broadcaster. Not surprisingly, CBC journalists suffer worst of all from accusations of bias in *Hidden Agendas*.

There are two major problems with this study that render it suspect. The first is that the authors set out with the objective of proving a point, and they gathered data designed to do just that. Given the undisguised mission on which the authors embarked, with little pretence of disinterested inquiry, it is fair to conclude that their findings may have largely been determined by

their method. In particular, the loaded nature of their survey questions possibly resulted in skewed data. For example, their survey of 270 journalists and 804 members of the general public included such questions as whether communism was "evil and unworkable" or "a good idea but wrecked by bad leadership." Another equated capitalism with both free markets and the right to own private property. The linkages made and images evoked with such framing may have resulted in biased responses.

Their content analysis suffers from similar agenda-driven flaws. Their finding that media reports are left-biased because they tend to focus more on bad news that reflects poorly on the capitalist system (such as increased unemployment) than on good news (such as increased employment) can be explained instead by journalistic reliance on the accepted news values of conflict and significance. Their complaint that media reports focus more on the adverse short-term social consequences of tax cuts than on their possible long-term trickle-down economic benefits can be similarly countered. Their literature review section ignores much of the voluminous research into influences on media content. *Mediating the Message*, the compendium of such theories by Shoemaker and Reese, rates one reference. The lone authority referred to on the effects of totalitarian propaganda in the 1930s is not Lasswell but Hitler. *Mein Kampf* is cited not as an example, but as an authority. This is just one of numerous red flags that pop up throughout the text and cause the reader grave doubts about this study's own bias.

The second major problem from which *Hidden Agendas* suffers is the stale nature of its data, the findings from which must be considered suspect in light of subsequent events. The data was gathered in 1997 to 1998, immediately prior to a major upheaval in the Canadian media that proved beyond doubt to many that the influence of media ownership far outweighs the biases of individual journalists that may show through in their copy. The founding by Conrad Black in late 1998 of the conservative daily *National*

Post demonstrated what, to their credit, Miljan and Cooper acknowledge is a limitation to their study—that the ultimate power of media ownership lies in the hiring and firing (not to mention promotion) of like-minded journalists. The sale by Black in 2000 of the *Post* and the former Southam chain of dailies he had gradually taken over has seen a rapid about-face in their political coverage. The Asper family, which also owns television network CanWest Global Communications, now uses its acquired publications to support the federal Liberal party and the state of Israel. These developments, the authors admit, signal that their work is “far from over.” They promise that a replication will provide “necessary corroboration” of the results of *Hidden Agendas* within a few years. No doubt it will.

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- *Images That Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media*. 2d ed. Paul Martin Lester and Susan Dente Ross, eds. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003. 322 pp. \$26.95 pbk.

Photographs are documentary records imbued with claims of journalistic objectivity and social truth. They are also visual manifestations of material culture grounded in historically specific political and ideological visions of society. While researchers critically interrogate photographs as mythic symbols instrumental in the formation of cultural identity and savvy readers understand how photographs contribute to a mediated reality, the seduction of photographs to depict the “truth” remains central to its power.

It is the power of photographs to present seemingly authentic images of society that frames *Images That Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media*. Editors Paul Martin Lester and Susan Dente Ross draw on the denotative power of photography and suggest that many of the photographs seen in contemporary mass media present stereotypical im-

ages of contemporary culture rather than truthful representations of the diversity of groups and individuals in society. Defining stereotype as “a shorthand way to describe a person with collective, rather than unique, characteristics,” Lester and Ross warn that stereotyping is not merely a shorthand communication strategy but that it can have devastating consequences and can ultimately lead to discrimination, violence, and even murder.

Noting that many of the book’s contributors were once media professionals, Lester and Ross insist that their text does not “bash the media”; instead, they maintain that it offers a variety of examples for readers to consider how symbols, stereotypes, and archetypes influence their understandings of images. Lester is currently a professor of communications at California State University, Fullerton. He is coauthor of “Ethics Matters,” a monthly column in the journal of the National Press Photographers Association, *News Photographer*. Ross is an associate professor at the Edward R. Murrow School of Communication at Washington State University. A First Amendment scholar, Ross researches media portrayals of minorities and speech at the margins.

Images That Injure begins with conceptual essays that offer an overview of the ethical issues involved in stereotyping and address the power of images and the moral responsibilities involved in publishing potentially harmful photographs. The recently released second edition includes a new section on stereotypes related to the coverage of 9/11 that nicely complements existing sections on ethnic, gender, age, physical, and sexual orientation media stereotypes. One of the more intriguing sections, simply titled “Miscellaneous Stereotypes,” explores political stereotypes in editorial cartoons, depictions of computer nerds and their recent more positive reincarnations as computer hackers, and last but not least stereotypical depictions of media personnel. With chapters focusing on Arab Americans, African Americans, Mexican Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, Irish Americans,